



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK  
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

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**Interview with Clancy Zens**

**Interview Date:** March 2, 2004  
**Interviewer:** James B. McMahon  
**Transcriber:** James B. McMahon

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TAPE 1/SIDE 1

**MCMAHON:** This is James McMahon and I am with Clancy Zens (Z-E-N-S) for the Overbeck Capitol Hill History Project and I'm interviewing him on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2004. at 406 A Street SE. Clancy, welcome to the Overbeck project and we'd like to thank you so much for agreeing to be interviewed.

**ZENS:** Well, it's an interesting project. And you can always get me going on something that has a mystery to it.

**MCMAHON:** Well, what you did was, you got yourself educated on this and you saw that you'd like to participate. Tell you what, the Overbeck project is about the Capitol Hill community, the Capitol Hill neighborhood, and people who have lived here for a long time and have something of an historical knowledge to contribute to this. And we take people who have led interesting lives, such as yourself. So without further ado, Clancy, tell us where you were born and where you were raised and what brought you to Washington.

**ZENS:** Okay, well you asked me what I did before I got to this area. Well, I was in the service, and had just mustered out in Wisconsin. And then I went to see a good friend who had job possibilities. He said, "I got people looking for you in Cleveland, in the newspaper there, the Catholic newspaper in Cleveland." As you know, it's a first class one, which it is. He said a news service, not a publication but a service, a Catholic News Service also has an opening in Washington, DC. Well, I had not ever been close to Washington.

**MCMAHON:** How old were you at the time?

**ZENS:** This was my baptism. I loaded that car, top to bottom, and told my wife and daughter to wait a while and I would find somebody to put us up in Washington and we'll see if we want to stay in Washington.

**MCMAHON:** What year was this?

**ZENS:** Pardon?

**MCMAHON:** What year was this?

**ZENS:** This was the last month of 1945.

**MCMAHON:** Right after the war?

**ZENS:** During the war my career as a pilot was jammed up when I had a crash landing, and I was hurt. My eyes were blinded for about eight days. But they came back. I got sufficiently ready to get back on that seat in the P-39.

**MCMAHON:** And where was this accident?

**ZENS:** This happened in western Kentucky, Bowling Green, Kentucky. I was flying along and I had left Chicago on a little training flight. I was also bringing some equipment down to Camp Campbell, Kentucky, which is right across the border from Indiana. And all of sudden the gasoline was exhausted in one of the tanks. No problem, but now I'm turning that dial that picks up [one or the other tank] and it wouldn't work. So here I am floating along in this P-39 with essentially no power because it wouldn't pick up any gasoline. Well, I decided to look around and was up around 2000 feet and I see a nice cornfield. This is December of '43 and cold there, as you know it's winter time. So I said yeah I can hit that field and I did. But what I didn't realize was that the ground was rocky hard. And I just skidded (laughter) probably a quarter of a mile across the field into a grove of trees on the other side. And that's where the physical problem originated.

**MCMAHON:** It was a crash, huh?

**ZENS:** But I had advantages. This is interesting, I had been a Boy Scout as a young fellow, twelve, thirteen, or fourteen years old, and now I pulled those straps off of me and not so much leaped off. I took two steps and got out of there and rolled on the ground. That's an old Boy Scout trick, 'cause I was on fire. My face, you know, (Clancy puts hands to face to show that his whole face was burned) had lost everything because of this. It's funny how things come back. The wet ground helped put out the fire. So that was my preamble to getting mustered out.

That didn't happen right away because we were ready to go over to Japan. But we were among some of the troops waiting in different categories for an invasion of Japan. Except for the huge bomb that tore up Japan. And of course as you know the Emperor said that's enough. Well one of the things said was enough to send Clancy Zens from the states. By this time I was flying the P-51 which is a marvelous plane. But they didn't want any real action from that time on. So that was my preamble to this invitation to come to Washington and check in and see if I fit the situation on this news service desk.

**MCMAHON:** Were you a journalist by training?

**ZENS:** Pardon?

**MCMAHON:** Were you a journalist by training?

**ZENS:** Yes, I should back up on that. My training in school was in public high school called [Racine] Washington Park. And then to the Marquette University journalism school. Now this was quite an achievement because I mean this town and my family were absolutely flat. We lost our house. I wasn't going to quit. I said I know somebody that might lend me money. One of my uncles was the secretary of the Jordan Motor Car Company of Cleveland that made passenger automobiles, briefly. One of those that didn't keep going you know. But if you remember the work of Jordan, my uncle was their, I can say, Treasurer. And my father was upset at me. You know they were brothers, and here I am going to his brother for money and he hated it. No, I wouldn't do anything to disturb the family's equanimity but I wanted the money to get into college. And at that time (laughter) a year's tuition was \$225. So I couldn't afford it, I knew I couldn't afford it. Eventually, I would have to pay that back. Then I got a nice [summer] job working on the grounds crew of a golf course, cutting the grass and taking care of the physical side of the course. Which by the way had a name that you will recognize. It was named for H. F. Johnson. Well, Johnson is in business right now. "Pledge" and all those products.

**MCMAHON:** Johnson's Wax?

**ZENS:** Yes. That is big industry in Racine, Wisconsin. [Most] things that they make didn't pan out particularly in a tough market. (Comments about phone ringing in the other room.) (laughter) Well, anyhow, that was what happened before I pulled out of Racine, Wisconsin for Washington, DC.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** Now, the entry to Washington was interesting. Actually, I was taking the place of a staff member. [Jim] you said that you were Ukrainian and Irish. You know the writers on that news service and all kinds of writers around it were pretty heavy drinkers. I mean "heavy" drinkers. And then there is this one fellow they were trying to get rid of him. His tag line: you go to the Press Club bar, stand there, and stare at the patrons and say that "I can beat the hell out of you Protestants" and he made it funny, he was a clown really, ok. And he'd be overdrinking and now something had to be done.

**MCMAHON:** What was the name of this news service again?

**ZENS:** The Catholic News Service. Well it was it was NCWC, that's National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** It was in the building on Mass Avenue between 13th [Street] and Thomas Circle.

It was on the south side of that street and in a nice building with a statue of Christ in a niche in the front. I showed up at 8 o'clock in the morning in front of that statue and the custodian was also Irish, very Irish. Can't think of his name but he was absolutely 100% Irish. Well, I knock on the door and he lets me in. "Sir, what are you doing here?" Well, I said "I'm going to go to work for Mr. Frank Hall". He says, "You might as well go home for a little bit, because these people don't start work at 8 o'clock. They start work at 9:30." I learned a lesson about that. Well, we got along OK.

