

Museum of History and Holocaust Education Legacy Series

Harry Kone interview

Conducted by James Newberry

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Transcribed by Caitlin O'Grady

Born in Baltimore in 1920, Harry Kone worked as a welder while attending the University of Wisconsin. In 1942 Kone enlisted in the Marine Corps and sustained injuries while unloading a ship at Guadalcanal later that year. He recovered in a military hospital before serving in the Bougainville Campaign in 1943. After the war Kone taught English in Chicago City Schools. He lives in Marietta, Georgia, and recorded his oral history interview at Kennesaw State University in March 2016.

Full Transcript

Interviewer: Today is Thursday, March 24, 2016, and I'm here in the Sturgis Library at Kennesaw State University. My name is Adina Langer, and I'm the curator of the Museum of History and Holocaust Education. And I'm here with Harry Kone. Can you please start by saying your full name?

Kone: My full name is Harry Joseph Kone. K-O-N-E.

Interviewer: And where and when were you born?

Kone: I was born August 16, 1920 in Baltimore, Maryland. St. Anne's Hospital.

Interviewer: St. Anne's Hospital. Can you tell me about your, your family? What, what did your parents do for a living?

Kone: My mother was always a housewife, and my father brought in ships to the harbor in Baltimore. He worked for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. And in those days, different railroads had piers in Baltimore—like the New York/Pennsylvania Railroad, Southern Pacific. Different rail—railroads had piers, and they'd bring the ships in, and they'd unload these ships. And then obviously, you know, all the freight would go into the freight cars, and then they would take it to the various cities, towns, places, right.

Interviewer: Did you live close to the pier with your family? What was your home like?

Kone: Nah. We moved around several times, but mainly in west part of Baltimore, right.

Interviewer: And what, what, what did your neighborhood look like? Do you remember?

Kone: We lived in what they call row houses. If you want to go around the block, you have to get out of your front door and walk all the way around the block to get in the backdoor, right. [laughs] So, it was very nice in those days, right. We only had

one heater. That was the furnace in the basement. And—but the neighbors were very friendly, cooperative. We enjoyed it.

Interviewer: And the neighborhood, were there lots of different kinds of people? Different, different jobs that they did? Or was the population—were, were a lot of the families just like yours?

Kone: I'm not sure. Growing up, we didn't talk too much about what your father did. So, we were just a bunch of neighbors who got along. Had, had fun. Played all the games that the kids play in those days. The policeman though was very nice. They used to walk around the streets with their little—I forget what they call their sticks—but they would have a way of tossing them up and down and then up and so on. And they'd teach us how to do that.

Interviewer: Oh wow.

Kone: So I learned the policemen's baton, I guess in those days, right. So, I think in our neighborhood we had maybe, you know, twenty boys, and maybe three girls. So it was—.

Interviewer: Did you have any siblings?

Kone: No, I didn't.

Interviewer: And did your mother, did she stay home with you?

Kone: Yes, all the time. Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: So where did you graduate from high school?

Kone: When?

Interviewer: When and where?

Kone: Baltimore, Maryland. Mount St. Joseph's High School. I graduated in 1938. It was a all-boys coll—high school—at the time, right.

Interviewer: And you received a scholarship, right? Where, where did you receive a scholarship to from when you graduated?

Kone: Oh, that was to the University of Wisconsin. They were having a special program. They wanted people who could act in and write scripts for television. They were starting that at that particular time—about 1939/1940.

Interviewer: And was that something you did while you were in high school?

Kone: No, this was after we grad—I graduated from high school.

Interviewer: How did you know you wanted to do this?

Kone: How did I know? It was something different. I thought I'd like to learn to write, and maybe act in T.V. because they were just starting in T.V. in those days, right. So it was just an excuse—probably get out of Baltimore. [laughs]

Interviewer: And what, what did you know about Wisconsin at the time? Had you ever been—.

Kone: No.

Interviewer: —out of the state?

Kone: Didn't know anything about Wisconsin, right. So, I just hopped on a train and went from Baltimore to Milwaukee on the train, right.

Interviewer: At this time, did you know much about what was going on in the world? Did you have a sense that, that we were on the eve of war?

Kone: Oh yes, yeah. We were talking about it in high school, and studying what was going on and why it was happening. And—but never thinking about, "Maybe I'll have to go to war." Now who was our president in those days? That was F.D.R. wasn't it? Right?

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Kone: And he was trying to keep us out of war like Wilson did in World War I, right. So—and that's about the same time that he gave those four-stacker destroyers to England because England was losing so many ships because of the German submarines, right. So yes, we were talking about it, but never thinking that we would be involved.

[Break in interview]

Interviewer: So we left off, it was December 7, 1941, and you, you were telling me about—.

Kone: It was a Sunday, right?

Interviewer: It was.

Kone: And I forget—we were in the boardinghouse I think we were having lunch or dinner, lunch must've been right—when the news came what happened in Pearl Harbor, right. So—.

Interviewer: You mentioned you were dating your girlfriend at the time.

Kone: Yes, yes. [laughs] Very interesting. There was a lady who ran this boardinghouse right overlooking Lake Michigan. It was one of those big old-fashioned houses. And she rented rooms and she also served meals. And I think we paid like for the whole week, \$7.50. [laughs] And for dinner, there would be about twelve-fourteen of us having dinner. And, so at different times of day, different people would be at, at the boardinghouse. And I think—I forget exactly where we were, in the living room I believe, and they had the radio on—and that’s how we heard about it, right.

Interviewer: So, what did you, what did you think? What did you feel when you heard about it?

Kone: Well, we were all in a state of shock. We didn’t think Japan would do anything like that—particularly with where we were in Pearl Harbor with all our battleships down there. And—but, but well planned, obviously. And they were very successful. They sunk all of our battleships—destroyed them—as they thought they did. And then right away we—Roosevelt declared war on Japan. And then we started talk more how—And the draft—I think we had a draft at that time too. And I didn’t want to be drafted. And so, we, we—I had a discussion with my girlfriend at the time. Her name was Marjorie. And I said, “I think I’m going to go back home and enlist. And find out what my father did in World War I.” He was in the Navy in World War I. And see what he would say, and so on. So, I did. I left at that particular time—maybe a month or two later—and went back to Baltimore and talked to my dad. And for some strange reason, we decided I should go in the Marine Corps. [laughs] So, I went down and enlisted, and they accepted me, and I went to boot camp.

Interviewer: Now you were—what year in college were you at this point?

Kone: This was the first year.

Interviewer: First year.

Kone: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: So, so you mentioned your father was in the Navy, and, and you had uncles who had been in the Army?

Kone: I had two uncles, and they were, they were later be in the Army, right.

