

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND BEFORE THE SERVICE?

Raised on a farm, hillside farm in Kentucky, up last house in the hollow. Family was below poverty level, we were very poor. We had a creek between our house and the main road, which we call the hard rock. I can remember if the bridge washed out we didn't go any place. We stayed up there, our treat growing up was a grocery store down the road. We'd go down and buy bolonga and pepsi, and that was our treat. And the mailman, when he came up, that was an exciting moment, to see the mailman come. And, a babe in the woods, all the way up to high school, didn't know anything.

WHAT HIGH SCHOOL WAS IT?

Russell High School. Came to Wortland, lived with my grandparents in Blackwoods, Kentucky and went to Russell.

WAS YOUR FATHER A FARMER OR WHAT?

He worked on the railroad and Mother's a retired school teacher, and at that time there was only two of us, my brother and myself. But, there wasn't enough money to go around, we counted pennies all my life. Constantly count-pennies. Got to high school, still very quite high school. All my high school friends that remember me, say I remember him as a very quite person. I respect my teachers very much, I was taught to respect the elderly, handicap, that was the 2 basics. I was raised, and teachers, we, we, respected teachers, old people, and handicap. That's one thing we got a good whipping for if we didn't, if we didn't respect these people. Okay, I went to Morehead

RIGHT OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL?

Yes, right out of high school, I went to Morehead.

WHAT YEAR WAS THAT?

I graduated in 1964, then I went to Morehead, and I was a dorm person. Just stayed in the dorm, there really wasn't anything to do in Morehead at the time. I think Jerry's restaurant was there. So, I went down to Jerry's, mostly back up to the dorm, talked to boy's, didn't date too much, didn't have a car. So, usually just, you'd...

THIS RAN FROM 1964 TO WHAT YEAR?

1966, I would imagine I spent 2 years, I would imagine. Before I went into the Army.

BEFORE YOU WENT INTO THE ARMY?

I volunteered for the draft. I was classified as USS drafted, but I did go to draft board and volunteer to go where ever they sent me. You know, that was their

DO YOU RECALL NOW WHERE; YOU KNEW YOU WERE GOING TO BE DRAFTED SO YOU DECIDED TO SIGN?

No, I didn't know I was going to be drafted. No, I did this on my own.

YOU DID THIS ON YOUR OWN. WELL, WHY DID YOU DO IT, BECAUSE THE GENERAL RUN OF THE COLLEGE STUDENTS AT THE TIME WAS THE DETERMINATION TO AVOID ARMY SERVICE, IS THAT SO?

Yes. The time I was in it was.

YES?

Well, my father had, our family's were kinda, were very basic family, you fight in a war. You know, if there was a war you go.

WERE THERE A WAR ON SO?

My father fought in a war, he did four years, my uncles, same thing. I suppose my grandfather before me, I'm not really sure about the history. But, okay, it was my turn.

YOU DID NOT PICK UP ANY OF THE ANTI-WAR ATTITUDES, THAT WAS BEGINNING TO DEVELOP BY 1966?

No, I was pro-American, not ultra-right, but un-right. It wasn't a ultra-right thing, but a duty. It was my job. I was supposed to go.

OTHER THAN THAT, ABOUT THE FACT YOU WERE GOING TO VIETNAM. HOW DID YOU UNDERSTAND THE REASON YOU WERE BEING SENT TO VIETNAM? WHY WAS AMERICA IN VIETNAM? DID YOU HAVE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THAT?

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None, I don't know why. Today, I don't know why I was in Vietnam. I have no idea. I didn't know then, and I don't know now. I just knew it was a war. America was fighting a war and I was supposed to be their.

AND, SO, YOU VOLUNTEERED AND WHERE DO YOU WIND UP NOW?

Okay, Fort Knox, basic training. I didn't like that very much at all. I think that started a great deal of anxiety when I realized this wasn't the movies. This wasn't the movies, they were teaching us to kill people. And I realized that when I think the sargent give me a M-16, and said this is not for hunting deer or not for hunting rabbits or squirrels, like I've been used to living in this part of Kentucky, he said, "okay," and I accepted that fact that the weapon as not a toy or a weapon you go out and collect game with, it was to kill another man with. That was my job.