And I had an opportunity to do other work on the side, including a very interesting project. A good friend on that staff, he was the editor. They called him the editor even when he didn't write. But they put together stories and Bill Fanning was the editor. And Bill gets an invitation from the Defense Department. Overseas about this time the Russians were right in the middle of Europe. And others sort of surrounding our troops. But our troops were tired of this. Hanging around [Europe]. And they didn't want to stay there any more than they had to. So this program was sort of a scholarly course—to explain to GI's. This is not officers, either, the enlisted men were the main guys [to inform] why it's important for them to stay a while. To keep pushing back against the Russians who were pushing from their side, see.

**MCMAHON:** And what year was this?

**ZENS:** This was '46.

**MCMAHON:** '46. OK.

**ZENS:** And I wrote, not one, but two manuals for use of the troops. The total circulation of these was one million, two hundred thousand.

**MCMAHON:** That's incredible.

**ZENS:** That's the most popular thing I guess even against later [work I did].

**MCMAHON:** That's interesting to know. Were you living on the Hill when you were working for this publication?

**ZENS:** At this time I was desperately looking for a place to live for my daughter and wife and I forget. I think I was living up on Connecticut Avenue. Or just off Connecticut Avenue. I was astounded to have the woman that ran that place tell me that so-and-so whom you see going in and out—[he] looks just like you—a man with a little limp, was working with nuclear weapons. How can you work on the nuclear weapons here in the middle of Connecticut Avenue? Well it turns out she was correct. The National Bureau of Standards was further out, you may remember, out on the edge of town. Right in Gaithersburg, somewhere like that. But they would then pile their guys in a bus and take them [there]. They were

working on the nuclear problems, you know, making the bomb more efficient, I guess. And of course there was an awful lot of talk about the other, the bigger bomb. But anyhow, it was one of my first lessons in Washington: don't ever say that this or that will not happen. Because things are going on that you don't hear about. And that was a good lesson for me. But meanwhile I worked in the news service. One big legal situation was ironed out by the Supreme Court while I was working on that [NCWC] staff and being sent to cover, at the court.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** It was called the *Everson* bus case. Very simple, as I understood what it was. It applied just in case these busses rode along the line of path going from neighborhood to the school. If the bus didn't have to vary from its path too much, Catholic school kids were also eligible to ride—this was a startling thing for some people. The *Everson* case settled that. That the kids attending parochial school, if their [public school] bus line didn't take them too much out of the way, they could jump on that bus. Well, it's interesting that I am telling you now that I worked pretty hard on that story. And darn it if I didn't goof it, but it's true that the Catholic side won the case.

But William O. Douglas was one of the people writing an opinion. His final sentence of the opinion he wrote supporting the idea of Catholic kids going into that bus and getting a ride was quite Constitutional. Mr. Douglas' famous statement was the American Constitution was not disturbed by this decision. And it was—Mr. Douglas was a big shot then. His opinion that the Constitution defended and supported this idea of the Catholic kids going. But the sentence was something about the [wall] side of the Constitution holding against violations of church and state. And it's used these days anytime now. Anybody that doesn't like our side of the legal picture quotes Mr. Douglas. I have to admit that I did not feature it in my story. I featured what happened that the kids now could ride the bus.

**MCMAHON:** I see.

**ZENS:** But as time went on the real important thing was Douglas saying that this procedure did not violate the Constitution. He has some sort of stimulus in there. I guess you've got to say that Clancy missed the boat on that one.

**MCMAHON:** Was it going to the Supreme Court that brought you to the Capitol Hill neighborhood?

**ZENS:** I had to go every Monday afternoon to the Supreme Court's press room and it was interesting because the other reporters [covering] the Supreme Court were covering a whole gamut of cases. Every Monday the court would come out with many, many verdicts, but I was there only for one reason. So they talked to me in the newsroom, "Well Clance," as soon as they passed out the sheets, you know, of the

day's action and if it wasn't on there then they would roar with laughter. "Well, you wasted another Monday afternoon." But it was very interesting to cover the court. And that was the best—not the best but the most important—story I covered as a member of the news service.

**MCMAHON:** So you are living up on Connecticut Avenue, and you used to go to the Supreme Court, and you were looking for a new home. And was it going to the Supreme Court that brought you to the Capitol Hill neighborhood?

**ZENS:** No I'm sorry to say that I ended up in an apartment on the north side of Alexandria. I'd take anything. In fact (laughter), one thing that I would do is on Saturday morning go see Mrs. Nelson and say "Let me help you carry your groceries home from the grocery store." I was playing up to her.

**MCMAHON:** Who was Mrs. Nelson?

**ZENS:** She was the landlady in a rather small apartment on the north side of Alexandria. So we lived there not too long, actually. And then we moved to a place just across the river here in northern Virginia at the Crystal City area. Which was not yet Crystal City, but they were homes. Not just apartments.

**MCMAHON:** What year was that?

**ZENS:** Oh that must have been '48 or '49. So we were vagabonds, but eventually we found our home. Well eventually we bought from a developer one of his new homes south of Alexandria. It was a very comfortable house at that time. When I came around to selling it brought me \$15,000 which was great. It sounds funny now \$15,000, my god!. You know that was a good sum. But then I think I told you already the story of Archbishop O'Boyle, who was not too chummy with me. In fact he wasn't chummy with anybody. He was a mean, mean guy. Really, we might as well admit it. And in a book review—I didn't write it as editorial. Oh! By that time this Archbishop had asked me to start a newspaper, the *Catholic Standard*.

**MCMAHON:** This was Archbishop O'Boyle?

**ZENS:** Pardon?

**MCMAHON:** This was Archbishop who? O'Boyle?

**ZENS:** O'Boyle.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** And so two of us were chosen. One on the business side and myself on the editorial side. They were going to print it out in Indiana, Huntington, Indiana. *Our Sunday Visitor's* print shop. They had

gotten together with O'Boyle and made a deal with him that they would handle the printing in a certain way and give him a little break, you know. Well I said to the business man, we better check on this, the physical process of putting together a weekly paper from the middle of Indiana to Washington. We went out there and got some stories ready. They were sample stories and we did a back and forth using the ordinary mail system. But it was taking too long. And here was O'Boyle who wasn't yet a Cardinal. The Archbishop saying "I don't have any money for a paper—at least. you won't have to live with these people out there in Indiana." But I got somebody on our side, Bishop Hannon later. He was just an ordinary priest then, but he understood. We worked on the Archbishop, even though he was a mean bastard. He couldn't understand practical things. So what happened was, they lined up the kids in various classes to peddle the paper.