Interviewer: And so you received your orders to report to boot camp. How did that come to you? How did you get that information about where and when to report?

Kone: Well, you mean like in the recruiting stations? Oh, downtown in Baltimore they had recruiting stations; and I went down and enlisted at that particular point, right.

Interviewer: And did you spend any time with your family before you reported to, to boot camp?

Kone: Oh yes, yes. I guess a couple months. Yeah, a couple months at least. And then had notification where to report downtown in Baltimore. And they put us on a train in Baltimore and went to Washington D.C. And then we boarded another train in Washington and went to Parris Island, South Carolina.

Interviewer: So, what were your first impressions of Parris Island?

Kone: I guess the first impression was, “What the hell am I doing in a place like this,” right. And—‘cause they were yelling at us right away—the drill instructors. And then, then they issued us uniforms, helmets and shoes, and we’d have to hold a bucket of sand, and then they’d look down at our feet and that’s the kind of shoes we got, that size. Whether they fit or not, that’s what you got. And I think the thing I remem—remember most about just going to Parris Island was the fact that the drill sergeants said, “Now we have you.” [laughs] “Now you’re ours.” And then they did from then on. It was really very difficult going through Parris Island, right.¹

Interviewer: And so how long were you at Parris Island?

Kone: Oh, I imagine we were there about eight weeks.

Interviewer: And from there you went to, to Camp—

Kone: I went to the rifle range. We went to the rifle range for a week. Learned how to snap in, as they say, and learn all the positions—prone, kneeling, sitting, off-hand. And then from there we had no leave, nothing. We went right to San Diego, and we helped load the battle—not battleships—but the freighters. And we learned to ride, in the afternoon, how to come down cargo nets. First of all, we did just to adjust to our uniforms on, and then we’d go down with rifles, then we’d go down with packs, and then we would go down with all the equipment that we land with. We didn’t know what that was gonna be, so that was about a forty-fifty pound sack that went on your back going down these cargo nets. So, we learned to do that. And after the ship was loaded, we left San Diego and off to the islands.

Interviewer: Had you ever been on a big ship like that before?

Kone: No, I never had. No, no.

Interviewer: And so this was 1942.

¹ Parris Island became an official Marine Corps Recruit Depot in 1915. Marines were first assigned to Parris Island in 1891 as a small security detachment.

Kone: Yes, right. Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: So what was life like onboard the ship while you were traveling?

Kone: Well, in, in the service, you sort of lose contact with different people because you count off by numbers—one, two, three, four—and number ones go here, and number twos go there, number threes go here. And so the people I was with, we were separated aboard ship. And then this one day we lined up, and we went through the one, two, three, fours again. And I forget what my number happened to be, but they said “Alright, all number two step over here.” And now they said, “Now you’re machine gunners.” So, from there on in the ship, I learned all about how to fire machine gun, right.

Interviewer: Was there, was there any kind of social life on the, on the ship? Did you get information? Was there a radio?

Kone: No, nothing. Never had a radio on, right, you know. We just crisscrossed—zig-zagged I guess—until we landed. And then we were, we were training for later on in other islands, right.

Interviewer: So where was the first place that you landed?

Kone: The first place was Pago-Pago, and this was probably the first time we were allowed to fire weapons real—with real bullets, right.² So we knew how to handle it, right. And then we were doing coast watching at the time. We were doing—We were in a village in Pago-Pago, and, and we would have to take turns going out for night watch. And what we would do, we’d have an early lunch, and then we’d cross a reeds [unclear] to where we had a machine gun nest. And we’d have to stay there all night, and if anything, anything arose we’d always have a weapon to fire and alert the other groups that we were with. And one night, this did happen when we were out there on, on duty. And it was a Japanese submarine, and they began unloading from their ship. And so we started to fire our machine gun, and didn’t—nobody did anything because I don’t know if our bullets reached there or not. But the day before, we had a reload the, the machine guns. The boxes that we had—they carried their ammunition in—and we didn’t know what, what they were just putting bullets in where they were supposed go. And then as soon as we started to fire this machine gun, we noticed that we had a lot of tracers. So, it was just a line from where we were to where the bullets were going, right. But fortunately, in the other part of the island, they had the artillery. And I think what they did—they must’ve had a gauge from where our bullets were going and where they were, and they could fire like this. And it, it frightened the, the Japanese their

² Pago Pago is the territorial capital of the American Samoa Islands. At the outbreak of World War II, the Samoa Islands were an important link between the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. These islands were essential to holding off Japanese forces because the loss of these islands would have cut off the communication link between the west coast of the United States and Australia.

battleship—or their submarine. Then they piled back in again, and they shoved off. So that was my first engagement with firing any weapons, right.

Interviewer: Did you ever interact with any of the people that lived on the island?

Kone: Oh certainly. Yeah. What happened there—We were, we had mosquito netting, but we didn't have any of the bars that you put up, and you put the netting over these bars to make sure that you're covered. So we were ordered to go out and get some sticks. So we went out and started looking around for some sticks, and we thought we'd work on our, our, our bunks—sacks—what we call them. And we brought, and what we thought would be first—would work properly. But lo-and-behold, the fire—the talking chief was a, was alerted to what we were doing. And we were told nobody's gonna talk to us the rest of the time we were here. So we had to go to them and apologize for cutting in, in their harvest patches I guess, or whatever it was. And so, we apologized. And, and after that they said, "Anything you want, we'll bring you." So, they brought us bananas, and they brought us coconuts. You just ask for it, and they'd do that for us now, but we learned you don't go out and just cut down whatever you want, right. So that was our—working with these natives, right.

Interviewer: So, at this point in time as you were training, you were preparing for the Guadalcanal campaign.³

Kone: Yes, right.

Interviewer: So what did Marines have to do to prepare to go there?

Kone: Well we learned a new, what they called overhead fire. Bullets coming out of a machine gun will go so far, and they make what they call a beaten path. So maybe it'd be like thirty-five or forty yards from the, the closest bullet to the farthest bullet after you get this overhead fire. So the, the, the troops can progress while you are firing over their heads. That's why it was overhead fire. [motions with hands] But you had to stop at a certain point, or they knew about how far they could go. Otherwise you're, you're shooting your own men, right. So we learned to do that while—just before we went to Guadalcanal, right.

Interviewer: And so were you involved in the initial invasion?

Kone: Not the initial invasion of Guadalcanal. We came later, right.

Interviewer: So then—

Kone: We were probably the next group that came.

³ The Guadalcanal Campaign was an American military operation conducted between August 1942 and February 1943. It was the first major Allied offensive against the Japanese. The Allies sought to use Guadalcanal as a military base and communications route between the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

Interviewer: —when did you land?