OF COURSE YOU KNEW THIS WHEN YOU WENT INTO THE ARMY. THIS WAS WHAT YOU WERE GOING TO BE FACED WITH.

Yes, but when your hit with, all of a sudden this guy throws a rifle in your face, you know this is to kill somebody with this. And that's exactly why they made it. They didn't make it for any other reason.

SO, YOU GET THROUGH THE BASIC TRAINING, AND WHAT KIND OF AN OUTFIT ARE YOU IN THEN?

Then I went into communications, I went to Fort Mammoth, New Jeresy, and I went through, I think it was, 6 months of communications training. Then I went to Fort Dixs and then we had jungle training at Fort Dixs. That's when things started to, I knew that something was going to happen, because when they sent us to Fort Dix, I realized we were then training for jumping off of convoys, machine gun position and implimentary type situations.

YOU KNEW YOU SERE GOING TO BE A FIGHTING MAN? AT THAT POINT?

At that point, when I went to Fort Dixs and we were being trained to be attacked and to combat an attack, I think that was thefirst time I really realized that it was getting close, it was getting pretty close.

SO, THEN AFTER YOU FINISHED THAT PARTICULAR TRAINING?

I was sent directly to Vietnam.

YOU WERE SENT DIRECTLY? WHERE YOU SENT TO ATTACHED TO A PARTICULAR UNIT?

No. I was in long lines South Stratco. and my security clearence was secret communications.

YES, LONG LINES SOUTH STRATCON?

I was just trying to figure out if I had this straight about what unit. A lot of this stuff I don't remember and I don't know why. I don't want to remember why. Do you have any information there?

I DON'T HAVE THE INFORMATION HERE, IT ISN'T PRESSING. YOU DO JOIN THIS PARTICULAR DEPARTMENT IN VIETNAM AND THEY WHAT TIME, WHEN DID YOU GET THEIR, DO YOU RECALL NOW?

Yes, it was in late, I remember it was in probably October, last of October. I remember eating Thanksgiving Dinner. I remember flying into the country, I flew into Vung Tau. We were mortered on the way in the country, the air strip was mortered on the way in, we had to circle, we couldn't fly in.

WHAT YEAR WAS THIS?

1968. They said we couldn't land because they were having mortor and rocket fire on the airport. Okay, we finally got down and they stationed us is Vang Tau. And moved us out to a mountain in the jungle, outside of Vang Tau. Maybe 6 or 8 miles north fo Vang Tau.

AND WHERE WOULD THAT BE LOCATED, SAY IN RELATION TO SIEGON?

South, that was in the jungle. There was a hill I was stationed on nicknamed

D.C. Hill. A jungle completely surrounding the area, except for the top of the hill. And it was sand, and I remember this because we were trying to eat Thanksgiving Dinner. I remember they gave us turkey, they gave us turkey, we were eating turkey and they brought some sort of cheap wine to drink. And the sand was blowing into my food and I couldn't eat my Thanksgiving Dinner, because of the sand in my food. And everything was real lush green, except for the top of the mountains we were on. HOW WAS THAT EXPOSED?

It was a desert up there.

HOW LONG DID YOU STAY IN THAT SECTION?

I stayed there 2 months.

FROM NOVEMBER TO JANUARY?

No, maybe it was less than that.

WHAT DID YOU DO WHILE YOU WAS THERE?

Perimeter guard, filled sandbags, burnt crap. Vietnamese and American.

YOU WHAT?

Burnt the human waste, burnt waste, filled sandbags, patrolled, and that's all.

WELL, WHAT DID YOU THINK YOU WERE DOING THERE AT THAT TIME, YOUR FUNCTION AS A SOLDIER, HOW DID YOU UNDERSTAND BEING THERE DROPPED DOWN IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE LIKE THAT, UP IN THE TOP OF A MOUNTAIN, AND WERE THERE BC'S ALL AROUND YOU?

Yes, there was some incoming fire at this place every day, or most ever day.