**MCMAHON:** In Washington DC schools?

**ZENS:** The Washington DC schools.

**MCMAHON:** Catholic schools?

**ZENS:** Catholic schools. It wasn't so much that they peddled in the class or even at the church doors. It was a subscription. And we get something like 30,000 subscriptions. So this maneuver, to take the paper away from Huntington, Indiana, and put it downtown in Washington. The print shop was just off Thomas Circle. Now, we started the *Standard*.

**MCMAHON:** What year was that?

**ZENS:** That was not just a year, it was November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1961.

**MCMAHON:** 1961?

**ZENS:** I'm sorry; 1951.

**MCMAHON:** And you were living in that house in southern Alexandria at that time?

**ZENS:** We had bought the house.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** Well, along comes a story. It was [about] a book that came out from one of the priests over at NCWC, about Mr.—Senator—[Joseph] McCarthy. [The] conclusion to this book was that [McCarthy] wasn't doing anything worthwhile to stop the domestic Communists in the United States of America. And I quoted—this was not as an editorial, just a sentence in this book review way back in the paper—that [the author] had concluded that Senator McCarthy's work was of negative value.

Wow! The place blew up 'cause O'Boyle had an old fashioned Irish [unintelligible]. And God, they were mad. "What's Zens got to do telling us that Senator McCarthy is not doing anything worthwhile?" So [at] the next meeting he looks me right in the eye and he says, "Mr. Zens." He shifted his anger a little bit. "It's time for you to come over to my side, you're over there in Virginia, and I'm tired of that, and I want you in Washington, DC. No ifs, ands or buts." That began the search by myself, by my wife, by my daughter and my brother-in-law to find something in Washington. It wasn't necessarily immediately on Capitol Hill. For example, I can remember doing a pretty thorough look at the hill that overlooks the Washington part of the Potomac, you know, the Palisades.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** The only trouble was that one that looked very good to us was just [the river] smell of it was awful. They couldn't get the smell out of the joint. It was damp. So we centered on Washington's Capitol Hill. And I remember we looked at one house was just a few feet south of [East Capitol Street].

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

**MCMAHON:** OK, Clancy, continue.

**ZENS:** Well we started looking at places on the Hill. And the first two that we saw, like that one on 6<sup>th</sup> Street, didn't please us. Nothing wrong with it, but it was just mediocre. And we were walking along then on A street right past this house, right now heading for that little group of commercial people in between the blocks, between 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> on Pennsylvania, including the real estate firm of Millicent Chatel. Does that name mean anything to you?

**MCMAHON:** Yes it does.

**ZENS:** Well what happened was that my wife's brother was just crazy about wood working. And as I say, we walked by this little street here, and this chap, Leonard Larsen—Danish [brother-in-law] came to the door and peeked in and he saw these floor boards. Now those are forty-four years old, buddy, so you can imagine how much even better they looked then.

**MCMAHON:** Oh yeah.

**ZENS:** Whoa! They were just A-1.

**MCMAHON:** You meant you went into the real estate firm of Millicent Chatel and she took you around here to this house?

**ZENS:** She just gave us a key.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** What had happened was that a couple, both working down the hill for the Smithsonian, young people, had bought the place. Either a year and a half or two years ahead. And they had done a hell of job cleaning it out. It was being used as a rooming house by a guy who worked in the library of Congress, an old man named James Padget. I'll talk about him a little bit later.

Anyhow, here we are with the key to the place that's pretty empty. And I said "Gee." We looked how big it was and after all we were only—my son, myself, and my daughter was coming along, but no need for a house that big. But Leonard Larsen, the Dane with the woodworking (laughter) feeling would not let us off.

**MCMAHON:** This is your brother-in-law?

**ZENS:** He says, "Don't pass up that house, don't pass it up." Ok. So, we went back to Millicent and said we want the house. I think we better not get into the pricing. 'Cause it so stunning.

**MCMAHON:** OK (laughs).

**ZENS:** Let's leave the price out of it. This was the bottom of the market.

**MCMAHON:** Clancy, can I say this? Cardinal O'Boyle forced you to move to Washington DC...

**ZENS:** Absolutely!

**MCMAHON:** ...in retaliation for you quoting an author, a priest author, who said that McCarthy was doing—damaging the country with his performance on Capitol Hill. Is that correct?

**ZENS:** That's correct. Except a little bit more precise. The book said that he was "counterproductive," that's the word that killed the paper.

**MCMAHON:** And this was not even an editorial?

**ZENS:** Huh?

**MCMAHON:** This was not even an editorial?

**ZENS:** No it was a quotation [from] the book.

**MCMAHON:** But is was a news article you quoted in the Catholic Standard?

**ZENS:** Exactly

**MCMAHON:** And he read it?

**ZENS:** Yeah.

**MCMAHON:** Ok, now good, so you bought the house, and we won't mention the price. So finally you are on Capitol Hill. Huh?

**ZENS:** Yeah, right.

**ZENS:** Let's see what happened then. Well, when I was, no that didn't apply. I'm going back to that business of the huge circulation of that pamphlet for the GI's. No, that was before that. But I did get some jobs. I loved to write. And I would take any job that was interesting. And I got a small reputation of "Let Zens do it, he'll do it right," you know. Well, the people who had worked on that series of manuals for the GI's now were largely in a group under Commerce Department to face up to the Russians and other Communists in Eastern Europe on a business of commercial [supremacy], you know. Its trade fairs. The trade fair system existed there in Europe a long time traditionally. But it was a first entry by Uncle Sam into the trade fair situation. And very definitely (laughter) at these clowns over in Moscow—we'll come to that. But anyhow. That's about the time I was asked by these people who remembered what I had done on writing the manuals, you know. We needed a writer for the placards on the wall, the small patter done by these overseas type people. And you're just the man. That's how, for example, I got to know what happened with Khrushchev and Richard Nixon. I think I mentioned it briefly to you. This was an episode that got page one in the *New York Times*. It was a small fair put on by us.

**MCMAHON:** Where?

**ZENS:** And not other—the only participants were American companies. American commercial achievements. That was the idea. Of course the debate is Mr. Khrushchev saying: "Well, yeah, it's great stuff and all that, but our system puts useful stuff in the hands of the more wide part of the population." In other words, we're the kind of people that are helping the common people. You are trying to prove what tremendous commercial capabilities you have. Our side is to convert all of that—well they didn't have a lot, but see that the people got the benefit. That was the crux of the debate.

Well here's Capitol Hill now, we're on Capitol Hill.

