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Senator Carl Levin
269 Russell Office Building
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510-2202

Dear Sen. Levin:

I know you have correspondence from Linda Dewey about the Kassel Mission of the 445th Bomb Group on September 27, 1944. I hope you will connect this to that correspondence.

I am a survivor of that mission. On June 10th of this year, I will be 90 years old – but my memory of that time is as clear as ever. Only the most important facts are missing.

Even though the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur fell on Sept. 27, and I had a three-day pass, I volunteered to go on that mission as it would have been my 25th and a finish to my assignment, allowing me to be home for Christmas – also my wife's birthday.

The Kassel mission was disastrous, but I was one of the lucky ones – I survived by parachuting out of a burning plane and spent the next 10 months in a German P.O.W. camp. Only three men from my crew survived that day.

Overall, about 150 U.S. Airman were killed. I knew many of them and even buried the burned bodies of five of my fellow crewmen – at German gunpoint. After the war, I visited the parents of those men; there was little I could say about the reason for their deaths, even then.

So, you can see, that for me as much as anyone, the events of that day -- and their consequences -- are very, very personal... and are still surrounded by the questions that prevented me from telling those parents what heroes their sons were and that keep me now from telling my grandsons what really happened on that day.

Our new President has promised a more transparent government, and one that will honor its veterans properly. With that in mind, I ask you on behalf of myself and the 30 or so remaining survivors of that mission to put pressure to bear so that our FOI request can be granted in a timely manner, and the truth about the Kassel Mission revealed.

Sincerely

Ira P. Weinstein