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Question: Okay, I'll try to make myself clear. I'm just afraid I'm beating around the bush here with this. But I'm so curious about this cause this has come up in interviews over the past five years and it's very rare that we get a chance to interview someone like you who was raised in Japan and also got to see the way it was in the occupation during the war crime trials. Because everybody always asks me when we talk about what I do in the war they always ask about the war crime trials in Germany and in Japan because it was so different. Because in Germany there to this day they're still chasing Nazis down and in Japan it was all settled in the forties and there's no, you can't sue the Japanese government for past sins and where in Germany to this day there's still lawsuits where people want to be paid compensation for working in camps and things.

Answer: Oh, they're still doing that?

Question: Oh yeah, they still are. And so you know the question comes up all the time about the difference. It comes up all the time the difference and so now here you were actually at some of the war crime trials it's so interesting to me to be able to ask these questions.

But, about the temple, I read that in 1974 that the Class A war criminals who were executed that their remains were not put into this temple, into the memorial. But in 1974 that their remains were placed in this memorial and it was sort of quietly done because there is so much controversy about the memorial because the Koreans and the Chinese to this day have not forgotten what happened. And I was speaking to a man, not in the interviews who in fact I was emailing him cause he's Japanese. I was emailing him about trying to find an interview over there and we were talking about the remains of Tojo and the others being interred there, and he said that his point of view was that they were more martyrs than war criminals, that they should not have been executed. Do you think that's a common feeling?

Answer: I think some people feel that way, some people in Japan; and some others, I don't know which is greater, but that some others don't feel that way. I talked to Japanese diplomats and some of them agree with me that the war criminals, General Tojo and others, should not have been enshrined there because that shrine, the Yasukuni shrine was designated as a shrine where the war dead, those who died in war, were enshrined. So like my brother is enshrined but Tojo and others did not die in action. They did not die during the war so they shouldn't be, they shouldn't be there and a lot of Japanese agree with me, but I don't know who did that. Apparently, it was okay with the government, maybe, ultra patriot.

Question: Is the, you know, as far as their attitude, a lot of them feel that they were scapegoats, that we needed to punish someone, and so Tojo and them were punished for the war. And that, the one I was reading besides the fact that they were enshrined this man's feeling was, is that it wasn't like Hitler and it wasn't like the Nazis in the concentration camps he said Tojo and the rest of them should not have been executed for the, for going to war. Do you think that's true, do you think there's any, were they found guilty and sentenced to death for political reasons or?

Answer: They found, why they found guilty?

Question: Yeah.

Answer: They found, they were found guilty because they lost the war.

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Question: Do you think that's it?

Answer: Yeah, because during the trial it came out, you know, their crime against humanity and things like that but I think this was a Japanese lawyer who pointed out there is no law against.. no law such governing a crime against humanity. what is that, what is that law? So if there is, if there is no such law there is no crime... and if there is no such law there is no punishment. I think it's a non-criminaliza... (Inaudible) some Latin word. But if that is the case it was hard for these technical people to find the criminal, war crime criminals to be found guilty. But..

Question: So they're..

Answer: when you lose a war there isn't anything you can do about it.

Question: So their crime was they lost the war.

Answer: Yeah, I think so.

Question: Did, is your brother in the shrine, is your brother interred in the war memorial there?

Answer: Yeah, my brother's name is there. I didn't see it but my sister told me.

Question: Have you been to that memorial, the shrine.

Answer: No I haven't been there.

Question: It's a, it is a big, it's a real important place isn't it, I mean it's..?

Answer: Well, I guess so.. Where I was in Japan the military constantly pounded into our head that the it's a privilege to be enshrined there and that the, nothing like being enshrined, it's a, it's an honor for you and it's an honor for your family and this and that you know. They used to pound that into our head when I was growing up in Japan.

Question: So when you were growing up in Japan, it was very military..

Answer: Oh, very much so, very much so.

Question: And you.. the religion is Shinto, is a national religion, isn't it, is that what it's?

Answer: Huh?

Question: The religion there, is it Shinto, is that Shinto Buddhism?