Kone: Next group.

Interviewer: Next group.

Kone: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: So can you, can you tell me about what, what it was like? What the island of Guadalcanal was like at that time?

Kone: It certainly is no place you want to go for a vacation. A: Mosquitos are horrible. Although, in a way, they're nice because they take your blood, but they always deposit something there, and that turns out to be malaria, right. Then it rains three times a day. What else can I tell you about the day? Oh, everything was jungle, and if you were in the jungle for more than fifteen minutes without a compass, you can get lost. That's how thick the jungle was. Fortunately for us, the Japanese had attacked us because we had Henderson Field, and that's what they wanted. And of course, the reverse was that we had it after, after we controlled Guadalcanal. But that took us six months to conquer Guadalcanal. That's how much the Japanese wanted that because whoever controlled that island would control everything to Australia to New Zealand, and parts of Southern Asia. So, they really wanted that. And course we had a hard time because the—we didn't have a Navy. Our, our battleships were all gone. And I think they say that a Japanese battleship could fire their big guns like fourteen miles. So if you had a destroyer, I mean, they could blow it out of the water before it ever got close enough to fire at, at the battleships. So they controlled all that. And they controlled all the airfields. So we were either shot by the Japanese soldiers trying to come through the jungles, or we were bombed by the Air Force, or we were bombed by the Navy on Guadalcanal. So we really had a rough time over there, right. And if a certain plane, or the certain sound of a plane came, we knew if it was a Zero we were gonna be strafed, if it was a Betsy, then we were gonna be bombed. So, we knew which foxhole to jump into, right. So, so we were, we were trained very well, and we were waiting for them. But they really had a rough time coming out of the jungles. We'd be there waiting for them, right.

Interviewer: So eventually, did you—you just wore them down? How, how did you ultimately—

Kone: Well, that's what it was. They lost more than we did, right. I think—we lost like a thousand Marines killed taking Guadalcanal, right. So it was a tough battle, right.

Interviewer: And at that time, did you know about what was going on in the rest of the world?

Kone: No, no. Only what Tokyo Rose would tell us.⁴ We would hear it by radio, right. What was cooking someplace else, right.

Interviewer: Did you ever see newsreels? Or anything like that?

Kone: No. No.

Interviewer: And then so you, you, you had caught malaria pretty early—.⁵

Kone: Mm-hmm. Correct.

Interviewer: —in your time. So, what was your recovery like? What was it like to have malaria?

Kone: It certainly isn't pleasant. [laughs] You're very weak, and you hurt—you ache all over. And you're vomiting quite a bit. So, you wish you weren't there. [laughs] And we took our Atabrine, and we also had quinine. So today that's why I like to drink scotch and—or vodka and quinine water because you fight malaria with quinine. So, I don't want to get quinine in Atlanta.

Interviewer: So, after you recovered, what, what was your day—daily life like on, on the island? What, what were you do—what were your duties?

Kone: Well, because we had a machine gun company, we would be moved around quite a bit. Wherever they thought the enemy could be coming from, we, we'd move our unit to where we could have fire power, and reach them before they crossed over. Because they were so adamant about getting Guadalcanal. They needed that airfield, right. So we were moving around quite a bit.

Interviewer: And at some point you ended up helping unload ships. Can you tell me about how that happened?

Kone: It was very difficult for us to have any kind of food—anything, any ships coming into Guadalcanal because they had bombed them or else they could shoot them out with their—the Navy. But when a ship would come in, we'd have to unload it because there were no docks, and there were no porters or no—Everything was done by cargo nets. They—the ship would come in, throw out its anchor, and we'd have to use these little cargo net—little Higgins boats come out and they would unload them.⁶ But big cargo nets coming down, and dropping into our Higgins boat, and we'd unload whatever it happened to be—food or ammunition.

⁴ Tokyo Rose was the name given by the Allied powers in the Pacific to all female English-speaking radio broadcasters of Japanese propaganda. These programs were broadcast in the South Pacific and North America to demoralize soldiers abroad and their families on the home front. Tokyo Rose was never used by Japanese broadcasters, but appeared in United States newspapers in 1943.

⁵ Malaria is a mosquito-borne illness caused by a parasite that results in fevers, chills, and flu-like symptoms.

⁶ A Higgins boat was a type of landing craft used in amphibious warfare during World War II. Often made of plywood, these boats could hold a platoon of 36 men.

And then, before you know it, the ship was gone again. So we had to do everything in a hurry. You know, one, one day we were unloading—I was there, I think there were four of us unloading—we had our helmets on, cartridge belts, our rifles we had put in the bottom of, of the Higgins boat. And then all of a sudden, the ship was being strafed. And then the cargo net stopped—whoever stopped the cargo net—and it split open. And all the things cascaded down on top of us. And we had to dive from our Higgins boat into the ocean. Well, in the process of loading, I had a lot of stuff on my—ammunition—on my knees and ankles so we could store, store the stuff in there—our little Higgins boat—so we could take it to shore. And I couldn't pull my legs out fast enough with all these cargo nets—or all these supplies started to drop down on top of us. But finally I made it, and in the process, I twisted my knees. And I wrecked my knees really is what happened to me. And—but fortunately when the cargo net finally broke open, it fell over top our Higgins boats. And as we came up from diving, we grabbed on the cargo nets, and that pulled us up so we climbed back into our Higgins boat. But from that time on, my knees were terrible, and I couldn't perform my duties. So they sent me to a hospital for surgery on my knees. And that was in New Caledonia. [laughs] And then, from there they sent us to Austral—New Zealand—and for more rehabilitation and then reassignment. And then the next trip we were supposed to make was back to Bougainville. But my knees were so bad that I never—I had to go back to hospital for more surgery on it. So—.

Interviewer: So before you ended up in New Zealand, what, what was the hospital like in New Caledonia?

Kone: They were all cargo—they were Quonset huts.⁷ All joined together—welded together. And the floor, yeah, or boards—big boards—but they were cracked. They weren't always tight together. And when different—different animal—not animal, not animal—different. The sailors would come in, and different Marines, because it was a Naval hospital. Marines didn't have any hospital. It was all Naval hospital. And they'd have to put—oh, rig, rig the guys up depending on how they were wounded. And then once you get your legs—say you got shot in the legs—they'd hang you, pull your legs up, then you were in a cast. Wouldn't they make the casts out of plaster or Paris or some whatever? It's almost like a concrete. Well they put in maggots, and they would eat the, the dead skin in there. And as the maggots would come out of the cast, they'd fall on the beds, and we'd knock them on the floor, knock them on the wood. And with our crutches [makes squish sound], we'd kill all the maggots, right. So, it was very rugged times, yeah.