Some incoming water on the perimeters, but mostly I felt like I was hiding.

YOU DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU WAS THERE?

No.

ON TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN AND EVERYBODY WAS AROUND YOU, THE ENEMY?

I don't know.

WHAT WAS THE FUNCTION OF THAT?

It was a communication post. They had a couple of microwave towers up there. The trick was, I was trained in communications. I got tricked because the people that did the work on communications were civilians, okay, and they made a lot of money for going over there, they got, there company's would pay them. Philco/Ford were one of the companies and they would pay them \$30,000 a year to mand to equipment the microwave equipment and so forth. I was trained for that, and ended up protecting the cilivions who were working the equipment. They used me as a front, a training was meant as a front.

YOUR TRAINING WAS NO USED?

No.

WHY DID THEY DO THAT?

I don't know. They paid the Americans to do it. They paid people from Philco/Ford.

BUT, YOU WERE TRAINED TO DO IT?

Yes.

THEY DID NOT USE YOU?

No.

WHERE THEY UP ON THE HILL WITH YOU?

Yes, they carried weapons. They were up on the hill. That was the easy part. Vang

Tau was the easiest part.

OF THIS AREA?

Yes, that was the easiest part of my year.

YOU LEFT THERE?

Yes, I was sent North.

NORTH, FROM THERE. YOUR WHOLE OUTFIT WAS SENT OR YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL?

Me, as an individual. They scattered us out.

WHERE DID THEY SEND YOU?

They sent me to an outpost north-west of Fulong, a few miles from Shilon. So, we were on a highway coming from Cambota. Our outpost was 8-10 miles out of Fulong.

WAS IT A SIMULAR TYPE OF OPERATION AS WHEN YOU WERE IN THE SOUTH?

No, this was different. This was the Delta.

BUT, WHAT YOU WERE DOING WAS ABOUT THE SAME THING, IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?

Yes, but it was a lot rougher.

BUT, IT WAS A COMMUNICATION CENTER SIMILAR TO THE OTHER?

Yes, it was Long Lines, it was connected with Long Lines South, all a branch.

Like an antenna on one hill, just different stops.

WAS IT THE SAME SITUATION FOR YOU? WERE YOU NOT DOING WHAT YOU WERE TRAINED TO DO?

Yes.

DID THEY HAVE THE CIVILIANS THERE TOO?

Yes.

MAKING THE BIG MONEY?

Yes, lots of it, and they bragged about it. I was getting \$60.00 a month combat pay.

HOW MANY MEN WOULD THEY HAVE?

Our unit probably 80 men. We were with the South Vietnamese ranchers and Koreans.

THEY WERE THERE WITH YOU?

Yes.

WHAT WERE THEY DOING, DEFENDING YOU WAS THAT IT?

We all worked together that was our job.

BUT, THE WHOLE THING WAS A COMMUNICATION CENTER THAT WAS BEING DEFENDED BY DIFFERENT UNITS?

Yes.

HOW LONG DID YOU STAY THERE?

My remaining time.

AND HOW LONG WAS THAT?

I think it was November of 1968. I got home for Christmas. I was in Vietnam from 1967-68.

YOU WENT TO VIETNAM IN NOVEMBER OF 1967 AND GOT OUT DECEMBER OF 1968?

Yes.

SO, THAT YOUR SPENDING MOST OF THE TIME IN THIS ISOLATED OUTPOST?

Most of it was in the Delta.

IS THAT WHAT THEY CALLED IT, THE DELTA?

Yes.

DID YOU GET R&R ONCE ON A WHILE FROM THERE?

I had one R&R. And I had drunk some water, supposedly, and it had dysentery and my R&R consisted of going to the hospital in the Philippines. And I lost a lot of weight. I weighed 140 pounds, I think. I for almost a week, I didn't get any kind of treatment. I had some pills, I had diarrhea and vomiting for nearly a week, until I went to the American Embassy Hospital in the Philippines and I was taken care of there.

SO, YOU WERE OUT OF IT FOR HOW LONG?

Only one week.