Answer: No, all our family's religion was Buddhism. Shinto-ism is a state religion. Some people have Shinto as their family religion too but not too many. It's a separate thing, yeah. So when young people get married they go before the Shinto shrine for the ceremony but when they die they go to Buddhist Church.

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Question: Is the, now when you were growing up there and going to school also the Emperor Hirohito was, he, Hirohito.. he was a God, correct? Isn't that the way he was..?

Answer: Well, they said he was a descendant of God.

Question: That's what you were taught?

Answer: Yeah, we were told that.

Question: So was that... your education was regulated by the government, isn't that, the national government and so you were raised up in the mold that they wanted you to be raised in?

Answer: Uh huh.

Question: And you, Hirohito was he, Hirohito was very important in Japanese society, wasn't he, I mean..?

Answer: Yeah, he was. He was a center of Japan, a center of the Japanese people and he is a descendant from Emperor Jimmu, way up there.

Question: Like over 2,000 years, right?

Answer: Something like that, yeah. But, well when we were young we didn't have to really believe in it. We didn't have to. We said well, okay if that is, if that is what they tell us, okay, let it be like that you know. We weren't too serious about it.

Question: Yeah, cause part of the peace treaty too was to change that.. cause didn't Hirohito have to denounce his divinity and, cause didn't he come on the radio and speak to the Japanese nation and say he wasn't son, he wasn't a descendant of God and. Because see he wasn't, he was a real important person in the national identity, right? Hirohito was?

Answer: While I was in Japan early part of the occupation I saw him going around mingle among people. He took his hat off like that, and people were very happy that the man could come out and talk to them because way before the war that wasn't possible.

Question: Well, they couldn't even look at him, could they?

Answer: Yeah you can look at him.

Question: When he was traveling before the war though, if he was going somewhere you weren't supposed to look.

Answer: No. You were supposed to bow, not even look at him.

Question: Now were you, you weren't married at this time, were you? When you were in, in 1946, you were single?

Answer: No, I was, I was married.

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Question: Was your, did your wife come to Japan or?

Answer: In 1947, yeah.

Question: And were, the trials, were they still going on in 1947, the war?

Answer: Yes.

Question: They were.

Answer: Trials I think started in '46 and all of '46, '7, '8 and '9 so, three, four years it lasted.

Question: Did you, did, was there any defendants that you successfully got off of the charges that you saved?

Answer: Yes. We had a medical officer. He was a Major General. Well, I think the prosecution wanted to try him because he was a head of the medical section or whatever, because some of the men under him did bad things. But we were successful in getting him off the hook you might say. He was found not guilty and after the trial was over he brought his family to where we were living, thanking us for the nice work.

Question: So he was, he felt indebted to you for helping?

Answer: Uh huh.

Question: Did you feel when this other, the man was found guilty of executing the airman did you feel, did you feel responsible for having failed him in not being able to defend him?

Answer: Did I, did I feel I failed?

Question: Yeah.

Answer: No, no, we did the best we could.

Question: There probably, there was no way to save him anyway, was there?

Answer: No, no. Because he admitted he killed.

Question: Yeah.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Did the, you know I think I was talking about the way things happen. You know a lot of people that were POW's and veterans over there, they viewed things as being so cruel but like one veteran said that he was in POW camp in Japan and how badly he was beaten and people were beaten to death. But he said you know they treated their own soldiers just as badly as they treated us, that he's forgiving because he says, you know, he doesn't think it was out of malice, that he thinks that that's just was the way that it was, that that's how, that they, he doesn't think that, he doesn't think this treatment was completely mean spirited. He thinks

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that's just the way it was, that they saw, there was nothing in their view, there was nothing wrong with this treatment of POW's.

