

**Interviewee:** Bolling, James  
**Interviewer:** Jack Sigler  
**Date of interview:** December 8, 2003  
**Category:** World War II  
**Status:** Open  
**Tape location:** Box #48

**Sigler:** Good afternoon Mr. Bolling.

**Bolling:** Good afternoon.

**Sigler:** You understand that this interview is being recorded?

**Bolling:** Yes sir.

**Sigler:** Okay. Why don't we start by you telling me where you were before you got into the service in World War II and how you got in.

**Bolling:** I lived in West Virginia at the time - coal mining country. The Air Force had a school in Charleston ... kind of a pre-flight ... academic courses and mandatory courses in about three different kinds of math and elective courses of English and chemistry and history, world and American.

**Sigler:** All kind of college-level courses?

**Bolling:** Yeah. I was sworn in aviation cadets in January of '42.

**Sigler:** So you enlisted right away after the war ... you enlisted just as soon as Pearl Harbor broke out?

**Bolling:** As some people say, the war clouds were gathering, and it was obvious that we were going to get into it. The Air Force, which was then the Army Air Corps, was pretty much depleted; they had nothing. I think that President Roosevelt could see what was coming and started trying to build up the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, whatever. I was given two months of leave immediately because they had no place to put me and I was scheduled to go to Maxwell Field in Alabama, over in Montgomery, but they finally had an opening in Santa Anna, California, and that's where I went to kind of a pre-flight thing before going to flight school as a bombardier. I went to Albuquerque, bombardier school, and from there to B-17 training in Boise, Idaho – \_\_\_\_\_[??], Nebraska, Sioux City, Iowa, and Wendover, Utah.

**Sigler:** That would have been, what, mid-'42 to early '43?

**Bolling:** Yeah, later part of '42. From there, I went overseas ... flew over to Scotland from Goose Bay, Newfoundland.

**Sigler:** Had you been assigned to an air crew or were you on your own?

**Bolling:** Yes, we were assigned to an air crew in Boise and trained with them for two or three months before we went into combat. When I got into England, we were given a short course in combat with Germany using the experience that the RAF had for a couple of years. They assured us that we wouldn't be able to do daylight bombing and they were pretty much true.

**Sigler:** Now, this would have been early '43 by this time?

**Bolling:** '43, yeah. I got over there Easter of '43.

**Sigler:** Okay. What unit were you assigned to initially?

**Bolling:** 379th Bomb Group.

**Sigler:** And so the British told you you couldn't do daylight bombing?

**Bolling:** They tried and they were pretty much sure that it couldn't be done. We were trained in daylight bombing to see the target. In the weather in England and Germany, we aborted more missions than we flew by far. The weather is pretty much unpredictable, and we had no radar. We had to be able to see the target or we couldn't do anything.

**Sigler:** How did you reconcile this problem?

**Bolling:** We would brief for a mission normally at two or three o'clock in the morning and then wait until we saw either a red flare shot out of the control tower or a green one. If it was red, we went back and went to bed.

**Sigler:** On your aircraft?

**Bolling:** On the aircraft ... have our guns ready and checked all the equipment, the bombs and ... everything ready to go, but lots of times we didn't go. The first mission I was on, we called it "Northwest Germany," because the weather was socked in below us and we couldn't see the ground. We dropped our bombs scattered over northwest Germany, and that was the name of the mission, "Northwest Germany," because we didn't know where we were [laughs]. We probably killed some cows. I'll never forget, on that first mission I saw these little black specks coming up and I thought, you know, those sons of bitches are coming up to shoot us. That's the first I'd thought about really fighting, but that was true. Germany had occupied France and they had several air fields along the French coast to meet us as we came in.

**Sigler:** You were flying daylight missions?

**Bolling:** Yes, altogether. The whole time I was over there.

**Sigler:** That's what I thought, that the British didn't like daylight but we did because ....

**Bolling:** Well, they bombed cities whereas we bombed targets. We lost our original compliment of crews and airplanes ... it was forty airplanes and forty crews, I remember.