THEY SENT YOU BACK AGAIN?

Yes, and I was still weak and still sick.

SO, YOU VIEW THE WAR FROM WHAT YOU EXPERIENCED IN THAT ONE PLACE? WHAT WAS A TYPICAL DAY LIKE FOR YOU THEN?

Filling sand bags, setting up perimeters. I remember it was so funny. We had a sergeant, we had a perimeter set up, we had strung barbed-wire, set the perimeter. We were surrounded one time, completely surrounded. We filled sand bags and dug some trenches in behind our lines. I ask our sergeant, his name was, I only remember one person's name in Vietnam, that's all. I forgot all my buddies' names and I don't know why. I don't remember their names. I'd have to look at the list and I don't know if I'd remember then or not. And I ask my sergeant if that's where we retreated to, because they were getting close, they were on top of us. And he said they United States Army does not retreat. We fall back. And I was not very well educated and I couldn't understand the difference between retreat and

fall back. To me I was digging a hole and I knew what that hole was for.

YOU REMEMBER THIS GUY'S NAME?

Yes, Christistian. He was never around during a fire fight.

WHERE DID HE HAUL OFF TO?

He was back, maybe a mile back. Company Headquarters.

WHERE YOU UNDER A LOT OF TENSION FROM ATTACKS?

Everyday, continually. Everyday we were getting fire. It was really getting bad. It was unbearable. The rest of the time it was continuous fire, everytime we walked out, everytime we got on a truck. Everytime we walked out, everytime we got on a truck we were fired at. Snipers fired mostly.

WHERE DID IT COME FROM IF YOU WERE ON TOP OF THE HILL?

Oh, we was in the Delta. That was tht Delta. It was coming from Buddist, we got a lot a fire from them. We got a lot of fire from villiages, surrounded by 2 villiages. We got a lot of fire from them. They had the yellow flag of the South Vietnamise Army in front ot the doors. But, they D.C. firing was firing from these villages, even though they had the yellow flag on the front. I was afraid every day that I was going to be killed, I quit writing letters home to my Mother and Father, because I didn't want them to read a letter then I'd be killed, so I quit writing home.

WAS THIS SOMETHING THAT WAS SHARED WITH YOUR BUDDIES?

Yes.

YOU ALL FELT THE SAME WAY?

Yes, I've seen them throw up. I've seen them use the bathroom, urinate, in their pants, uniforms. I've seen them cry for their wives.

WAS IT THE DAILY EXPOSURE TO THE FIRING THAT DID THIS TO THEM?

Everyday. I know that during, I was under fire for 7 days and that was heavy incoming fire. I know that one night it was 60 rails of direct hit my bunker, I was in, I was having M-60 machine gun that was my job. A guy got killed, my partner got killed. I carried ammunition for him and he got killed. So, I took over the M-60 machine gun on patrol and also when we set up at night. And constantly picking away at us, every, like that 7 days. They shot at us once every hour you could almost take your watch and count it, when that hour come around it was bang, bang bang. They'd shot and they they'd stop. And they they'd start again, and they'd stop.

AND IT WAS A HARRASSMENT TYPE OF THING?

Continuously, I had a direct hit, 2 direct hits. One tore a side out of my bunker. I was in a communication van getting ready to go out on patro and it was hit, direct hit. I tore the knees out of my pants crawling on the ground trying to get underneathe the fire. We had machine-gun fire. The complex was over run, they didn't come directly through, they went around the sides of the complex and when they went around the sides they had the rangers, the South Vietnamise rangers had started using granades to belt some viles equipment. We had some helicopters just right over us, I say 100 yards over top of us, firing rockets and they were firing directly in front of us. Artillery coming in and dropping, our own, it was so close our own artillery dropped on us. And, I know I ask about it, there was a big whole in the ground before me and I told the lieutenant, I said, "tell them to take this stuff out." I asked the lieutenant to take it out and move the artillery out front. He said that wasn't our artillery and I know they were dropping it on us, because it was close. Everything was close.

WAS THIS A PARTICULAR TIME?

7 days. And then there was another 6 or 7 days after.