Answer: Well, I think they, I don't know about the Navy, but the entire Japanese Army was so disciplined and so tough that that was natural. You know before, before I came back to Seattle in 1934 in my senior year in high school we had to go and live with soldiers for a couple of weeks. And we had maneuver and during the maneuver of course we fired rifle but we were told to pick up all the casings, you know, small casings. Well, some of us couldn't find all the casings... like we expended maybe five; we couldn't find five and the soldiers got mad. Almost, almost beat our boys... almost. And if he were soldier said, if this happened to another soldier in the active duty he would be really you know physically treated you know. But because you guys are students you get away this time but you got to find, find them. And, well I guess in the American Army that wouldn't have happened you know if a little casing got lost, you'd say, well, it's a loss. But over there their country was poor and they didn't want to lose all that.

Question: So a lot of what in our eyes things that were viewed as, things that were viewed as criminal acts, really, in a Japanese military man's eyes was just, that's just the way it is, that we treat offenses differently.

Answer: Uh huh.

Question: Cause they didn't see anything in the, I've heard that, of course I hear this from American veterans but you know that being a POW, that you sort of, well you're a different status too. I mean that you're a, because you had surrendered and were captured that you had a different sort of level that you were at at that point, is that true?

Answer: Yeah. They were ashamed to be captured as a POW and they always said that's a real shame so rather than being captured, they wanted to commit suicide. And so with that kind of mentality you don't know what they do you know. So when they captured enemy POW they figured they were lower class, yeah.

Question: And it's a real class, isn't Japan's or, this is a class based society in the United States but in Japan, wasn't there's very rigid classes isn't there cause there's emperor and princes and there's Samurai Sp.?? and there's business and isn't there deferent levels of who you are?

Answer: Four.

Question: There are four levels? What are they?

Answer: The Samurai, farmer, artisan and business. That was the way it was until about middle of last century but after that, that's all abandoned.

Question: So is it middle of the 1900's or middle of the 1800's?

Answer: Middle of 1800.

Question: Oh, so it's abandoned but is there still a hold over about class and society cause in World War II a descendant of a Samurai, did they still, were they still somewhere in the..?

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Answer: No, after Commodore Perry went and opened up Japan and they had a big turmoil but eventually they opened up the country and they started to import industrial technique, different system, medical system and whatnot. These things were gradually forgotten but by government decree but it took long, long time. And people still know there is, there was such a cast system. It doesn't apply for a least a hundred years or more but still they talk about it. And still they say well my ancestor from the Samurai class, so other people say, so what, you know. But..

Question: They still..

Answer: they still they are proud of it. But..

Question: Did... what did you think about the use of the atomic bomb, did you think that was good or bad or..?

Answer: Atomic bomb?

Question: Did you think that we should have used it or..?

Answer: Do I think it was a good thing or bad thing?

Question: Yeah.

Answer: Well, I read a number of books. I heard from different people, different Japanese people saying Japan was about to give up anyway. And even if atomic bomb did not fall by the end of that year, that's 1945, Japan would have given up. If that is the case, they didn't have to use a bomb. But nobody knew, nobody in this country knew about that and even if somebody told our president, maybe they wouldn't have believed it. How that would have been resolved and peace came about nobody knows because it didn't happen. But I heard and I read saying that they didn't have all kinds of things. They didn't have ammunition; the food was running out; morale was low. And they, our country would have come to some kind of term by the end of that year. We don't know. But I think it was dropped on the assumption that the Japan will continue to fight. We don't know now, yeah. It's, it's difficult thing to talk about but I was wondering why didn't they give warning to the people of Hiroshima saying, we're gonna drop something terrible by certain day and that you people all should leave. I think they should've, could've given a warning. Then all the civilians won't get, wouldn't have been hurt... yeah. I think that there were quarter of a million people you know..

Question: Did you go to either Hiroshima or Nagasaki Sp to look?

Answer: Huh?

Question: Did you go to either Hiroshima or Nagasaki when..?

Answer: I went to both cities. From Tokyo I went down to see my folks so the train stopped at the Hiroshima station. I got off the train to look at... it was all flat and I was taking pictures and the conductor says, you better come back to the train; train is about to leave. I took more pictures and I think I delayed the train by one minute. But, it was all flat... yeah, it was terrible.

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Question: So it was different than Tokyo, was..?

Answer: Same flatness... there was nothing.

Question: But no chimneys sticking up or anything?