**MCMAHON:** You bought the house?

**ZENS:** We bought the house, and I am going to come back to it in a very interesting thing. But first I'm going down the path that we are at. Do it right now. A young man also working—I should say that I was

asked to do some work with that group preparing the commercial trade fair details. And I was sent to Thessaloniki. That's really Thessaloniki there, a Grecian semi-capitol on the north side. And who should be there but people doing different things but they brought down the kitchen that had been the crux of the debate between Nixon and Khrushchev. They just moved that thing out was all. It had run its course in Moscow. They had brought it down here.

**MCMAHON:** Oh, this is a fabricated kitchen that you can assemble and reassemble?

**ZENS:** Well, I'll give you one word and I'll tell you that it was the Whirlpool Magic Kitchen.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** It had a lot of, supposedly, absolutely modern things in it. And I [met] this young fellow. He's pattering around on his scooter—he's in charge of the thing now that it's moved down to Thessaloniki. And I forget what his name was—Ernie. “Ernie,” I said, “that was interesting what I see here. You had Mr. Nixon and Khrushchev arguing over it.” And he said “Yes,” and I said “Well the Whirlpool Magic Kitchen must have been quite something.” Well then he chuckled. The Whirlpool Magic Kitchen did not impress him. He took me in and we walked around behind the whole thing. There was a curtain obscuring it. And he showed me how human [action] and the use of the hands—things that they had back there. They weren't as dazzling as they appeared in front. They were, more or less, [ good stuff], but they were pretty common in terms of the amount of knowledge at that point, what a good kitchen could be.

And he chuckled and I said, “Ernie,” I said, “the Soviets are just known as tremendous spies and observers, and things like that. How did they get out of Moscow with that thing without telling Khrushchev and having him make a big fuss over being tricked by these human bodies that were detailed to keep the Whirlpool Magic Kitchen going?” He says “That's a good question.” He says “I don't have the answer.” Now Khrushchev came out with a bio here—what about six months ago, maybe a year ago. I'll have to check and see if he mentions that. But it was astounding that the Ruskies would let us get away with tricking the people of Moscow, see. This was one of my first—well it was my first—episode with that group. And what's so interesting, Jim, is the headquarters for it in Washington. Where I work now, at least part time, was the old Providence Hospital. Oh, it was a beat-up wreck. But it served as a place to put together a group that may or may not be around too long. And so I would work out of there.

**MCMAHON:** You mean Providence Hospital right here on Capitol Hill? The building at [2<sup>nd</sup> and D Streets]?

**ZENS:** Well, the building now is a block, an open block.

**MCMAHON:** It's a little park.

**ZENS:** But this is what I would do, Jim. I would edit the *Standard*. It's hard to believe it now.

**MCMAHON:** And where did you do your editing?

**ZENS:** In a building we owned at 1711 N Street, over in the other side of town. But at the end of the day, which is like 4:30, 5:00 o'clock, I would jump in that car of mine and get over here, grab a bite in this building.

**MCMAHON:** In your home here?

**ZENS:** In my home here—well it's only a minute away.

**MCMAHON:** Right.

**ZENS:** It was perfect.

**MCMAHON:** Sure.

**ZENS:** To do extra work.

**MCMAHON:** On 4th [ed: 2nd] and D Street SE?

**ZENS:** That's right.

**MCMAHON:** Was it still a hospital at that time? Or did it...

**ZENS:** No, no, no. Some other Commerce group had already taken it.

**MCMAHON:** Oh, so Providence Hospital had abandoned it by that time. What year was that?

**ZENS:** That was—let's see. Oh, I would say '56 or so.

**MCMAHON:** And this was right across the street from [St. Peter's School]?

**ZENS:** Because the program started to dwindle—the Russians decided to back off, and you know the gusto behind it fell down.

**MCMAHON:** So all the preparatory work for these trade fairs was done in a building where Providence Hospital used to be in some abandoned office there?

**ZENS:** Definitely.

**MCMAHON:** OK. I see.

**ZENS:** And these people now, as I said. I would work over here. The [*Catholic Standard*] office was over there on 1711 N Street NW. But I lived here, so here I am coming in grabbing a bite, rushing over to the hospital and working with these guys 'til midnight.

**MCMAHON:** Boy, that's a long day Clancy!

**ZENS:** I can't believe all the work I did, yeah.

**MCMAHON:** That's a long day, but I think it shows your love of writing and love of the work that you did.

**ZENS:** Yeah. But see it's so handy..

**MCMAHON:** Yes, exactly.

**ZENS:** You could either walk down there. Now they [also] had a kind of beat up parking lot behind it. It wasn't really a parking lot, but even that was available. And so my day began (laughter) a 8 in the morning and ended at midnight.

**MCMAHON:** How old were you at this time?

**ZENS:** Let's see. Oh 1957, born in '18. well...

**MCMAHON:** Eighteen off fifty-seven. You were about 38 or 39?

**ZENS:** Yeah.

**MCMAHON:** And your kids were growing up here?

**ZENS:** That's right.

**MCMAHON:** Were they going to St. Peter's School?

**ZENS:** My youngest daughter did. My son went to St. John's High School, and later to Georgetown University. But imagine working day after day, from dawn 'til dusk.

**MCMAHON:** You said it.

**ZENS:** And then they started badgering me to go overseas and continue some of the things I was doing over there. Well that was quite attractive to me. As a matter of fact that's when the break started between myself as a *Catholic Standard* guy and these fellows. And incidentally, are you now in the government service for a regular—you know getting paid regularly?

**MCMAHON:** Well, I'm retired right now.

**ZENS:** Yeah, well...

**MCMAHON:** But I was a government employee in various government agencies for 33 years.

**ZENS:** Yes, now this is just extra. But when I was doing work there as part timer...

**MCMAHON:** And this is for the Department of Commerce?

**ZENS:** Department of Commerce. Even if you only worked an hour in any fourteen day period, later on this stupid guy [himself] who didn't understand money at all that, here it's blowing at him. If you worked one half day you got paid for this whole pay period. Plus I also got four years of that previous military service.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** So my retirement [record] doesn't really tell you [all that it might].

**MCMAHON:** Right.

**ZENS:** It's just a break, and I didn't have any plan.

**MCMAHON:** Well it was a break for a good guy.

**ZENS:** Yeah.

**MCMAHON:** Good guy.

**ZENS:** But then...

**MCMAHON:** And you were a family man at that time too.

**ZENS:** Yeah, but then they—this goes back to 1961, no, it goes back to the Kennedy inauguration. And I think that this is the funniest story in the whole thing. And interestingly, here I am as a new resident of this house. We just bought it, and it was just before the inauguration, and it's a tremendous snow storm. It's one for the books. The historic snow storm of 1951...