DID THIS SEEM TO HAVE ANY EFFECT ON THEM, WHO WAS OUT THERE, THE D.C. OR THE NORTH VIETMANISM?

D.C. I saw maybe, the whole time 4 or 5 North Vietnamise. The rest were silk plaid, blace sild plaid.

DID THEY GO OUT AFTER THEM ON PATROLS?

Yes, we set up and fired back, then the rangers went out. I don't know what they did, nothing that I know of. I know that we would fire at night and that there was a body count in the morning, we'd know that they were out there. As far as seeing them, all I could see was mussel flashes. I didn't see them shooting at me. I saw the flash of the mussel. I saw the mortar. I saw the rockets. I saw the mussel flashes, but I didn't see them.

AND YOU HAD THE KOREANS WITH YOU?

Yes, I hated the Koreans.

YOU HATED THEM, WHAT IS TH PROBLEM THERE?

They were thieves, I did not trust them. They, I was afraid of them. I was afraid of the South Vietnamise rangers, too.

YOU WERE AFRAID OF BOTH OF THEM?

Yes.

WHAT BROUGHT ON THAT FEAR? SOMETHING THAT THEY WOULD DO TO YOU?

No, not necessarily. They were very hap-hazard about the way they conducted themselves. I didn't know if they knew there was a war going on. Just very they really didn't take the battle to the enemy, you'd see the soldier there with his wife and family.....

...in the bunker, he'd be cooking a meal. I didn't know the Koreans would not kill me. I did not know that the South Vietnamese rangers would not kill me. SO, THERE WAS A TENSION BETWEEN THE AMERICANS AND THE OTHER 2 GROUPS? THAT WAS EVIDENT ALL THE TIME YOU WAS THERE. DO YOU THINK THAT WAS A FEASIBLE FEAR IN YOUR PART?

Oh, yes. It was real I didn't want them in the bunker with me. Nobody else did. I'd rather be in there fighting for myself than have them with me.

DID YOUR OFFICERS FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT THEM?

I think so. They was with us, but when it got real hot it really didn't make any difference if they were there, they probably would run. I have a feeling they would run.

YOU COULD NOT RELY ON THEM AT ALL, AS FAR AS THE KOREANS?

The Koreans- as far as they're fighting ability-yes. Probably rely on the Koreans would steal ammunition to save his own life. Or steal my food or steal my uniform and they were known as thieves. Koreans were known as thieves.

WHERE THERE A LOT OF EVIDENCE BEHIND IT?

Yes.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR OFFICERS. WHAT WAS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE AMERICAN OFFICERS?

I didn't see them too much. They were mostly back at command. When 2 of my friends were killed, one morning, 2 of my friends were machine gunned. And what happened the Vietnamese, supposedly there was a message that these 2 guys were going to hand carry instead of deliver it on the radio, and the Viet Cong had got the straw for the rice and spread it across the road and my 2 friends stop the jeep because they'd set it on fire, and my 2 friends slowed up and they opened fire and they were both killed. I called my officer, my LT. and told him 2 guys had just got killed, he seemed he was amazed, he didn't know. He didn't know they were killed. I had to tell him.

SO, WHAT DID YOU THINK THEM, THERE WASN'T VERY GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MEN AND THE OFFICERS?

I don't think they knew what was going on either. I don't think they knew what was happening. They didn't want any part of it.

WHAT ABOUT, IT SOUNDS LIKE THE WAY YOU DESCRIBE IT, WAS VERY FRUSTRATING TIMES. DID YOU EVER THINK ALONG THE LINES OF HERE IS THE MOST POWERFUL NATION IN THE WORLD WITH ALL OF OUR TECHNOLOGY AND ALL THE REST OF IT, AND YET WERE HARASSED AND HOLD UP BY PRIMITIVE PEOPLE?

Yes, I felt that these people were little kids. At one time we were mortared by a 15 year old kid.

YOU KNOW THAT?

Yes, he was captured. They said he was 15 years old and he made 50¢ a night, that is how much he got paid to use the mortar. And he was good. He was real good. He was dropping mortar around every 25 to 30 yards, within an half-mile area, drop 40 some rounds.