Answer: In Hiroshima I didn't see so many chimneys, not too many factories nor was, were there I guess, from the station that is. Not as many concrete chimneys as the Yahata Steel Mill area or between Tokyo and Yokohama... nothing but chimneys... but Hiroshima I didn't see so many chimneys but as I recall, just plain flat. Nothing was there.

Question: Was Nagasaki the same or..?

Answer: Nagasaki... I didn't go to Nagasaki until about six, seven years ago. It's out of way, you know, way out there. But Hiroshima I saw in 1946. I didn't go to Nagasaki, yeah.

Question: Were there people when you stopped that train station in Hiroshima... were there people there waiting to get on the train and get off the train?

Answer: Yeah, people getting on and getting off the train, yes.

Question: But just nothing but no city?

Answer: Well, I don't know where they would have gone but there were people getting off, yeah. Those days the Japanese trains had passenger cars marked with a white line about that wide for allied forces. And so trains had these cars and only the occupation people could get in there. But the cars without the line the Japanese got on and there were cars without the line so they were getting off and getting on, yeah. Not too many, but still there were some passengers.

Question: Did the, were you, now in Yokohama, was it, it was bombed also pretty badly was it or..?

Answer: Yokohama... not too bad.

Question: So when you were there, there were buildings and places to live and..?

Answer: Yokohama...

Question: Is that where you lived over there, is Yokohama?

Answer: Yes, while I was working for the trials we lived in Yokohama but the, I didn't see as much destruction as Tokyo area, yeah. There was some destruction but not as much.

Question: When you were over in Japan when you first were there and you were still with the U.S. military, did you ever run into any Japanese that were, that, did they have any, anybody have animosity towards you for, did they view you as a Japanese that was sort of a traitor or did, did you ever get any of that? That people viewed you...?

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Answer: Toward us?

Question: Towards you because you were a Japanese in American uniform?

Answer: No, they, if anything they respected us. You know, I went there almost a year after the war was over. I went there September of '46... the war was over August the previous year so maybe they were used to by then. I didn't come across anybody who said to us that they didn't like or they hated anything or us like that. Of course, I, we couldn't read their minds but most of us, most of them showed respect, yeah, especially us because we could talk their language.

Question: Uh huh.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Did the, did you think that the occupation forces, that they did things properly when they were there, do you think that Macarthur.. that the right decisions were made about Japan and how to reshape it?

Answer: I think he was the right man.

Question: He was?

Answer: He was, he was an actor you know. He was quite an actor so.. and the people liked him, yeah. So I believe he did a good job, was obviously some people didn't like him but by and large I think people appreciated him and so many of them now... Of course I left Japan before he did but so many of them were sad when he had to leave Japan to come back here.

Question: So the Japanese themselves liked Macarthur?

Answer: Uh huh.

Question: Mr. Doi said that Macarthur was the picture of a conqueror, that that was one of his strengths was that he was what they expected a conqueror to be. Is that true?

Answer: Well, I guess so. He..

Question: He was fair..

Answer: He had the charisma. I think he was the right man.

Question: Did you ever meet him? Macarthur?

Answer: Well I didn't talk to him or anything but uh.. He would come down to his office at... the Imperial Palace was here and the moat here, the water and then there is a street and a there is a Daiichi Building, insurance company building... that's his office was, where his office was on a hill, come in a, oh, Cadillac and about 10:00 or 10:30 in the morning and lots of people were out there you know waiting for him to get out. He got out the car and walked in.

Question: So his office...

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Answer: I think, I think he didn't smile... but I think he was the right man.

Question: His office was right by the Imperial Palace, was it?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Just right across the street?

Answer: Yeah, well, here's the Imperial Palace and all around is a moat and there's a broad street and then a, there were buildings here and his office was right there.

Question: Did a, now did the occupation forces respect the Emperor's, the palace, did they leave it to him or did they show the Emperor respect and leave the palace intact and not use any of the palace for military uses or..?

Answer: Occupation people or..?

Question: The U.S. Forces, did they, was the Emperor's Palace, was, did they respect the Emperor, his..?