Interviewer: Do you remember food from that time?

Kone: I beg your pardon.

⁷ A Quonset hut was a prefabricated structure made of corrugated steel. Developed during World War I, the Quonset hut sold thousands of models during World War II.

Interviewer: Do you remember the food? Do you remember what you ate?

Kone: What did we eat?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Kone: Whatever they brought us. Wasn't great, but it was, it was alright. We, we survived. Much better than being in the islands. I mean in Guadalcanal trying to get something to eat, right. Like when you go out on Guadalcanal we'd get powdered eggs for breakfast, for lunch they'd get powder eggs with—the same eggs—with powdered tomatoes. And then the dinner we get the same thing, only they put in Vienna sausage. And nobody'd eat it. So they'd throw that away. The next morning you get powdered eggs. [laughs] Same thing. So, that's why we lost so much weight because we couldn't get all of the food we needed. The ships couldn't last that long in the, in the little harbors that they had.

Interviewer: So, during this time when you were at the hospital and then, and then possibly when you were in New Zealand, did you get to communicate with your family at all? Did you, did you send or receive any letters?

Kone: Oh yes, yes. Once upon a time I got about twenty-five letters from my girlfriend at the time. Yeah. She wrote everyday. And of course, on the island, on Guadalcanal, we didn't, we didn't get any of the mail at all. But in New Zealand, I got at least twenty-something letters. And of course, everybody in my squad, they'd all pick up my letters because when they're delivering them somebody would always stand on a box of ammunition or something and call your name out, and just throw the letter, right. So every time "Kone, Kone, Kone, Kone"—so the squad would pick up my letters, and of course they'd start reading them, right. And they'd always come and say "Harry, you know what, you've got to marry this girl." [laughs] "She loves you." I said, "Thank you for reading my mail." [laughs] So, but days, days like that make it worthwhile, the comradery was there. Everybody was—we were, we were all one. Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you remember any of your, of your comrades in particular?

Kone: Did they do what?

Interviewer: Did any, did any them—did you keep in touch with any of them?

Kone: No. We, we—After Bougainville I think most everybody I knew was dead. You know, so nobody that I contacted really.⁸ So—.

Interviewer: So why was this battle of Bougainville so important? Why were they training you to go back there?

⁸ The Bougainville Campaign was a series of Naval and land battles between the United States and the Empire of Japan during World War II.

Kone: Because, that's the way they planned it—MacArthur and Nimitz—I guess. MacArthur was going to go into New Guinea, and then they were going to go into the Philippines, and then they were going to go into Japan, right. And the Navy—because of the ships—they, they would go up on the islands. So that's—the Army went one way, and the Marines went the other way. That's why we were in all the islands, 'cause we needed the airfields.

Interviewer: Can you describe what the fighting was like in Bougainville?

Kone: The what is what?

Interviewer: Fighting. What, what was it like to fight there? What was the battle like?

Kone: It—What can I tell you about that? I—you, you, your mind goes blank after awhile, and you know what you have to do, what you were trained to do. And, you know, you do what you have to. It's, it's— [sigh] it's very difficult to talk about it, right.

Interviewer: Now your legs had been injured previously. Did, did that play a role in, in how the battle went for you?

Kone: Well, you, you know what you're supposed to do, and you know the man—or your comrades on the left are gonna do what they have to do, and those on your right. And that, that's why in the Marine Corps we have that *Semper Fi*, “Always Faithful.” You know what you have to do, and you know that anybody else on the other right or left of you, they'll do what they have to do, so.

Interviewer: So, after that, you, you ended up going back to New Caledonia.

Kone: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: So, so when was that exactly?

Kone: What is what exactly?

Interviewer: When, when did you end up going back to New Caledonia? Right after the battle?

Kone: Yeah, yeah. Right. Then I went there for more surgery, right, right.

Interviewer: And, and was that—was it successful this surgery? Or—

Kone: Well, they told me that I was gonna have maybe three other operations rest of my life, so. They didn't know. They do what they have to do at the time, and so. But they said I'd have probably at least three other surgeries the rest of my life. So in the meantime, oh—. Before I forget, I have to tell you this. I was in the

hospital ship coming back after they couldn't do much more for me. They said, "You, you can't stay over here much longer 'cause you, you can't help us." I came back on a hospital ship, and oh about a half hour before we came into, into the California coast, the captain made an announcement. He said, "In about a half an hour," he said, "we're gonna go under the Golden Gate Bridge." Well as soon as that word went out, every crutch, and every cane, and every—anything that they could hobble—went topside. And when we went under the Golden Gate Bridge, and everybody was quiet. The only things you could hear were just the motors running in the ship. And I looked up and I said, "Oh, thank you Father for bringing us home." I think to that day—to this day—that's the most memorable thing I have in my life. [coughs] Oh, I forgot my coffee.

Interviewer: Oh yeah. Go ahead and take a, a drink of—a little break to drink some more coffee.

Kone: Mm-hmm. [drinks coffee] Very good.

Interviewer: All these beautiful trees are contributing to a, a very intense allergy season.

[pause]

So you sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge, and this was your return home to the United States. How did you feel about leaving the Pacific?

Kone: Well, I was glad to, to leave. I mean, we zigzagged all the way back to the States. And then we—First place we landed, "Be prepared," they told us, "We don't know what hospital we're going to, and what, what floor I would be on, and what—and—"different little things like that. So anyhow, when we landed, they put us in ambulances, and we went to Oak Knoll Hospital—it was in Oakland, California—and our beds were selected for us. And—so when we got there, I went to my bed. And we used to call it the, the sack. And on there, there was a book. And I thought, "Gee, this is nice. The Navy's giving us books." And I picked the thing up, and it said, *The Science of Mind* by Ernest Holmes.⁹ Are you ever familiar, familiar with these? And I said, "Gee, I, I've never seen this book or heard of it, I wonder what it is." So I started to read it. Well it's one of these esoteric type of books. And I said, "This is fabulous. Next to the Bible, I think it's the best book I've ever read." And unfortunately I—we were only there about two weeks, and it's a real thick book like this [demonstrates]—and they said, "Please leave all your books and all the materials for the next group that's coming." There's a next group of veterans arriving. And I—then I went to the hospital in San Diego for more surgery down there. But then I, I didn't know anything about it until mon—years later—when we found out that the man who wrote the book, I could've heard him talk in California had I only known it. But nobody knew anything about Ernest Holmes, right. So, he created the *Science of Mind*. It was a

⁹ Ernest Holmes was the founder of Religious Science. His book *The Science of Mind* proposes a science with a new relationship between humans and God.

form of religion, right. Spiritual approach I guess I should say, right. But that was fabulous, to have a book like that. That of all the beds, and all the, you know, so yeah. So life is, is wonderful. It just seems growing and growing, right.