**Sigler:** In the group?

**Bolling:** In the group. Four squadrons. We lost them all ... in my reckoning, all but three of our original crews ... and untold amounts of replacement crews. We never got to even know them because they didn't last that long. We persevered and three crews I know of, including mine, made it through twenty-five ... just extremely lucky.

**Sigler:** What was the greater threat - enemy aircraft or anti-aircraft fire?

**Bolling:** I think that the fighters were a greater ... the anti-aircraft fire was tremendous flying over the Ruhr and the Rhine Valley ... large industrial areas. They had 2,000 guns at a time shooting at us. In our training here in the States, we were taught that if you made a bomb run over fifteen seconds long, that you would surely be shot down. That did not turn out to be true because we were five miles up in the air, and when they're shooting at a moving target, it just isn't that accurate. They first tried aiming at all the airplanes, then sometimes they'd have a barrage. They knew from where you were going ... they knew what you were going to hit. They just put up ... all their guns up and make you'd fly through it instead of trying aim. Trying to make a fifteen second bomb run would cause your bombing to be less accurate. After two or three missions, we took long bomb runs to get accuracy. What we taught here, fifteen-second bomb runs, just wasn't true. We'd make a fifteen-second, we'd zigzag, hoping to confuse the ground fire. You're just as apt to zig when you should zag - you may as well fly straight and you get your bombs more on target. I made twenty-five missions.

**Sigler:** You're position stationed on the aircraft was down in the nose as a bombardier. Was there a gunner there with you?

**Bolling:** No, we had a gun. The navigator and bombardier were in the nose, just below where they had the pilot. I got credit for one FW-190, Fokkewulf, I shot down. You could never be sure of who shot down something since there's a lot of people shooting at it. We had ten people on the crew, so six of them were gunners and everybody's shooting. As I remember every fifth round was a tracer, so you could see where your fire was going. You were going one direction and the fire in another; there was nothing accurate about it. It was accurate for them, because they're aiming the airplane straight into you.

**Sigler:** They just have to point the aircraft.

**Bolling:** Yeah. The German air force was extremely proficient in shooting down B-17s. We also had B-24s, but they weren't in my group or wing.

**Sigler:** In your opinion, which was the better aircraft, the B-24 or the B-17?

**Bolling:** You know, I'm prejudiced since I was in the B-17. I know the B-24 troops say that they could carry more bombs than we could. I don't know ... I really don't know what the record is on ... you really couldn't tell how many was lost in B-17s or B-24s as to which were the better airplane.

**Sigler:** Most of your missions were over northern Germany that early in the war?

**Bolling:** Yes, we had not penetrated as far as Berlin when I left. See, I got back to the States in December of '43.

**Sigler:** After you'd finished your twenty-five missions?

**Bolling:** Yes. After that, things got a little easier because the Air Corps got P-51 Mustang Fighter escorts after I left.

**Sigler:** You didn't have any fighter escorts when you were there?

**Bolling:** We had P-47s, but they didn't have much range. They were big, heavy fighters. They couldn't go very far. We had two or three missions where we were briefed to descend over France to 12,000 feet so the Spitfires could escort us. We didn't like that because they can throw rocks at you at that altitude.

**Sigler:** The Spitfire didn't have .... ?

**Bolling:** They couldn't go the altitude. We flew around 25,000 feet ... up to about five miles.

**Sigler:** You could get up that high even with the bomb load?

**Bolling:** Yes, as high as 30,000 feet.

**Sigler:** What was the weight of the bomb load?

**Bolling:** We could carry two 2,000 pound bombs or divide that up by any number smaller. Two or three of our missions we flew incendiary bombs and two or three with fragmentation bombs. They were fastened onto a pipe. I remember six (they were about the size of your briefcase) frag bombs. They were fastened on a pipe and after you dropped them ... they had shotgun shells in the end ... it went off and cut the wires that held the frags to the pipe so they would scatter out. They were an excellent bomb to use on air fields because it would get aircraft that were on the ground and personnel that were on the ground. I remember one mission, one pipe got hung up in the bomb bays and I went back there with the bomb doors open ... 25,000 feet ... with my oxygen mask on ... we were un-pressurized. I got it loose and a shotgun shell went off, and I thought sure as hell that the frags had gone off.