**MCMAHON:** '61?

**ZENS:** I'm sorry, '61. I'm in this room probably and I had the fire going. The thing doesn't really take a real log, it takes that phony stuff. But anyhow here I am tremendously comfortable, I'm telling my wife isn't it great to be in this nice warm house when outside a blizzard is blowing, and all of the transport in

town is stopped. No movement by street cars or busses, there's nothing moving. But here we are being comfortable in a nice warm room. Well, the phone rings and what it is, is a member of the staff of the *Catholic Standard* back in a building used partly—next to Washington St. Matthew's Cathedral—and they are telling me that the Cardinal of Boston—I don't know his name anymore—is going to give the invocation tomorrow for the inauguration of Mr. Kennedy.

**MCMAHON:** Cushing, it was Cardinal Cushing, wasn't it?

**ZENS:** Was it?

**MCMAHON:** Go ahead.

**ZENS:** It could be. He's flying down from Boston, but he's hung up in Philadelphia, and somebody is going to have to read the invocation, because he probably is not going to make it. So that's what I was up to. I had to struggle with hip boots, then 17 blocks walking. Each way. It was just a tremendous difference from sitting down (laughter) there in that warm room.

**MCMAHON:** Right.

**ZENS:** Well, OK, I got the thing. They knew me as having that because [they used] the Catholic News Service I told you about before had sent out copies of it to the different papers. And said yes, I'll—if you need it—I'll go over and get it and put it through the mail slot.

**MCMAHON:** Wait, you were getting a copy and putting *what* through the mail slot?

**ZENS:** A copy of the invocation.

**MCMAHON:** How did you get the invocation?

**ZENS:** From some news service [that competed against others].

**MCMAHON:** And that's why you walked the 17 blocks, to this news service?

**ZENS:** That's right.

**MCMAHON:** The news service that provided [some] stuff to your office. OK.

**ZENS:** Now, Ok. So we have accomplished that much and, sure enough, the next day the Cardinal from Boston, managed to get other transportation coming down from Philly to Washington. I forget what it was—probably the trains, but the trains weren't running. Maybe a snowplow or something. But anyhow he made it. Well, you must remember, it was small detail but everybody knew about this. These

dignitaries up there on that platform in front of the Capitol making their speeches and all of a sudden (laughter) the podium caught fire.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** Why? Because they had to put heat in it, they overheated it, and this thing that I fought so hard for—to you know, walk 17 blocks and get it—caught fire.

**MCMAHON:** Right.

**ZENS:** I think one of the newsmen had a copy, but all of this ended up with a fire in the podium [in] the lectern of the inauguration.

**MCMAHON:** That was the copy that you actually got and you actually put it on the podium there?

**ZENS:** That's right.

**MCMAHON:** Who did you give it to, a Secret Service man or something like that, or what?

**ZENS:** Well I don't know who took it in back in that office.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** My duty was specifically to slip it through the mail slot.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** And it's word for word, see. They must have been proud of it you know.

**MCMAHON:** Yeah.

**ZENS:** But that was really one of the first.—well, no it wasn't one of the first—but it was a thing that Capitol Hill will always remember me and my problem of walking (laughter). Oh it was tremendous but...

**MCMAHON:** So we are talking January 19<sup>th</sup> and January 20<sup>th</sup> of 1961?

**ZENS:** That's right.

**MCMAHON:** Inauguration day is January 20<sup>th</sup>, and I seem to recall on television it was snowing even that day, and the 19<sup>th</sup> was when you went the day before in your boots up to Northwest Washington to slip this thing through the mail slot?

**ZENS:** Yeah.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** But that's when my first—well not first but—interesting things that you could associate with Capitol Hill.

**MCMAHON:** Yeah, OK.

**ZENS:** Because I was on the Hill and was sent away to get these things. But that's the part of the Capitol Hill experience that I've had that I cannot forget. That and the one where the Khrushchev Magic Kitchen was related.

**MCMAHON:** Right.

**ZENS:** That also was quite interesting. They sent me. Commerce sent me to Greece, they sent me to Yugoslavia, they sent me to Czechoslovakia, and later they sent me—not too much later—to Casablanca in Morocco. I spent a whole month there.

**MCMAHON:** And what were you doing when you were there?

**ZENS:** Well I was teaching the kids to do a good job of peddling from the podium [such as this stuff] we make in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and all that. Anyhow, the commercial side was, that was it. It was commercial.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** But it was certainly an experience. And as I said I would go over to the hospital, I called it the hospital, to work with those Commerce guys. And I was so proud of them because, you know, in Washington you get a lot of skeptics. A lot of people draw a paycheck but don't do anything. And this was just the opposite. These were kids, well they weren't kids, but they were fellows training for display and stuff like that. And they worked like mad.

**MCMAHON:** That's great.

**ZENS:** They were still working when I'd leave there.

**MCMAHON:** Those were your salad days, huh?

**ZENS:** Yeah.

**MCMAHON:** OK, tell you what—here we are in early 1960's, your family is on Capitol Hill. Were you editor of the *Catholic Standard* at that time? All during this time?

**ZENS:** The what?

**MCMAHON:** Were you editor of the *Catholic Standard* all during this time?

**ZENS:** Well, certainly part of it. Let see, how did that work? How did the split work? I left the *Standard* deliberately on exactly ten years. I had come in 1951 and—no, it was more of a ten year period of the product appearing as a paper. It was November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1951. And on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1961, I waved goodbye and said I'm going to the Commerce Department.

**MCMAHON:** Oh great, OK.

**ZENS:** Now, meanwhile at Commerce, I don't want to stretch this out. The program was starting to dwindle. They were making more friendly motions, you know, the two sides. OK, so when I left in 1961 it was not much point in going back to that very fine trade fair exhibition program.

**MCMAHON:** Right.

**ZENS:** Well, they snatched me up. I've been snatched up all my life.

**MCMAHON:** By whom?

**ZENS:** By the weekly magazine. The magazine called *Commerce America*, beautifully put together. They had lost their editor and they grabbed me.

**MCMAHON:** Great.

**ZENS:** So, that started in '61.

**MCMAHON:** So, well I tell you what. A lot of things happened in the 1960's on Capitol Hill here, the neighborhood. How did they affect you? You know the assassination of President Kennedy, do you remember that, and the riots?

**ZENS:** Well, I didn't touch something along the same line. General Phillips, head of the Space Program, he didn't go up there, he was just head of the program. He lived around the corner here.