Answer: Well I don't know whether the occupation people respected the Emperor or not.

Question: But I mean did they not respect him but, did, like Macarthur didn't tell the Emperor that he wanted his palace for an office or anything. I mean they left the Emperor intact, I mean they didn't take away his palace. They didn't put him in jail. They didn't, when the war ended the Emperor stayed living in the palace, right? So Macarthur was in his office here and Emperor Hirohito was over here, but they didn't, Hirohito was not punished at the end of the war, correct?

Answer: No, I think, I know a lot of books say that the Macarthur didn't want to do anything to, from all studies he figured if you leave the Emperor alone and if the, also if you leave the Japanese government alone he could do better job than he running everything so it was mainly Macarthur's decision not to depose Emperor.

Question: Yeah, Mr. Doi thought that there would be a power vacuum if the Emperor was deposed, that all of a sudden there would be an opening for other elements to move into the government.

Answer: Could be.

Question: Was there enough, the Japanese people themselves, would they have accepted it if the Emperor had been deposed do you think?

Answer: I think the Japanese people were happy that the Emperor was left alone. They still believed that he was the almighty and that, I think it worked better the way that Macarthur went. Take him away, try him and found him guilty and all that, I don't know what would've happened.

Question: There's no way they would've ever have executed the Emperor of Japan.

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Answer: You never know. Oh, you know, he although Japanese so-called constitution said he wasn't responsible for anything, without his consent the war couldn't have started and he stopped the war.

Question: He did?

Answer: Yeah. He told the people to lay down arms so the, all the commanders said well, if that's the Emperor's wish, we will lay down.

Question: I know one woman we interviewed, Ms. Sakurai, who is 96 and she lived in Tokyo during the war, I asked her about the day the Emperor came on the radio to announce his divinity and I said well, do you remember that? She says, yes I cried. It was a hard thing for most Japanese, I would think, for the Emperor to..

Answer: You'd think so, yeah.

Question: To this day does the, the Imperial family in Japan, it's different today, isn't it, their role in Japanese society... because you pretty much, when the occupation, Japanese government was completely redone. We gave them a constitution and we changed the whole way things work, right? Do you feel on the cases, how many cases did you actually work on in..?

Answer: Well, I don't recall how many but I think one case on the average lasted two or three months.

Question: Really?

Answer: So we had trials.. I went there in '47 and they was already going on so I went there all of '47, '8 and '9. I worked there for about three years, three years, that's 36 months, oh, I must have been involved in at least a dozen cases, yeah, at least.

Question: In a lot of those cases, did you feel, I mean is that really a lot of it, is that they lost the war, and that's why they're being tried, I mean is that a majority of the cases or, do you think? Like you said the General who was in the medical field and the guard that executed the airman and, do you think, if they, you would not, there would not have been those trials if the war had gone the other way, none of them, that's what I'm saying?

Answer: I think because Japan accepted the unconditional surrender there were more trials.

Question: That there were more trials?

Answer: Yeah, I think so, yeah. And also I guess you heard about purge. Before the war the big business, all the corporations cooperated with the Army or Armed Forces and they benefited and so I think the way I heard everybody who held a important position like Board of Directors and certain rank and above were purged. They couldn't..

Question: Oh yeah.

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Answer: They couldn't go back to that company, yeah. And I knew one person who I got acquainted with Mitsubishi and I worked for Mitsubishi here in Seattle branch after the war but during the war there was one man in Mitsubishi's, one of the Mitsubishi offices and that branch manager there said that man is, has been purged so he cannot take an active part, but he's an advisor and he was getting paid.

Question: Changed his title huh? Uh huh, interesting, yeah. The, I guess it's all I have to ask unless Karl has more. Yeah you know cause that's been the biggest question, is about the differences, everybody asks that about well how come cause today even today you read about it all the time that there's one group that wants to sue the Japanese government because they were used as laborers in industry during the war. The Chinese of course always have a big problem because of the occupation of China and so we get asked that all the time... well how come this is the way this worked and this is the way it worked in Germany. So I'm glad that I've had the chance to ask you, someone that was there, about how the peace was settled so.