**Sigler:** It had just dropped them?

**Bolling:** Yeah, it dropped them out. I'd forgotten about the shotgun shell. I made two missions on Schweinfurt, the two roughest missions that we had. Schweinfurt was Germany's ball bearings center. Two or three weeks before our first Schweinfurt mission, the girls in the bars in London told us that there was a mission coming up that we would fly, bombing in the day and the RAF would hit it in the night and the war would be over in three or four months – the theory being that if we got the ball bearings that they couldn't make any machines, etc, etc. They said it was top secret; only bar girls were supposed to know about it [laughs]. Sure enough, two or three weeks later we were briefed and warned about how top secret it was - "What you hear stays here. This is top secret, close the doors," almost to a 't' what the girls had told us. The girls were true, what they said was true, and if they knew it, Germany knew it, because the fighters were terrific. They came from Norway, over on the eastern front - everywhere ... all the way in, and they would land ... they didn't have too long a time to steady up. They would land and meet us again on the way back. You didn't need a navigator ... burning B-17s all the way in and out.

**Sigler:** Do you remember the date of that mission or about what it was?

**Bolling:** October and November as I remember.

**Sigler:** Of '43?

**Bolling:** Yeah. There's a club that's called the Black Thursday - that's the second Schweinfurt. To me there was no difference in the first and the second, but I guess the people that wasn't on the first Schweinfurt experienced terrific fighting. They formed a club. I belong to it, but I've never gone to any of their conventions if they have them. I go two or three times to my combat squadron and the group at the same time ... convention or ... not convention but reunion. The last one I was at there was three of us from the squadron. Since then one of them has died. I don't feel like going to a reunion again with that other one; we could have it in a phone booth. It isn't worth the trip. I'm retired from the Air Force; I stayed in. Some of the pictures here you see are an outfit I retired from. All of these people worked for me, except their wives, they didn't work for me. This one's got the officers and their wives, and this one is just the officers.

**Sigler:** We'll talk about those in a minute. You must have been ... you were basically close to London?

**Bolling:** Yes. Kimbolton is the name of the little town we were in. It was close to Bedford, which is north of London. When we got leave for a weekend or something, they would allow one or two crews at a time to go into London. It was an interesting time. It almost seems like a dream, it's been so long ago. Things come back to me a little slow. Our group commander ... eventually after the war, he made four stars ... was a West Pointer ... General Morice Preston. We went over with him as a ... he was a lieutenant colonel and he made colonel after we started flying combat.

**Sigler:** You're whole unit went over as a single unit? You didn't go over as a replacement crew?

**Bolling:** No. We went over as the original people. As we lost them, they were being replaced largely because while the Army Air Corps had nothing to start with, the production capability of this country and the expansion of the Air Corps in making crews, training crews, they could replace them as fast as Germany was shooting them down, pretty much. There was a period there where we were depleted before we got replacements for a week or two.

**Sigler:** In your later reunions, people that had been shot down ... any idea how many were taken prisoner and how many were lost?

**Bolling:** I know that the most of them, the vast majority of them, bailed out and were prisoners of war. In other words, it's easier to shoot down an airplane than it is to kill the people in there because they're smaller targets. Some are killed; we brought back dead people and ... cemeteries over there that was used for that purpose. We had our own chaplains and doctors.