Interviewer: So, was there a difference in the medical treatment between the New Caledonia kind of field hospital and the—.

Kone: Oh yes. In the field hospital, they only do first, first class things. When I say first class—they do that in a hurry. They can't do a real fine surgery. Like me knees required more type of surgery than they could do in the, in the, in the field because they had to cover the wounds and sow them up, and things like that. Remove the shrapnel, and different things—stop the bleeding, and that sort of thing. So, yeah. So, they were different. But they, they—it was a wonderful medical program, 'cause I was like in five hospitals in California. So—.

Interviewer: And, and do you remember—did they, did they give you medication for pain or, you know—.

Kone: Pills to take, you mean? Yeah, yeah, yeah, yes. [laughs] Yeah. Otherwise you wouldn't be sleeping too well. [laughs] Yeah, yeah. Yes, they gave you whatever they thought you needed, yeah. They were very good, right.

Interviewer: So, after this time that you spent in California, where did you go next?

Kone: They—the last hospital I was in—In the meantime, I was doing guard duty at different places because they wanted me to walk around and do the best I could. And then they thought maybe it would be great if I went to OCS because of my experience in Guadalcanal and different places. And so I said, “No.” I said, “I don't think I'm gonna make it because my knees are too weak.” They said, “No, no, no, you're ok. You're mobile.” So, I went to OCS in Quantico. And we had to learn to poop and snoop and do different things like that to, to become an officer. And my legs just gave out completely. So, when I went to the hospital there in Quantico, the doctor said, “Son, you should've been out of this hospital a year and a half ago. What are you doing walking around here?” So, they discharged me, right.

Interviewer: So before—Just going back to the, the trip from California to Virginia. How did you get across the states?

Kone: Railroad, yeah. That's all they had in those days, right, I guess. Well, then they had airplanes, but most of them was just to, to put you—They, they had troop trains. So many people were—I mean so many soldiers, and sailors, and Marines were being transferred different places. So, they go so far, and so many would leave and, and then we headed up from California to Virginia—Quantico, Virginia, right.

Interviewer: Do you remember stopping anywhere along the way?

Kone: Only to discharge pass—passengers, right. No.

Interviewer: And when you were in Quantico, what were your, what were your duties? You were talking about some of the specific training.

Kone: Yeah, we were learning to become officers, yeah. Drills, and rifle procedures, and ideas of what you are going to face, and yeah. Now I'm very happy that I was discharged because I would've gone to Korea as an officer in those days, right.

Interviewer: So then, what were your memories of the end of the war when, when the bombs were dropped on Japan?

Kone: Oh, I, I thought that was a wonderful thing, otherwise they predict that a million men were going to be killed going in to Japan, so. You're sorry that, that individuals had to be killed. But, the Japanese were not famous for prisoner—for protecting prisoners at all. They were very cruel, very—almost wicked I would say—from what we have heard about the fellas who were prisoners. So I, I was very happy that it was all over, right.

Interviewer: Do you remember where you were when you learned about the bombs that were dropped on Japan?

Kone: The bombs on Japan?

Interviewer: The atomic bombs. Do you remember where you were?

Kone: I, I guess I was in the Pacific at the time.

Interviewer: Well, you were in the Pacific when they were dropping the initial bombs, but the, the end of the war. Do you, do you remember the moment when you—.

Kone: Oh! The end of the war completely.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Kone: No, I don't remember where I was. I really don't. But I must've been very happy. [laughs] But I don't remember exactly where I was.

Interviewer: So, you were discharged in August of 1945? Is that right, August of 1945?

Kone: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: And, can you tell me about meeting your wife? Where did you go right after you were discharged?

Kone: I went to Chicago, and we made arr—we made arrangements to get married in Chicago. And we were married in Chicago, right. So—.

Interviewer: So how, how did you meet her?

Kone: I met her at this boardinghouse. Way back in '49, I guess it was. Yeah.

Interviewer: In, in '39?

Kone: '39, yeah.

Interviewer: So this is the same girlfriend—.

Kone: Yeah, oh yeah. Wrote me all these letters. Oh absolutely, right. Oh yeah.

Interviewer: And what, what was her name?

Kone: Marjorie.

Interviewer: And so she—Did you write back to her during the war too? Did you write letters back to her?

Kone: Unfortunately, I didn't, right. And she told me about that too. She says, "You know, I dated a couple guys while you were gone." I said, "ooooohhhh." And she said, "Well you didn't write to me that much. I didn't know where you were going." I said, "Well they, they, they tore up all our letters. You know, they crossed everything out." And she said, "And we weren't so busy." And I said, "I didn't have time to really write," so. I said, "I know I should have, and I didn't." But anyhow, she was, she was faithful, and wonderful, and yeah.

Interviewer: And she was in—Did she spend the war in Wisconsin?

Kone: Yes, right.

Interviewer: Was she a student?

Kone: She rolled bandages. She rolled bandages for—I guess it was—She worked—At the time, she was working for the Cudahy Packing Company, and she was the—working in the, in the main office.¹⁰ A secretary to the president, she was. You know, you know. So she was in Milwaukee all the time, right. Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Interviewer: So you got married in, in, in September in Chicago.

¹⁰ The Cudahy Packing Company was an American meat packing company established in 1887.

Kone: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Who came to your wedding?

Kone: We only had twelve people: my mother, my father, her mother...and just friends from Chicago, I guess. So that's it, yeah. There were at least twelve of us, right. Counting us! [laughs] Yeah.

Interviewer: So then, was it very shortly after your marriage that you were diagnosed with TB?

Kone: Yeah, after about three months. So, she waited two and a half years for me, and she'd have to take an L, a streetcar, and a bus to get to the hospital, you know. And she'd come like three times a week, three-four times a week, right.

Interviewer: And what was that hospital like?

Kone: It was a VA hospital—veteran's hospital. Just like every other hospital that you've ever been into, right. Although, there are more paraplegics and quadriplegics and—Well as you—What can I tell you? A lot of jungle rot on, on, on the people that—and everything was like purple every time you passed this one section. They were getting rid of all the purple bandages, and so on. And I had to go there for something, it was on my—I think my tongue hurt because one of the fellas that I was close to had cancer of the tongue. Naturally, you look at him, and you, you, you can pick up cancer too. Now I thought, “Why is my tongue sore? Maybe there's something wrong.” So, I applied to go to this place where, where they—all the wounded people were. And I saw all these bandages. And I noticed the doctor was using one finger. She said, “Ok, let's see. We'll do that. And we'll do this here, and we'll do that over here, and we'll put them over here.” And all of a sudden my tongue got better. [laughs] Yeah, I didn't want any of those purple hands fingers going in my tongue, right. So, I get up and walked out, right.