WHAT DID THEY DO WITH HIM WHEN THEY CAUGHT HIM?

When I saw him he was in a little barb-wire type box, maybe the size of this little square thing here. They had the barb-wire rolled around, he was in there.

COULD THEY BE NOT CATCHING TO MANY OF THESE GUYS WAS THERE?

No, I saw maybe, captured people. I've got some pictures I could show you, not here but at my mother's house. Maybe 20 captured. That's all, that I know of. I don't know what happened to them, what they did with them.

SO, THEIR STRATEGY WAS VERY EFFECTIVE THEN?

Yes, it was.

GRINDING YOU DOWN?

Yes it was, everyday. I wanted to get shot, that's what I prayed for. I was introduced to God in Vietnam. I meet a supreme being. I gave up on my life, completely gave up on living. And I realized them that there was a God, because I didn't have anything else. I gave up. I wanted to get shot really bad. I Prayed at night to get shot to get out of there. I wanted to get on a helicopter and get out.

HOW MANY MONTHS WAS THAT, NOW?

Probably nine.

NINE MONTHS OF THIS. THE OTHER GUYS WERE PRETTY MUCH IN THE SAME MENTAL STATE?

Yes, they were crying and throwing up.

DO YOU THINK THERE WAS NOT AN ATTEMPT AS YOU ALREADY INDICATED, TO RECOGNIZE THIS PRESSURES AND EVERYTHING YOUR UNDER AND GIVE YOU SOME RELIEF AND CHANGE IT AROUND.

I know I thought all night, we'd been in a fire fight.

WHAT WOULD A FIRE FIGHT BE LIKE? I WILL ASK YOU THAT BEFORE THE STORY. WHAT WOULD A FIRE FIGHT BE LIKE IN THESE SITUATIONS?

We had two 50 caliber guns, mine was a machine gun. We had three machine guns, two 50 caliber guns and M-14's and M-1's. We'd get sniper fire if you set up on point, they'd move us from point to point, we got sniper fire from one point and all of a sudden we'd get mortar fire from another point. It would be exchange of fire. It was muzzle flashes. And then all of a sudden someone would scream "in coming," you would hear "pop." All of a sudden you'd hear popping noises, you hear an explosion, you could tell the mortar was coming in, you could hear the popping noises in the background, you could see the rockets, they were like Fourth of July candles, when they came off the ground. You could see those. Just brief exchanges of fire that was continuous, all the time, all the time.

DID YOU EVER FEEL PERSONALLY WE ABLE TO GET ANY OF THE OTHER D.C.?

I don't know.

JUST KIND OF KEEP FIRING AND FIRING AT WHATEVERS OUT THERE?

You fire for the wire, in case they tried to get under the wire. And shot.

DID ANY OF THE PREACHERS OR CHAPLINS COME WHILE YOU WERE UP THERE?

No, only in Bungtu, we had a service, they had a little place, a little hut, I guess made by the French. And it was a bar, he held services in the bar. He told us he was a Catholic. He told us it didn't make any difference what we did as far as drinking and everything else because we were in God's hands. There's not to much you can do. If you drink and stuff like that, that's just the way it goes, your now in God's hands.

DID THE ARMY ENCOURAGE YOU TO DRINK?

Yes.

WAS THERE BEER AROUND?

Yes, all the time, they brought it to us. They brought it in back of jeeps and it was hot. They made sure there was ice. And they brought it in trailers in back of a jeep.

THEY DID NOT SEEM TO MIND IT IF YOU GOT DRUNK?

No one was drunk. They didn't care. They didn't care if you were drunk on the line. There were no rules, no rules whatsoever.

NO RULES, NO DISCIPLINE YOU MEAN?

No, whatever you did to releive your tension was up to you, they didn't care.

WAS THERE ANY WOMEN?

In our unit?

NO, BROSTITUTES OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

Yes.

WERE THEY BROUGHT IN?

No, if we would get to Fulong in a truck they gave us, we'd go back to our CO's office, company commanders office. they'd have prolaties on his desk, they gave it to us.