**Sigler:** Was your own aircraft ever badly hit?

**Bolling:** Every time.

**Sigler:** Every time [laughs].

**Bolling:** It was shot up every time. Several times, half a dozen times, we landed at the nearest RAF base.

**Sigler:** At what point would they replace the aircraft as opposed to just patching it up?

**Bolling:** Oh, I don't know. We were ... had our own airplane, each group. That's something that the Air Force doesn't do now. Over there, we had our own airplane, our own ground crew that took care of that airplane. After we'd made about fifteen sorties, a replacement crew flew our airplane and they made it back to the base but they couldn't land. They crash landed on property adjoining the base. So that did away with our private airplane [laughs]. The ground crews were excellent in repairing airplanes. It was amazing how they could get an airplane back in the air after being shot up bad ... changed the engines. They worked all night to change the engines. In a way of speaking, they had it rougher than we were ... they weren't in the danger that we were, but their life was not easy. They managed to get those airplanes back in the air. They did it in patches, putting on whole parts.

**Sigler:** You say you finished your twenty-five missions by the end of the 1943.

**Bolling:** I got home in time for Christmas. I forget the exact date in December, but I got home in December of '43. I elected to stay in the Air Force.

**Sigler:** Would they have released you at that point?

**Bolling:** No.

**Sigler:** Because war was still on.

**Bolling:** No, they sent me to instructor's school in Midland, Texas. From there, to Sebring, Florida, checking out pilots in autopilot. We were the first outfit to go overseas that went overseas with autopilot capability. Up until that time, the corrections that the bombardier put into the airplane, the pilot followed the needle to straighten the airplane up to the directions the bombardier wants it. With autopilot, the controls of the airplane are hooked to the Norden bombsight, so when you make a correction, the airplane makes that correction.

**Sigler:** So you actually flew the aircraft for the battle approach.

**Bolling:** As far as your direction is concerned; the fore and aft didn't have anything to do with the airplane.

**Sigler:** So you went back and trained people for the rest of the war.

**Bolling:** Well, several jobs. I did work at Sebring, then I worked in supply a while. Then I went to radar navigation school and from there I went into B-36s, tremendous, big bombers. At that time, it was the only threat we had against the Soviet Union.

**Sigler:** That came on in service when? The late '40s?

**Bolling:** Yes, I got into it in 1949 until about '57 in B-36s.

**Sigler:** Still a bombardier?

**Bolling:** Yeah. Well, with radar and navigation. You do all of that.

**Sigler:** That's right. They cut down the crews considerably from the ....

**Bolling:** But it was a pressurized airplane. We kind of liked that. While we were in combat, normally it was about forty below at 25,000. If it was forty below out there it was forty below inside. The gunners were more exposed to the weather temperatures because the waist gunners that went on each side ... just a big open hatch and that slipstream [?? 324] of the airplane and forty degrees ... how they made it I don't know.

**Sigler:** Did they have heated flight suits?

**Bolling:** They had electric ones if they didn't get them shot down. Also the tail gunner was back there. There was a little protection for the navigators, bombardiers, and the pilots that they didn't have that slipstream hitting them at extremely low temperature. It was an interesting time. I guess there was never anything like it before or after. Aircraft after the B-17 were

pressurized.

**Sigler:** Then you went to jet engines.

**Bolling:** And B-52s. I went from B-36s to B-52s. Other jobs I had was commander of a airborne missile outfit. I was deputy wing commander for operations, B-52s, and KC-135 tankers. I retired in 1966.

**Sigler:** So twenty-five years.

**Bolling:** It was an interesting career. I always felt like that we deserved our pay because I was always confident that we could do the job. Nuclear, conventional, whatever - we had the capability to do anything and we had the people that were capable of doing it. We had outstanding combat crews, I think, in all three airplanes that I was in, B-17s, B-36s, and B-52s.

**Sigler:** Did you fly in Korea?

**Bolling:** No. The B-36 was the only threat at that time that we had to forestall the Soviet Union. They didn't send them into Korea for that reason. They had to be on alert and ready to go ....