Interviewer: So—

Kone: But they, they were wonderful. All the doctors were marvelous, and—Oh, oh one thing I would like to explain to—These poor guys coming back from Europe, or from Afghanistan, and all of the Middle East and over there—at night time, we'd get out of our beds in the VA hospitals, we'd get out of our beds and go to the johns. And we'd sit there and talk to each other. And, oh maybe three or four of us would sit there for a while and then maybe three or four other guys would come in like one o'clock/two o'clock in the morning they couldn't sleep, and so on. And then we'd talk about what happened to you. Where were you? And what was life? What are you gonna do when you finish? And I remember this one fella. He was some—I think he was from West Virginia and, and he worked in the coal mines—and he said, “You know, guys,” he said, “I am never going down one of those mines again.” And we asked him, “Why would you not go down there?”

And he explained to us all the problems that they had with the mines, and so on. And he said, “That’s not for me anymore. Not after being in service. And, and hearing what some of you guys were doing. I’m never gonna go back there.” And then some of the other fellas—the, the black fellas there—they would talk about the trouble they had with, with the white police in the South. And this one fella told us about it. He asked his wife to come down. And when she got off the train, he went up and he kissed her. And all of a sudden, the police started banging him on the back and hitting him on the head. You’re not, you’re not supposed to kiss a white woman, you know, in a railroad station. And finally the MPs were there, and they dragged the police off. And his wife was, you know, quite white. That was the problem, right. And then we’d hear stories like this—that what happened to some of the black fellows—and, and you realize, and you look at them, you know. And they’re bleeding the same way you are, you know. Their hearts are in the same way, and their blood’s the same color, and they have the same feelings, and, you know, and they go to the same churches and all this or something. So, I maybe—that’s what some of these fellows from the, from—They’d get together and talk what they did. That would help them because the psychiatrists aren’t helping them. And it would seem to me that if they could get together and just talk—this has happened to me, and this is where it hurts, and this is why, you know, I only have one leg or—. Of course the guys without a head, they don’t talk at all, you know. So, they don’t come and talk to you. But I think that would help them more than just talking to a psychiatrist, right. Just like I’m talking to you. And you and I were in the same truck that got blown up or something, you know. Anyhow that, that, I think that helped tremendously.

Interviewer: That helped you—.

Kone: Yeah.

Interviewer: —and, and the, the—.

Kone: Yeah.

Interviewer: —and the other veterans in the hospital.

Kone: Yes.

Interviewer: And, and you had mentioned you, you also became a DJ for the hospital radio. Did you, did—What kinds of things did you talk about on the radio? What was the radio like?

Kone: We would interview different people who came. The different celebrities. That was when Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis were still partners. And we came and talked to them. Bandleaders would come. Kay Starr. Kay Starr, a singer?¹¹ She was a gal. We interviewed her. Oh, so many people that—Different writers would

¹¹ Katherine Laverne Starks was an American pop and jazz singer.

come. Newspapermen would come. And we'd talk to them. Ask them what they're doing and where, where they're going, and so on like that. And then, we'd play records that the WPA writers created—different people from Hollywood would record different songs and welcome the fellas back home. And we'd play that to them. And then somebody believed that if you had something under your pillow—like a little microphone or a, a, a receiver—that you would learn, that you could learn a language. And so we put French on, and we put Italian on, or what—whatever language we had, and we'd play those. But I never remember anybody ever learning to speak a language because they'd be listening to these things under their pillow, right. And then they had physical therapy. We made—They'd, they'd give us parachutes and they would show us how to pull different strands out, and we could make napkins, make tablecloths out of the parachutes. And plastic—we made pianos out of plastic. Little, little teeny pianos. And we'd make purses and wallets out of leather. They'd teach you how to sew it, and all that sort of thing. So the, the hospitals were very good for us, for rehabilitation, right.

Interviewer: What did you do with those things when you made them? Did you keep them or did you sell them?

Kone: Oh, some. In fact, when you see a great big sergeant knitting [laughs], and they made little booties, and they'd make—well, I don't know what they'd make—little pillows, I guess, and things, yeah. And here they are knitting [laughs], you know. You know, I never learned to knit, right. I made a couple wallets and some things like that, you know. Well you give them to people because didn't cost us anything for the material. It all came from the VA. And some things they were so nice, so they put them in the little place where they sold, you know, coffee—food—and things like that—for visitors. And they'd buy them. They'd buy these things—wallets and purses. [drinks coffee]

Interviewer: So, while you were in the hospital, what were you—what were your hopes and dreams for the future? What were you thinking about that you wanted to do next?

Kone: Well one nice thing. The University of Wisconsin was working with the Army or—yeah, I guess it was the Army—and they would give, give courses. And I took a whole year of English—English literature from the University of Wisconsin from USAF- United States Armed Forces, something or other.

Interviewer: While you were in the hospital?

Kone: While I was in the hospital. They'd come right to my bed—right to the bed, right.

Interviewer: This was the University of Wisconsin? Or the University of Chicago?

Kone: That, that was from the University of Wisconsin, right.

Interviewer: And so then when you, when you did get out, you, you went back to complete your undergraduate degree at, at—.

Kone: At Northwestern.

Interviewer: And how did you obtain your GI Bill benefits to do that? How did you learn about the GI Bill?

Kone: Oh, just applied for it. And when I was discharged in Quantico, I think I was given a twenty percent disability right then, when I was discharged from the— from Quantico. So I guess I was already registered with the VA. And so, I just, you know, applied for it and away I went.

Interviewer: And did it give your—you and your wife—house, housing assistance as well?

Kone: Oh, they paid for everything. I got a—We didn't get pensions in those days, we got compensation because in compensation, they can cut it. A pension, I guess, is sacred, and that was from World War I. Those fellas got pensions. So, we only got compensations. While I was in the hospital, I was one hundred percent disabled, and then they kept cutting it back. So—but I guess they sent the bills to Northwestern and—'cause I never paid a thing. And I'd go to the bookstore and just sign and—Shit and get my books and everything. You know, all paid for.

Interviewer: What did you study?

Kone: Communications. So, speech pathology and audiology.

Interviewer: And where did you live while you were attending school?

Kone: I lived with my wife in an apartment building. We had an apartment, right.

Interviewer: Was it close by campus?

Kone: Yeah, I took the L everyday to, to, to Evanston, right, 'cause we were living in Chicago—right on the lakefront. Off Lake Michigan, right. Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: And can you tell me about your, your career after you graduated?