AND WHAT DID THEY HAVE A BROTHEL IN TOWN. IS THAT IT?

All over the place. Every, almost every, all the Vietnamese women from 13 on up that I knew, that saw were prostitutes, as far as I was concerned.

DO YOU THINK THAT, THIS WAS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT WERE HAPPENING TO VIETNAMISE PEOPLE, THEY WERE BEING DEGRADED BY ALL OF THIS?

No.

WOULD IT BEEN THIS WAY ANYWAY?

Those people, it was there way of life. It was everyday, if someone got shot or got killed they just keep on walking along. They didn't stop and look or anything like that. That was their life. Prostitution was their life. Prostitution, drugs, killing, fire fights, bombing. There would be 500 pounds of bombs go off and these people would keep on working the rice patties. They wouldn't even look up about it.

COULD THAT BE BECAUSE THEY HAD ALREADY HAD ABOUT 10 YEARS OF WAR?

Yes, I know that was it. They were used to it. The whole time I was over there, I cannot remember 1 day when I was over there that I didn't hear the thundering and rumbling. The whole time I was over there, not a day I can remember there wasn't bombs.

YOU COULD HEAR THE BOMBS GOING OFF SOMEWHERE?

Everyday.

SOMEWHERE IN THEIR LAND?

Every single day.

DID YOU EVER THINK THEY WERE GOING CRAZY, TOO, LIKE YOU WERE?

Whose that the Vietnamise? No.

IT DID NOT BOTHER THEM?

No, I don't think so. I've seen a lot, we were coming down the road, we were on the highway, and they had all they're belongings with them. Like they were going to another town. They had everything with them and it didn't seem, I didn't see them crying. I saw maybe a mile long string of people and they just had their stuff like maybe they were going to move into another apartment. They didn't seem to be bothered. Not at all.

SO, YOU DID NOT REALLY FEEL ANY SYMPATHY TOWARDS THEM?

No.

YOU SAW THEM AS THE ENEMY I SUPPOSE?

Yes, I hated them. I still so. Yes, I still do.

I DON'T SUPPOSE THERE WAS MUCH DRUG EXPERENCE OVER THERE DURING YOUR TIME WAS THERE?

Yes.

THERE WAS?

Yes.

IT WAS MORE LIKE MARIJUANA OR POT?

Opium.

OH, THERE WAS OPIUM?

Yes.

WAS YOU IN A SITUATION WHERE THAT WAS CONDUCIVE TO RELEIVE TENSION OR ANYTHING ELSE? SOME WAY TO FORGET YOUR EXISTENCE?

If you didn't know where you were at you were better off. If you were so drunk and so stoned that you didn't know, I don't think you could get to the point where you didn't know, but it would help. I didn't even know what marijuana was, until I got over there. I was from Eastern Kentucky, I had no idea what this guy asked, "you want to try marijuana?" And I didn't know what he was talking about. I had no idea. I'd drink some beer. I hadn't drunk any whiskey, but I did over there. It made me feel better.

DID THEY FEEL IT WAS DANGEROUS TO TAKE THESE DRUGS AND GET DRUNK IN THE MIDDLE OF ALL THIS DANGER?

No way.

NO?

No, I remember that one night, there was a N.P., no two N.P.'s, a couple of N.P.'s and their sargent was hollowing at them that they were going to have to come get on the truck and go somewhere, and setting around stoned, couldn't keep their eyes open, falling down. And the sargent hollowed at them, and they just picked up their weapons, ready to go fight. Ready to go fight.

JUST THE WAY THEY WERE?

Yes.

DID YOU WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM? SURVIVE?

I don't know.

SO, ALL AND ALL IT SEEMED LIKE A PRETTY DEGRADING EXPERIENCE. IS THAT WHAT YOUR GETTING AT?