Answer: So what's the question?

Question: Well that was one of the questions that we asked earlier; that's why I'm not gonna ask these questions... it was just about you know everybody always asked well how come the war crime trials went the way they did? I always get asked about the war crime trials and it's been so nice to actually speak to someone that was at the trials because most people ask well how come, how come they went this way in Germany and how come they went this way in Japan? I always get asked that but I think you..

Answer: Well, there were I'm not sure but the one thing different between the trials in Japan and the trials in Germany was that is a persecution of Jewish people I think that played a lot of difference and then there were certain Jewish people in this country who wanted to go over there and take revenge and there was no such person in case of Japan.

Question: Did, when you were over there all the Japanese military that you spoke to, did you know our view of Pearl Harbor is that it was a real treacherous act, that it was a surprise but when you read about if for weeks there were negotiations between Japan and the United States because we were, we had told Japan we were gonna cut off oil supplies to them, isn't that what happened before the war, that I read an account from one man that they said that you know it was understood, that we were doing what we were doing because they felt that the United States had taken aggressive action by cutting off oil and steel to Japan. So I guess what I'm asking is should the Japanese veteran that you spoke to when you were over there they felt that they were doing what they were, the right thing for their country, is that, was that their feeling?

Answer: The question is whether they thought that they did the right thing?

Question: Yeah.

Answer: Some people thought so. Some people believed so because well, Japan was busy fighting in China and the Chinese appealed and country like United States said Japan was wrong and she was wrong. Like Manchurian incident... really

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the Chinese didn't start that, the Japanese destroyed the railroad and said that the Chinese did that and that sort of thing. Anyway the Allied Forces, or Allies told Japan to get out of China and Japan get out and so he says well we are gonna censor, we are gonna, we are not gonna sell you oil, we are not gonna sell you steel, we are going to do all these embargoes. Well, they didn't have big oil tanks in Japan in those days and the Navy, Japanese Navy started to say we're gonna run out of oil then we'll be dead duck and so we're gonna have to do something. Well, there's oil down there in southwest Pacific. You can go and get 'em. And but that means war. And anyway, and all these things piled up... not the Army but the Navy felt that the Navy couldn't function and without the Navy you couldn't function, Japan's armed forces, half of Japan's armed forces couldn't function so they had to do something. Then the Army said, well we should go down and get the oil from the Dutch East Indies. Okay, now if we do that Americans and Allies will come after us. Well, if they're gonna come after us we'd better go get 'em first, so that's why they say it was self defense. Well, could be you know, could be.

And I guess you, saw in the movie too, but I hear it was true that the Prime Minister, just before Pearl Harbor, Prime Minister asked Admiral Yamamoto what do you think of the war, do you think we're gonna win... and Yamamoto said no; I can, I can have early victory but I cannot guarantee after one year. I think he was thinking of oil... without oil... .Like, so in the end oil was the one that defeated Japan. In the very, very end, the big 50 or 60 ton Battleship Yamato.. never engaged in war. It was near Japan and for the final defense and there were Army, mainly Army Generals who said you, the Navy, you got battleship never fired a shot, go do something. There was a, when the last battle in Okinawa was taking place... but the Navy was reluctant to send that battleship but because Army groups had said so much, finally they decided to send Yamato, the big battleship. When Yamato went down to the Philippine Islands they had enough oil for one way only. They couldn't come back. They knew that so they held back that battleship in Japan but because of the constant harassment by the Army, the Navy reluctantly sent the battleship with the 2,000 sailors knowing they would, they would never come back. See so then there, because the Navy was gonna be a dead duck without oil they said it was self-defense. I don't know whether it's self-defense or not. In a way I think in a way Mr. Bush is saying is a self-defense. We're gonna go attack Iraq.

Question: Yep.

Answer: I don't know. Maybe I shouldn't say that.

Question: So a lot of people think that's it. Well, it's been real interesting.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Glad to get, to hear your story. Thank you so much for coming down today.

Answer: And it was very interesting talking to you.