Kone: Well, let's see. After I got my degree, I went and got a Master's degree. And then I taught elementary school. [laughs] This one school I went to, the, the principal said, "Harry, you have to go to the second grade because the, they're having trouble with a teacher teaching—reading." And I said, "Ok." Said, "I haven't done this before." He said, "Well, you're a professional. You got your degree." He said, "Go do something." [laughs] I said, "Ok." It so happened that she talked like this [imitates teacher with lisp] because she had a lingual lisp, and of course the kids were trying to imitate her. That's how they weren't learning to

read. So, she and I had to have a long talk, you know. And I tried to help her with her lingual lisp. So that was my first experience of teaching in the elementary schools, right, right. That was, that was fun, right. And then I—high school same thing. We tried to communicate with people who had difficult [S sounds]—some had lingual lisps other ones had lateral lisps. So, we would try to help them, right.

Interviewer: And then eventually you became a professor as well?

Kone: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Then I guess I went from one elementary, high school, to college because they needed a speech teacher in college. And so I went up there and I taught English as a Second Language. And all my career in phonics was so important because when you're teaching a foreign language, right, how some do not pronounce the "th"s and some can't pronounce the "ing"s and so on. And we—I think we had like seventy-two foreign countries when I was teaching in, in Chicago, right.

Interviewer: Altogether in the same class, people from all different countries?

Kone: Oh, yeah. Just mix them all up, right. Sure. Right.

Interviewer: How long did you teach?

Kone: Forty-something years.

Interviewer: And can you tell me a little bit more about your family—your, your children? When were they born?

Kone: My oldest daughter, she has her PhD. My youngest daughter went here to school. Got her Master's here. [Kennesaw State University] And she worked in a commodity market for thirteen years. And I wish I could remember the gentleman who she—who was in charge of the financing department. 'Cause she liked him very much, and she worked him. And I think he now—he's associated with the university. But I can't remember his name really. He has his own business, and he's doing very well. 'Cause Barbara worked with her—with him—for a while. And my son, [laughs] he went to University of Michigan, I think. And he majored in fraternities and beer. I think that was his first year. And we told him he can't stay in college and do that. So, we took him out of that and then sent him to University of—Where, where, where did he go? He went to—Where did he go? Someplace down in Chicago. Anyhow I can't remember where it is now. And then, he got a job working in a sporting goods store learning to put boots on skis. And then he went down to visit his sister who happened to be living in Atlanta at the time. And he got a, a job right away in a sporting goods store doing the same thing. And then he went to a bank. I forget the name of the bank—Nations Bank I think it was, at the time. And he worked in lock boxes. You know a locked box is not a safety deposit box. That's not it; that's a different story. And it's when you send a check in say for—corporations, money for some reason, you send them a

check. That check goes to a lock box. And they'll—Once that's recorded, they can use that money to lend it to other corporations or to other businesses and things like that. But anyhow, he learned to do that. And then, then he learned to sell to banks. So he's out selling all this computer rigmarole to, to banks now. So—.

Interviewer: And what are your, what are your children's names?

Kone: Susan is the oldest.

Interviewer: And she was born when?

Kone: '50. 1950. And then Barbara was born two years later. And she's the one who came to school here. [Kennesaw State University] And she was the first gal to major in the finance and also in—statistics I think it was, right. And then my son, Stuart. And he—While he was working for the bank, they sent him to school. So, he graduated from Georgia—Georgia State I think it is, right. So, we have a very happy family. And we're all, we're all living here. They wanted us to move down from Chicago because they were afraid that we'd have a road rage or something, or run into some abutment or something. So, they found this apartment for us, and that's where I'm living now in that apartment, right. So.

Interviewer: And, and your wife—she, she passed away in 2010?

Kone: I'm sorry, pardon?

Interviewer: Your wife, your wife—she passed away?

Kone: Yes, yes. She's been dead about a year now, right.

Interviewer: But you're still—You see your children fre—frequently? Do you see your grandkids around?

Kone: She had one son who went, who went to Georgia—University of Georgia. And now he's taking—He took over his mother's business. Barbara, his mother. And he's—and her business now, he's a financial advisor. And my son, you know, as I say, he—This is his sixteenth job. [laughs]

Interviewer: And so before I ask you my last kind of question, I wanted to actually go back. I realized I didn't, I didn't ask you—Early on, you, you had mentioned that when you were first in school at the University of Wisconsin, that you, you tried to work or you worked briefly at an airplane factory.

Kone: I worked in a steel mill. Yeah. I had to, I had to—If I want to stay in school, I needed money—earn some money. So I—I forget who it was at the dinner table. You know I told you we had these like fifteen people for dinner. They talked

different things. They said they heard about this steel mill that needed some people. So I applied, and I got the job. And we were making fuel oil tanks for tanks—for Army, Army tanks. And our job was the weld these tanks to hold liquid, right—gasoline. Well after they're welded, they have to be tested because the weld doesn't always hold. And it has to be re-welded in these certain places. So I was a, I was a tester. We would test these by putting them in, in tanks of water and so on. Then they asked us to—who, who wanted to learn to weld. And because welders make very good money particularly in—Years ago, most ships—big ships—used to be bolted together. And that, that takes a lot of weight. They, they could use the weight someplace else. The Germans learned to weld instead of using these big bolts, right. So, the Americas needed to make all these boats—these ships—and if you could weld—overhead particularly [motions with hands]—you could make very good money. That is working for a steel company. And they asked us in this factory if you had anybody that wanted to learn to weld. I said, “Oh sure. I'll, I'll learn.” Well when you weld, you have a, an arc. And, and the rod and, and the—what you're trying to weld together—it makes a very, very lar—bright light. And you have to have some way of protecting your eyes. So you have a big mask. I think you've seen them. Right? And so you snap your head down just as you're making that arc, and the light goes right into the glass to protect your eyes. I had a hard time getting my eyes accustomed to hitting it at the same time. And I said, “This is not for me. I'm gonna go blind if I keep doing this,” right. So I gave it up. I said, “I'm not a welder.” [laughs]

Interviewer: And this, this factory where you worked, was it unionized?

Kone: They were in, they were in Milwaukee. Yeah. It was steel mill.

Interviewer: Was there a union there?

