TWINING, NATHAN F.  (OH-274)  250 pages  PRCQ


[Note: Pages 12, 17, 56-61 and 97-102 are closed]

DESCRIPTION: Interview #1. [June 5, 1967; pp 1-61] Family background; war service of Quaker ancestors. Early military career: Oregon National Guard; appointment to West Point; early graduation due to World War I, 1918; infantry school at Fort Benning; Camp Travis at San Antonio, Texas; football teams; transfer to air corps; subsequent training. South Pacific, 1942-43: Gen. Millard Harmon; Gen. Ghormley; Guadalcanal; use of Air Cobras. 15th Air Force in Italy, 1944-45: organization; relations with 8th Air Force; bombing of Messerschmidt factory at Regensburg; bombing of Ploesti oil refinery; bombing of synthetic oil plants in East Germany; losses of planes; relief of pilots; night bombing by British units; relations with higher headquarters; accidental bombing of Gen. Leise’s headquarters near Cassino; aid to Yugoslavia, Tito and Mihailovitch; cooperation from Italian people; Col. Davis and colored troops; bombing of Berlin; German jets and rockets.

Interview #2. [June 26, 1967; pp 62-125] Summary of early World War II action in South Pacific; Guadalcanal; island hopping; bombing of Bougainville and Rabaul; Admiral Halsey. Extensive account of Twining’s airplane crash in Coral Sea and survival on a life raft. Succeeds Curtis LeMay at 20th Air Force on Guam, 1945; dropping the atomic bomb; possibility of invading Japan; surrender on USS Missouri. Air Materiel Command, Wright Field: force reductions after World War II; support for Air Force in Congress; development of Mojave Base, California, and Cape Canaveral; disposal of surplus equipment. Alaska Air Command.

Interview #3. [August 17, 1967; pp 126-191] Deputy Chief of Staff and Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force, 1950-53; Gen. Hoyt Vandenberg; Robert Lovett; approval by Truman of flights over Russia; CIA taking over flights after DDE becomes president; Congressional support for strengthening Air Force; missile program; JFK and LBJ’s interest in missiles and disarmament. Air Force Chief of Staff under DDE: military recommendations on “New Look” policy; lack of Army support for New Look; Maxwell Taylor’s encouragement of involvement in Vietnam; Air Force budget. ICBM program: Van Neumann committee; Benny Shriever; methods for handing out contracts; support from Congress and White House. Formosa: military support for Nationalist Chinese. John Foster Dulles; DDE’s lack of support for Nixon in 1960 campaign; detection of nuclear
explosions by testing the air; development of new airplanes; problems with the B-47; U.S. nuclear testing; Charles E. Wilson; Harold Talbott.


A name index is located at the end of the transcript.

[Columbia University Oral History Project, interview by John T. Mason, Jr., 1967]