**MCMAHON:** Oh really?

**ZENS:** And he was a guy with a conscience. He sent several of us in the neighborhood to round up a group of neighbors, and had this motion picture which were shot up there on the moon. He was the only one that had them like that.

**MCMAHON:** So General Phillips lived where, on 4<sup>th</sup> Street or 5<sup>th</sup> Street?

**ZENS:** No, on 4<sup>th</sup> Street:

**MCMAHON:** What hundred block?

**ZENS:** Where Dawn Winters is right now.

**MCMAHON:** Winters?

**ZENS:** Do you know the Winters?

**MCMAHON:** Yeah, I know the Winters.

**ZENS:** Phillips, If I have that right. Anyhow he lived there. And not too long...

**MCMAHON:** But he showed movies of moon shots?

**ZENS:** Oh yeah.

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

TAPE 2/SIDE 1

**MCMAHON:** Let see, where were we? We were talking about the mid 1960's and General Phillips, living around the corner and seeing those movies. So on from there.

**ZENS:** Well, let me switch a little bit to another subject which is very pertinent to the Hill. The sports situation. You know you could walk to RFK from here?

**MCMAHON:** Right.

**ZENS:** And my next door neighbor, who later died, he and I would get together and off we'd go walking to RFK.

**MCMAHON:** And what sports events would you see there?

**ZENS:** Pardon?

**MCMAHON:** What spots events would you see there? Baseball, football?

**ZENS:** You see you've lost touch of the early days. I guess Bob Short—it doesn't mean much to you. He bought, from Clark Griffith, the team that was shunted off to [Minneapolis]. And then he took over and just about that same time RFK opened up.

**MCMAHON:** What was the name of the team that was shunted off to Minneapolis?

**ZENS:** It was the Senators.

**MCMAHON:** It was the Senators. OK.

**ZENS:** And they did pretty well but they never won the pennant. I think they won one time way back in 1940, even before then. But anyhow it was so handy you didn't have to get on a bus or anything, just walk down there. You know. And here comes the end of the season and it was widely known that Mr. Short was going to take the team to Texas. Where it is now. And so [neighbor] George Turner and I decided that we better see that last game, the historic game.

**MCMAHON:** And what year was that Clancy?

**ZENS:** Pardon?

**MCMAHON:** What year was that?

**ZENS:** I wish I could say, it's in the almanac.

**MCMAHON:** Was it in the mid-60's?

**ZENS:** Probably.

**MCMAHON:** OK, go ahead.

**ZENS:** The Yankees were playing Senators and the game moved along, and I don't know if you remember the name, but a very powerful man named Frank Howard, could hit that ball forever. He hit a ball into the opposite stands for a home run that never varied from (laughter) absolutely straight.

**MCMAHON:** A frozen clothesline!

**ZENS:** That's right. He was so strong. But shortly after that, now George and I always had a reputation of being jinxes. We would go a game and something would happen. Well this was the most extraordinary thing. It's the 8<sup>th</sup> inning and the Senators are ahead, like 8 to 3. But all of a sudden from the stands, this was foreordained, somebody organized this, somebody rushes out and steals the bases! Steals the bases!

**MCMAHON:** Who stole the bases?

**ZENS:** The spectators.

**MCMAHON:** OK. Was this before the game was over?

**ZENS:** Absolutely, and umpires got together and all of sudden the team that was ahead, meaning the Senators, lost 9 to nothing. A forfeit, because the bases were gone.

**MCMAHON:** That's incredible, that's incredible.

**ZENS:** I got the ticket upstairs.

**MCMAHON:** You still have the ticket? Huh?

**ZENS:** I still have the tickets. All right, that's one example. About the same time, and maybe before or shortly after, the city high school football game was stationed at RFK. I think they were taking a chance, but they decided to do it. St. John's High School, where my son went to school and wore a uniform, and the other team was Eastern High School, the school over on East Capitol. So, the game is going along and we're into the third quarter and it's quite obvious to fans of the Eastern team that they're not going to win. They were behind, let's say three touchdowns, and St. John's was giving them a pretty good licking. And all of a sudden a whole phalanx of people, mad as hell, comes streaming down out of the stands heading for the St. John's rooters. It was a riot. I mean it was a riot. Now my daughter was at Immaculata, so it could have been 1960 something. But she was with me. I says, "Karen, whatever you do, let's get out of here." And we'll do it by jumping into a bus that's waiting. There was a bunch of busses. They weren't operating they were just waiting. Thank God we got in there because it was a real riot of high school kids. Now of course when you read the sports pages these days all the crime—the steroid problems, and all that stuff. It doesn't seem as big, but it sure felt like a big thing back then.

**MCMAHON:** Scary.

**ZENS:** But you see we had it very handy. Now there's an example of Capitol Hill being handy among other things for good living. You know. (laughter) Good living is when the guy chasing you with a club in his hand. But that business about the Yankees and...

**MCMAHON:** Stealing the bases?

**ZENS:** The fans stealing the bases.

**MCMAHON:** And you were there.

**ZENS:** Absolutely.

**MCMAHON:** That's wonderful. That's great. Those little historical moments.

**ZENS:** I also was at the final one at Griffith Stadium. It had been there forever. Now that, oddly enough, is a pretty tough area. You could walk down the street and they would wave at you and say how did it go and all that, you know.

**MCMAHON:** What was the location of Griffith Stadium?

**ZENS:** Well it's gone.

**MCMAHON:** When it did exist what was its location?

**ZENS:** Just north of Florida on Georgia Avenue. East of Georgia, east side of Georgia.

**MCMAHON:** Let me ask you this. Did you ever go to Uline Arena for anything?

**ZENS:** Huh?

**MCMAHON:** Did you ever go to Uline Arena for anything?

**ZENS:** Sure.

**MCMAHON:** Really? Do you remember that? What did you see there?

**ZENS:** Well it was hockey and one day a good friend of my son's—they now were kids around 15 or 16—went with me to see a professional hockey game. And boy they were lucky. 'Cause they did not have good protective netting behind the goal. And that thing was a rock, rock like. And I remember my son Mike's companion Eddy something or other (laughter) was sitting next to an empty chair that thing hit that chair. He would have been killed. Uline's Arena, right.