Kone: Yes, you bet there was. We were having trouble welding. No, we didn't have trouble with the welding, but the welds came around too frequently. And they—They have a man who comes around and checks you, and you're supposed to do so much work in an hour. Well, if, if it wasn't done—if—Maybe we could check five tanks an hour. That's all we could do, right. Well sometimes we couldn't do that many. And then they sent this guy around to check what was—why we couldn't do it. We were trying to explain that sometimes the welds wouldn't work. We could only do one an hour or two an hour. “No, you gotta do five an hour or you lose some of your pay,” right. But we went to the steward and we explained to him, we said, “We don't mind doing five or ten if we can, but some of them don't weld. Takes us a longer time.” Oh he said, “Ok. Any problem what do you, what do you suggest?” We said, “Well, give us—we'll do as many as we can. But we'll do ten if we can. We don't mind that.” So, he said, “Ok. Everybody in the factory stop.” And he—every—everybody on the floor stopped while he went and talked to the management. And then they sent this man around again who was gonna check on it. So he, he agreed that. Yeah. But you, you have to do more than five, you know. And only you do one or two, we, we can't deduct from

your salary, right. So it was one of those things that we agreed on. And it worked very nicely. So in my case, I was very happy to be part of the union.

Interviewer: That's great. Oh, excuse me. I just need to cough for a second. [coughs]

Kone: Oh sure, sure. [drinks coffee]

Interviewer: Just got a tickle.

Kone: You want some of my coffee?

Interviewer: Oh no thanks. I've got some water here. So I was curious in this—In the factory where you were working were there white workers/black workers all working together?

Kone: Yeah, but I don't remember there—I was only in a certain section. So, you only see those people in your particular section, right. So where I was working, no, I didn't see any black people working there. Not that they wouldn't hire them, but I just didn't see any, right.

Interviewer: And you, you had come from, from Baltimore and—Was Baltimore, was Baltimore segregated at that time when you were growing up there?

Kone: Yes. Definitely, yeah definitely, yeah.

Interviewer: I remember 'cause you, you mentioned that when you were in the, the hospital—the VA hospital in Chicago—and you, you know, you were talking with all different kinds of soldiers, you learned more about the experiences of some of the black soldiers.

Kone: Absolutely, absolutely.

Interviewer: Was that something that was kind of new to you? Did you know any black people when you were living back in Baltimore growing up?

Kone: No, no. No. But that's what really turned me on that, you know, that we're all the same. In, in fact, we were in a discussion at church once upon a time, and I said, "You know, Why—God, God doesn't make any mistakes. I mean, he's not stupid. Why would he make black people, white people, brown people, red people, and whatever else, yellow people I guess? Unless we find out why, maybe that's why we're having trouble. Once you find out why he did that, may—maybe we will—that'll give us peace." I don't know. So anyhow, that, that helps me out to do that, right. Yeah. [drinks coffee]

Interviewer: So I guess the, the last, last question I wanted to ask you is—What does, what does this military service, your experiences during World War II, what do they

mean to you today? Why do you think people should know about what it was like?

Kone: Well according to what we're taught, love is the most important thing there is. Most people don't know what love is all about. Otherwise they wouldn't be around shooting people, or killing people, or hanging them, or whatever they do with them, right. And I think we have to learn that, and that, that's the most important thing. And that helping people—being neighborly, being friendly—How can you improve society if possible, you know? Why do people have to have guns? I'm, I'm not opposed to guns, but—'cause I, I, I shot all the guns I wanted to shoot. Did all that sort of thing. But we have police, you know, we have civil serv—police—we have national guard and all these people who can—should carry guns. Why would a person in, in a city need a machine gun? I mean, you know, that's stupid, as far as I'm concerned. And I think the second amendment is sort of misinterpreted. Remember in those days, they didn't have rifles. A rifle is different than a musket. You understand why about the grooves in the rifle? Ok. It would take you a minute to reload after you shot once, to reload, right. Today, what? You have a, a machine gun go to a movie house, and you, you can shoot like sixteen bullets in a couple seconds. So why do you need rifles? I mean, yes, let's all go back to muskets. Everybody's entitled to a musket. [laughs] In those days, you had to go out and shoot deer. You had to shoot elephants—not elephants—turkeys, and things like that, you know. Maybe there were Indians attacking you or something, but we, we don't have that anymore. So why do you need a machine gun? So.

Interviewer: So do you think that learning about World War II and learning about veteran's experiences can, can help people put it all in perspective?

Kone: Well everybody is different. We all have a mind. God created us so that we have wonderful minds, and we should use them. And so you have to make your decis—You may believe something that I don't believe, but I don't say you're wrong. I'm not gonna go shoot you 'cause you're not—you don't believe my, my beliefs. So we have to learn that we all are different. But we're all one because we've been created by God I suppose. So but, I think our job in life now is to try to make peace, and be neighborly, yeah.

Interviewer: Do you, do you want to, to show us your Marine hat, hat that you brought in?

Kone: Oh sure, sure. [reaches for the hat] Oh here it's out. No it isn't.

Interviewer: Yeah, it's out.

Kone: Oh, it is out. I didn't know it was open. [refers to hat case]

Interviewer: Here you go.

Kone: Thank you.

Interviewer: And I can take that. [takes case]

Kone: [Puts hat on and salutes]

Interviewer: So it says Marine Corps—.

Kone: League.

Interviewer: League, ok.

Kone: Right.

Interviewer: And is this something that all veterans get or is it what—.

Kone: Well it's just what—Like you have the American Legion of every foreign war, Disabled American Veterans. They're all groups, and this is a group for marines.

Interviewer: And, and what does the group do?

Kone: They take care, supposedly, of Marines who are wounded. Now, like they have the veterans. You've seen the advertisement for the veterans? Well part of it is the Marine Corps League, right. So they help—if, if they're poor, or they're broke, or, you know, or if they're sick or something. Or they need help at the VA. So that, that's what we do, right. And we meet once a month, alright.

Interviewer: How long have you been a member?

Kone: A couple years now. Mm-hmm. I've been, American Legion, I've been there—I was with my father. So I've been there for sixty years, I guess. [laughs] You know, right.

Interviewer: So is there anything else that I didn't ask you about that you want to say? That you want to mention?

Kone: Let me think. It's dangerous when you have to think, right? Well I wish more people would go to the Veteran's Administration and see all these guys in casts, and wounded, you know, learning to—if they're blind, or if they're crippled, or one leg or one arm missing, or something. Why we, we shouldn't be like Islam, you know. To me, that's not a religion. If it's a religion, you don't run around killing people. 'Cause you're supposed to have love, and joy, peace. And they don't seem to believe in those things. And if you don't believe what they do, then they can kill you. I mean, how can you put a man in a cage, lock it, and then set it on fire? I mean, is that human? But that's—Just because I don't believe what you believe, that's, that's not the way to treat me, right. So that's why it's a, it's a

rough world because we're, we're trying to get people to love one another. And others don't want to do it, I guess, right.

Interviewer: Thank, thank you for, for coming and speaking with us today.

Kone: Oh, I'm very happy to do that.

Interviewer: We appreciate it.

Kone: Yeah. Right.