**Sigler:** Based in fields here in the United States?

**Bolling:** We had more of them, more different kinds of airplanes in Vietnam, so B-52s were used in Vietnam.

**Sigler:** The strategic problem had changed a little bit by then, too.

**Bolling:** Oh, yeah. Well, Russia got so we could get along with them.

**Sigler:** After some matter of speaking, at least.

**Bolling:** It seems now it would be Putin ... we seem to be getting along with him pretty good.

**Sigler:** Going back over your World War II experience, what's the one thing that comes to mind first, the one thing you think was most significant.

**Bolling:** The losses, I guess. That sticks in your mind. The people you knew that were lost, good friends. The briefings, so many of them that you didn't take off. That was kind of aggravating, to get all dressed up and ready to go and then you can't go. We wanted to go once we got out there, because we wanted to get our twenty-five missions. The first crew in the group to make twenty-five missions, Walter Eweur was the pilot, Conway was the bombardier ... they got killed. They would have been the first crew to finish twenty-five. In the briefing to take off

that morning, they had Walter Eweur's crew highlighted – first crew in the group to make twenty-five mission. But they only got over there.

**Sigler:** To go back to your talk about the raids of the ball bearings factories – you said even the bar girls knew it was coming up a month in advance. I've talked to other people, people who have been shot down, for example, who talked about German interrogators being able to give them their unit and huge amount of information. Why did the Germans have such good intelligence? How did they do it?

**Bolling:** I don't know. Those European countries, England, France, and so forth, they all seem to specialize in intelligence. One reason, I suppose, being that they're all bunched over there together, and we're so isolated over here. Maybe that's the reason that we haven't been as proficient in intelligence. Germany was extremely good at it, and the Russians are famous for intelligence spies.

**Sigler:** I've always been surprised how good German intelligence was about our Air Force in the Second World War.

**Bolling:** A lot of guys would tell us what they knew ... they knew all about them – once they captured them, they knew a lot about them. At that time, they had in this country a goodly amount of German sympathizers. They had what they called the German-American Bund, and so from that source they could learn a lot, I suppose. We had a lot of Germans, naturally, in the Air Corps, but you could never tell, you know, from anybody else. They were all fighting the war.

**Sigler:** They were good.

**Bolling:** The German air force was exceptionally good and proficient. I don't know if you give Hermann Goring credit for that or not, but they had a Hermann Goring squadron in France ... a Hermann Goring squadron that had their airplanes all fixed up like pinball machines ... painted. They'd come stare you in the eyes; they were not afraid of anything.

**Sigler:** What was the best German fighter that you came across?

**Bolling:** I think the FW-190, but you couldn't tell hardly a difference. It was a radial engine, whereas the Messerschmidt-109 was an in-line. You could tell them apart at a pretty good distance from the fact that they are inline ... are radial. Our P-47s that we had were radial. They looked a lot like the FW-190. I remember they used to ... they would never point their nose at you, our fighters, because you're not sure what they are.

**Sigler:** Oh, I see. Our own fighters would not.

**Bolling:** But they would be flying along with you, and they would flip their wing up so you could see that elliptical wing, which was different to the FW-190. Once they did that, we

could relax. They're not Germans, they're ours. I remember one of our late missions, they were throwing it up, but they weren't throwing it up very far. Turns out, the reason they didn't, they weren't ours.

**Sigler:** Oh, they picked up our own techniques.

**Bolling:** All of us ... they all came in in a hurry. Another thing, when we first got started, the gunners had to clean their guns after they landed. Some of the gunners would ... or a lot of them, no doubt ... once we got over the Channel, the missions we'd experience ... they hadn't followed us once we left the land. They didn't follow us over the Channel. For some reason, the Germans knew that we were taking our guns out to clean them ....