**MCMAHON:** Uline Ice Company. Brings back memories doesn't it?

**ZENS:** Pardon?

**MCMAHON:** Brings back memories doesn't it?

**ZENS:** I could say that Capitol Hill is right on the edge of it.

**MCMAHON:** Going on in the sixties, do you remember the riots, the riots in 1968?

**ZENS:** Oh, do I ever. I was in Jacksonville, Florida attending a Commerce commercial convention when word was passed around. Everybody go see the Eastern Airlines ticket counter. We have news for you. Well the news was the riot and the other news was that Eastern would put you up down there. If you didn't feel like leaving Florida and coming up here, they would give you a place to stay. But I decided I wanted to go. And by golly I got a cab ride from what is now Reagan but it was National Airport then. And they dropped me off right down the corner here. It was a lucky thing, it was rough. Everything was burning.

**MCMAHON:** Did you see it from the air when you came in?

**ZENS:** No, I don't think so. But that was the riots of '67.

**MCMAHON:** Was it '68?

**ZENS:** Another episode on a personal basis, right down the street here and I think you know about this. In the end of the alley that abuts St. Mark's Episcopal Church is a whole bunch of cobble stones and one Saturday afternoon [my wife] was going over to the camera shop to drop some camera material at the shop. I think she started down a few feet into that alley. There was a guy double parked, and he comes running out; she didn't know what was going on. She was wearing a Central American type purse and this guy couldn't get it off of her shoulder. Slamming her onto those cobble stones! She ended up [at] Washington Hospital Center. But what happened further, is that the neighbors got together and fed me. They would bring things over. They didn't know me, well some do sure.

**MCMAHON:** Well that was nice , that was really nice.

**ZENS:** Yeah.

**MCMAHON:** Yeah. Capitol Hill is close community isn't it? That's great.

**ZENS:** I think we ought to mention something like that.

**MCMAHON:** Sure.

**ZENS:** They did get the guy a little later.

**MCMAHON:** Oh good.

**ZENS:** He did the same trick between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. No between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, he got away that time. I think he was caught over on 6<sup>th</sup> Street, just this side of Stanton Park. They wanted us come down to testify. And wife wouldn't get near the place. She said, I'm not going to testify.

**MCMAHON:** Do you remember the construction of the Library of Congress at all, you know the new buildings around there?

**ZENS:** Well sure.

**MCMAHON:** Tell us about that.

**ZENS:** Maybe you can see it. See the vestibule back there.

**MCMAHON:** Yeah.

**ZENS:** Do you see a light in it?

**MCMAHON:** Yeah.

**ZENS:** The fellow that was Eisenhower's chief of staff, Sherman Adams, owned one of the houses that was torn down for the James Madison Library.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** So people milled around and they sold. You know the junk people sold things. I bought that.

**MCMAHON:** Is this the one that's on the ceiling?

**ZENS:** The one on the ceiling, the one between the two doors.

**MCMAHON:** Oh yes! And that belonged to Sherman Adams.

**ZENS:** Sherman Adams.

**MCMAHON:** Wow! Interesting.

**ZENS:** And what else do we have in the house?

**MCMAHON:** Yeah, tell us about that.

**ZENS:** Yeah, but I don't remember now.

**MCMAHON:** That you bought from Sherman Adams' house, you bought some other stuff as well?

**ZENS:** Yeah, I'm sure we did, but they tore it down and piled, believe it or not, a lot of it over on the Senate side. Anything worth looking at they brought over there.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** But of course, as you know it was Carroll Street, that was the block that was torn out of here.

**MCMAHON:** Yeah, right, OK.

**ZENS:** And one of the drug stores, I think it was People's, but I'm not sure. It was on the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Independence.

**MCMAHON:** Ok.

**ZENS:** But they tore that up.

**MCMAHON:** How about the construction of our Metro? Do you remember how our city was kind of overturned during those years, during the construction of Metro? But boy it's turned out to be a wonderful public transportation improvement to the city.

**ZENS:** Yeah, I don't have much recollection of the Metro. I've used it plenty of times but it certainly very useful. I don't know if you can say it's swell.

**MCMAHON:** Well listen. On those days way back when, how was it living in Washington DC in the summer time without air conditioning? How did you survive?

**ZENS:** It was rough, it was really rough, yeah. Yeah this was a hot city and we didn't have air conditioning. This house though has pretty good insulation. You know keeping certain amounts of heat out of here. Just yesterday, this is extra now, I put together a thing I bought, a humidifier and there was one part of it, a knob to turn. I couldn't move it. I called the company and they gave me some tips. But even their telling me what they thought would get that knob out of there, the large knuckle knob [unintelligible section]. Do you have a humidifier with big chambers?

**MCMAHON:** I don't have a humidifier at all.

**ZENS:** Well they have two big chambers in them. But anyhow that was yesterday, no it was two days ago. I said to myself, I got to get some muscle here. I wonder if Jim, I was thinking of you, is strong enough to twist that knob there? Which guards the water tank.

**MCMAHON:** I'd be glad to do it after we conclude the interview.

**ZENS:** Well what happened, the next day, when I was talking to the girl in the consumer affairs of that company called Holmes. I could hear somebody yell "Tell him to put a rag over it and turn." Well two days ago that didn't seem to help and yesterday, just when I was going to bring it up to somebody with muscle. I think you are strong enough to do something. I twisted it and it worked.

**MCMAHON:** Oh, that's wonderful.

**ZENS:** Yeah. Why I don't know.

**MCMAHON:** Let's see: going to... How about things like in the neighborhood. Well, you have a list there. Have you hit everything on your list?

**ZENS:** Yeah, I can't read anymore.

**MCMAHON:** OK, let's see here. You mentioned Sherrill's Bakery, tell us about it.

**ZENS:** [I was a] constant customer of them and they had two sides to that place. I don't know if you remember it. It had a counter where they were selling like donuts and stuff. And over on the other side of the room, not too big was sit down seats for lunches, you know. I don't think they served in the evening. But they were kind of crabby, they were kind of crabby.

**MCMAHON:** Did it add to the charm of the place?

**ZENS:** You know a movie was made of them.

**MCMAHON:** Yeah, on public television. I seem to recall that, yeah.

**ZENS:** Yeah, they were crabby, no question about it.

**MCMAHON:** But you went anyway?

**ZENS:** Absolutely.

**MCMAHON:** OK, let me see here.

**ZENS:** At the shoppers and at the Giant over here and of course at the Safeway. Safeway was quite a thing when they decided to move. They were there.

**MCMAHON:** On Seventh Street, across the street from Eastern Market?

**ZENS:** Yeah, but they were also at a place down...

**MCMAHON:** Further down seventh?

**ZENS:** Yeah.

**MCMAHON:** Ok, I remember, the building is still there. So once again it was easy to walk to?

**ZENS:** Oh absolutely.

**MCMAHON:** That's one of the great things about the Hill, you can walk to everywhere you want to go. OK let's see...

**ZENS:** We have a party here on the list, a Kentucky Derby Party around the corner, Mike Canning, I don't know if you know him, or not.

