

Interview with Vincent Speranza

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Excerpt from Interview # 3: July 20, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

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DePue: Let me ask you one quick question here. I don't want to interrupt you too much. What did you think about hearing the news about the atomic bomb, which ended up being the reason the Japanese surrendered?

Speranza: Oh. At that time, you know, (whispers) good for the bastards. We didn't care if they killed a hundred thousand, fifteen million—hey, it ended the war, we don't have to go over there and fight some more, and we thought that was a great idea. Now, later on, when you think... I don't want to get political here, but the people, the liberals or whoever they were that were saying, What a terrible thing we did, dropping the bomb on Japan. We killed a hundred thousand people, women and children and so on. We said, "But do you know how many more people would have been killed if we had to go and take the Japanese home island? Not only Americans—they expected another half a million casualties taking the Japanese home island. They also expected two or three million Japanese casualties, not to mention we were firebombing the whole island, the people's homes and everything destroyed. The atomic bomb not only shortened the war, but it saved an awful lot of lives. Those people who were trying to make us out as we were barbarians because we did this and that—hey lady, you haven't been in combat, and you don't know what they did to us. Besides, they started it. I'll try to leave politics out of it.

But what we felt was elation. And, of course, nobody understood yet what the real results of the atomic bomb—the radiation and all of that stuff—we didn't know. All we knew was a big bomb destroyed it, and the Japanese quit after the second bomb. That made us all very happy.