**Sigler:** Breaking them down while you were still in the air.

**Bolling:** Once they started coming over the Channel, it wasn't very nice [chuckles].

**Sigler:** Okay, one last question about the anti-aircraft fire. At 25,000 feet, what kind of a gun gets that high? The .88?

**Bolling:** The .88 and the ...

**Sigler:** .120, I believe the Germans had.

**Bolling:** Something over a hundred and something would shoot higher. But the .88s were the mainline. I understand they used them for other purposes other than anti-aircraft. They had a lot of them, I know.

**Sigler:** They used them in direct fire a lot and a tank weapon, too. For years, it was the best direct-fire weapon.

**Bolling:** Speaking of intelligence, it's always amazed me the way Hitler had built up the army, the navy, the air force, and France and England and everybody else over there had to know. You wouldn't need much intelligence to know what he was doing. I think Lindbergh told us what they were doing, but they still ... I think in a democracy, it's hard to bring the government to put a lot of money into war materials. It's not a vote-grabber. I think that they ... France and England, particularly, tried to ignore what Hitler was doing. Chamberlain was a good example piece in our lifetime. He agreed with Hitler, strictly hoping that Hitler would keep his word. He'd already proven with Czechoslovakia, Austria, the Sudetenland, that he couldn't ... his word didn't mean anything.

**Sigler:** That's right. As a young man in the United States, you were what at that point, twenty years old?

**Bolling:** I was twenty-four.

**Sigler:** Did you pay any attention to what was going on in Europe before we actually got into the war?

**Bolling:** I knew about it. I wasn't particularly concerned. I think had I been in France, if I had been a Frenchman, I would have been concerned. We were so far away from it over here, I guess it's ....

[End side A]

**Sigler:** Okay, we were so far away, you said you thought ...

**Bolling:** The two oceans give us a false sense of security. I think that Roosevelt knew better. He started building up before we went into war. I think we were reluctant, naturally, to get into it. We had been that way forever, World War I, World War II, but I think that Roosevelt could see the future, the perils of Japan, Germany, so we did not get in. We helped England with Lend Lease, but when Japan hit Pearl Harbor, we had to go to war. It was Japan then, actually. But then Hitler declared war on us. We didn't declare war on him ... probably would have. He was sinking boats, \_\_\_\_\_[??] in that direction.

**Sigler:** How did you feel when you heard about Pearl Harbor? I remember how I felt, but I was pretty small.

**Bolling:** I had never heard of Pearl Harbor.

**Sigler:** I hadn't either until I heard it on the radio that night.

**Bolling:** Radio, and then the newspapers - Pearl Harbor. I was thinking what in the hell is Pearl Harbor? There's no doubt it was ours and Japan had bombed it. The world was changed. I thought that an inducement for Japan to do that, to bomb Pearl Harbor and start that war, was the fact that Hitler was running wild in Europe. It looked like he couldn't be stopped. Italy joined him, so I think that the powers that be in Japan figured if we're going to ever go to war with the United States, that was the time to do it. They wanted to expand, to take over most of Asia, if not all of it.

**Sigler:** Do you think most Americans realized that at the time, or just the political leadership, Roosevelt and the others?

**Bolling:** I don't think that we ... you know, we had no idea, I don't think, that Japan was going to do that, even though they had a couple of ambassadors over here talking ... mostly talking to cover up the bomb mission. I don't think that the people, up until that time, they weren't ... in this country I don't think they were too concerned. They were more concerned with Germany.

**Sigler:** Heard a lot more about it.

**Bolling:** You know, that was in the news all the time, what was going on over there. We have had a kind of a special relationship with England, and the country kind of got started with ... first people starting the country were England, Spain, France ... particularly in the Carribean. They were fighting each other there. France ... for some reason or another, they have never had good relations, exceptionally good relations, with this country. They helped us in the Revolutionary War, but they weren't helping us really; they were helping themselves. They'd been fighting England forever, and it was another opportunity to fight them on another front with some help. So, you could say they were helping us. You could also say we were helping them. Roosevelt was in office so long, that there were people in combat that never knew that there had ever been another president. He was followed by Harry Truman, which was a down-to-earth president. He authorized dropping the bombs on Japan, which saved a lot of our lives, and probably a lot of Japanese lives.