**MCMAHON:** I know Mike, yeah.

**ZENS:** Well he has it every year.

**MCMAHON:** For how many years?

**ZENS:** Oh, at least ten.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** And they do a little amateur betting.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** And my daughter won \$18 or \$20.

**MCMAHON:** Uh huh.

**ZENS:** The central point of the party, although is people. People bring stuff, a bottle of wine or something to eat, but then action on the track is of interest. And that's where everybody gathers and screams and shouts.

**MCMAHON:** Are the Cannings from Kentucky, what's the Canning's connection with the Kentucky Derby other than throwing a party?

**ZENS:** I think Mike started it. But maybe they heard about it or read about it somewhere else. But I would have great ball.

**MCMAHON:** OK, Kentucky Derby party, all right. And you motioned Sharon Ambrose here, politics on the Hill.

**ZENS:** Which Hill?

**MCMAHON:** Sharon Ambrose and politics, neighborhood politics?

**ZENS:** Yeah. I'm the (laughter) the president of the Republicans for Ambrose.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** Every time I see her she laughs at me and she says you left me. But you are looking at the president of the Republicans for Ambrose. I send her \$25 or \$30.

**MCMAHON:** Clancy, you mentioned parking on Capitol Hill, it's very important. How have things changed over the years? Has it gotten more difficult to park around here?

**ZENS:** (Laughter) Boy, you can say that again.

**MCMAHON:** And how do you think that that came about?

**ZENS:** The fact that in a house, let's say an apartment, or a house there's now two cars, where there used to be one. And there is an awful lot more. You know, privately owned cars. But I can say that in 44 years I had not been shut out. I always found a place within reasonable distance. Let's say over past Jimmy T's. And you learn off-hours and you learn on-hours. You know that on Saturday afternoon.

**MCMAHON:** Yeah, tell us some of those secrets.

**ZENS:** No, I'm not going to. But there are certain times when you got a good chance, a very good chance.

**MCMAHON:** Of getting a reasonable parking space. Ok, How about Frager's. I remember that you mentioned that quite a bit.

**ZENS:** Well, Frager's ought to be mentioned because it's so much of an institution here. And I think they work very hard in there to find the things that you want. I told you about the humidifier. This was also part of that... It's a strange little episode. To say first I get the business of opening the petcock. But about six or seven days before that I went to Target. Have you ever gone to Target?

**MCMAHON:** Yes.

**ZENS:** And they advertise that they have everything. And then they say no sir, no sir. We don't have any humidifiers. But when we walked out together sort of around the corner, there were some. She was kind of embarrassed. But more than that, she got on the phone and called. They do that you know. To find out what the price is on a humidifier. And they gave her a price. I put the thing in my rolling cart, went to the checkout counter and the lady says that's not the price. The price is \$10 more. I'm not Irish like you (laughter). But I don't take a pushing. That's a kind of beating I don't care for. You say one thing and you do another. So I gave up on them. But the next day I decided well, I better go and pick the thing up because I tried a couple. I tried the Home Depot, I tried the remnants of K-Mart up here. I wasn't getting anywhere. So I went there and sure enough it was gone.

**MCMAHON:** OK.

**ZENS:** [Unintelligible section] Well, then I decided to go circular checking. This is 406, the next one is 408, then Steve is 410 and then the next one. Yeah, that's the one. A family of blacks was there. I used to chat with the guy.

**MCMAHON:** You also have on your list here, mentioning about the *Hill Rag* and *The Voice*. What can you tell us about that? Since you're and an old newspaper guy, you probably have a take on those two newspapers.

**ZENS:** Well, I'm sorry to tell you that I only contributed one time.

**MCMAHON:** An article?

**ZENS:** It was on St. Peter's, a little history. I forget which of the two I was in. But I think that both are quite well done.

**MCMAHON:** And this is your professional judgment as a newspaper man? They are quality newspapers, both of them?

**ZENS:** As a neighborhood paper, definitely.

**MCMAHON:** OK, that's nice. All right, let's see here. Tell us about how the church fits into the community. Are you talking about St. Peter's?

**ZENS:** St. Peter's, yeah.

**MCMAHON:** You have been a member of St. Peter's ever since you came to Capitol Hill?

**ZENS:** Absolutely.

**MCMAHON:** Since 1951 was it?

**ZENS:** Well it would be 44 years, yeah. And worked with four or five different pastors.

**MCMAHON:** Were you ever a member of the Parish council?

**ZENS:** Yes, I was. Also, I was a reader.

**MCMAHON:** OK, and how was the Church involved in the community here? What activities you are aware of on Capitol Hill that it does?

**ZENS:** Well that's pretty good as a question, I think that the overwhelming feeling in the community is not necessarily to be religious. The ones we know, like the blacks and their traditional churches. I know we moved the bell sounding from 6 o'clock to 7.

**MCMAHON:** In the morning? I guess at 6 o'clock it woke a lot of people up?

**ZENS:** Absolutely, and that's worth mentioning.

**MCMAHON:** Yeah, of course, right. All right. Well that looks like it concludes the interview. This has been great. And I thank you so much.

[Clancy remembered one more item that he wanted to add to the interview and the recorder was turned on again]

But Clancy you mentioned Constance McLaughlin Green. And she is an historian that has written extensively about Washington, DC. What can you tell us about her?

**ZENS:** Well, it was quite interesting. I was in the midst of a project of early days either at the Church or on the Hill. And of course I knew that she had done quite a bit of work, and I went to see her. She was not too warm. I think she felt that I was getting into her business, but she came through, she didn't make a big smiling episode of the meeting that we had. I think that we had a couple of meetings. She lived over—well facing the Supreme Court.

**MCMAHON:** In our neighborhood, Constance—she did?

**ZENS:** Yeah, but she was, of course, a professional, so you can't blame her for being very careful. She sent my copy to her publisher and to get his permission. And I was very happy to have her as part of the story.

**MCMAHON:** What was the substance of your meeting with her? What type of information were you trying to get out of her?

**ZENS:** It was early days. What's the name of that little short street that the Lynches live on?

**MCMAHON:** Duddington.

**ZENS:** Yes it was that era.

**MCMAHON:** I see, and she had a wealth of information on it. She wrote a two volume book on Washington DC. I think it was praised and received a number of awards as well? OK, but she was in the neighborhood here?

**ZENS:** Yes.

END OF INTERVIEW