**Sigler:** Asking a question about your own place - while you were an officer, you were in training in the States in the '44-'45 period. Did you have any idea that there was something like a nuclear weapon - an atomic bomb?

**Bolling:** I was just trying to project myself back. I knew about them. In the B-36 program we had nuclear weapons. That was ... I got in there in '49. I don't remember ....

**Sigler:** Hearing about them until the first one was used?

**Bolling:** Yeah. Alamagordo put off that one out there and then they put off ... in the Pacific they put off a hydrogen. We knew about the atom bomb, you know, the low yield, comparatively, to hydrogen. But I was in, you know, in the nuclear program when they developed the hydrogen bomb. We had nuclear training and all of that; all the officers had nuclear training.

**Sigler:** Let's end with one last technical question. When we were using aircraft to drop the bombs, nuclear bombs, at least the originals were dropped with parachute bombs so the aircraft would get away. How were those aimed? How did you aim a parachute bomb?

**Bolling:** Well, I never ....

**Sigler:** Had to do that?

**Bolling:** ... the hydrogen with the parachute.

**Sigler:** By that time, the planes were flying high enough ....

**Bolling:** Those first two were firecrackers compared to what we had later, even though they pretty much obliterated two Japanese cities, which is enough to scare you now with the proliferation of countries that have nuclear weapons. It seems to me that they will be used ... several countries that have them are at odds with each other, like Pakistan and India both have

them. They almost come to blows. Other countries developing them like North Korea.

**Sigler:** South Africa apparently had them and destroyed them. Israel has them.

**Bolling:** England, France ....

**Sigler:** France, China ....

**Bolling:** But, I don't know. I remember, before World War II, that I'm sitting around with older people, and they were saying there will never be another war - people are too intelligent now. **Sigler:** You found out differently.

**Bolling:** Yeah. And there's some of that talk now - nobody would use those nuclear weapons. Yeah, they would. If a country has them, and they go to war and they're losing, they're going to use them.

**Sigler:** Even in my own immediate history, there were times when there was a lot of pressure on the President to use them in our country ... in Korea, for example, when we were losing.

**Bolling:** Then there were some statement made at that time almost saying that they could use them. It seems to me like ... I don't know who it was that made statements that implied that, you know, if things didn't go to suit us, that we could ... I think Curtis LeMay, for one.

**Sigler:** That's right - you served under him when he was chief of the air staff.

**Bolling:** Oh yes. Curtis LeMay was a man that got ... whatever amount of money was spent on his command was well spent. He got full service. He had a favorite saying that he didn't try to distinguish between the inefficient and the unfortunate - the results were the same. The results is what he, you know ... and he meant that.

**Sigler:** Well you've had quite a career in the Air Force.

**Bolling:** Yeah. He was in England when I was there, and he got to be ... I think he started out as a group commander and then he got to be a wing commander, division commander ....

**Sigler:** I didn't realized he served in Europe before he went to the Pacific.

**Bolling:** They sent him in to take over 20th Air Force, as I remember, in the Pacific, to drop those bombs. The crew ... I went to school with the bombardier, Tom Ferebee, that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima.

**Sigler:** Have you seen him since?

**Bolling:** Yes, I saw him about fifteen years ago. He died only two or three years ago. He was down in Orlando. He was an excellent craps shooter, but his poker playing left something to be desired as I remember [laughs]. As somebody used to say, he lost his house, his farm, his wife, and his bank account, but nobody ever ran him out of a pot.

**Sigler:** Okay. Thanks for taking the time to talk to us.

**Bolling:** Yes, sir.

End