Yes, very degrading. I didn't wear uniforms, the U.S. Army, we weren't required to wear uniforms. We were required to wear patches, they just gave us new uniforms, we throw away our old uniforms, instead of washing them we just threw them away. Ammunition, we just dumped them with the rice patties, when we thought they wouldn't fire. We dumped out boxes and boxes of M-60 and M-60 relms, clothes we threw away. And we'd have people coming in the country, and say, after we'd been there so long and say, "why don't you have the patch sowed on your jacket and stuff?" And we'd say, "what difference does it make, it doesn't make any difference if I have this on my arm or this on my shirt, I don't care." I walked around with no shirt. I didn't wear a shirt. You talk about stiff, polished shoes, I didn't wear a shirt.

SO, A YOU SAY, ALL THE DISCIPLINE PRETTY WELL DISAPPEARED?

Yes.

HOW DID YOU GET ORDERS FOR FIRE FIGHTS? HOW DID YOU GET ORGANIZED FOR THOSE? WAS THERE SOMEBODY GIVING YOU ORDERS FOR THAT?

We had a Sargent tell us, you seven patrol those parimeters, or my job was the machine gun, that was just automatic. I had a machine gun. At night time I got out and we set up a position and if there was incoming fire we returned fire. They told us where we could not shot and where we could. They'd say don't shoot 30 degrees to your right, because we have rangers 30 degrees to your right, they'd put up little yellow or orange flags in front of our bunker or our prarimeter and they'd say don't shoot past this flag or don't shoot past this flag. Triangle type.

WAS THERE A CHANCE TO SET DOWN AND READ A NEWSPAPER?

No, they stoled, the people that worked for the mail. I forgot what they call them now, mail personnel, or whatever, they were worked with the letters and stuff. My brother would send my Playboy and they'd steal it. I didn't get to smoke Kool cigarettes while I was over there, because they'd steal it, and I had to smoke just whatever kind of cigarette I could get a hold of. They'd steal my cigarettes and magazines. The only news I got a hold of was the Arm Forces radio and the paper, Stars and Stripes. But that's about all the news I got. Sometimes I got a paper from home.

BUT, THEY DID NOT SUPPLY YOU WITH ANY NEWSPAPERS? HOW ABOUT BOOKS? ANDY BOOKS? ANDY LIBRARY?

No, I don't remember seeing any, no.

HOW WAS THE FOOD?

Terrible. Roast Beef everyday.

HOW WAS THAT, TOUGH?

Yes, real tough. Kerosene. I think they used kerosene to cook with because all our fook had a karosene, after I ate my meals. Sometimes, we ate rations they were okay, rations were fine. Sometimes, I would go to, they had a mess hall farther

up the road. They had potatoes and I got those and cook them in the day time. I'd build a fire in the daytime and cook potatoes, that was a change.

ANY FRESH VEGATABLES?

No.

MILK?

Yes, we had some milk. Mostly beer.

YOU MUST HAVE FELT LIKE A PRISONER, YOU LIKE TO GET OUT BUT COULDN'T GET OUT?

Like I said, I prayed, I wanted to get shot.

THAT WAS THE WAY YOU'D GET OUT?

I wanted in the back of a helicopter. I wanted to get hit so bad. I prayed to get hit.

YOU NEVER DID?

No.

YOU DID NOT LIKE BEING LUCKY?

My lieutenant said one time that I was the luckiest soldier he'd ever seen, I'd ran through a lot of fire, mortar, machine gun fire to get from one position to another. There was tracks of bullets in the side of the little communication van, there were tracks of bullets on a little building, a little white building, and my bunker was blown up. And he said I was the luckiest soldier he'd ever seen. But, I never did get hit. But, like I said all I do, we get, when they'd coming, I'd say, "Please, God, let me get shot."

HOW LONG WERE YOU THEIR BEFORE YOU STARTED SAYING THAT TO YOURSELF?

Just as soon as I got to the Delta. Just as soon as they started coming in on us at Ton Son Nhut.

THAT'S IN JANUARY OR FEBRUARY, ISN'T IT?

Yes, right after Christmas.

I WAS ASKING YOU ABOUT WHAT YOU WERE GETTING IN THE WAY OF INFORMATION, ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON AT HOME. DID YOU KNOW, OF COURSE, THAT THERE WERE ANTI-WAR DEMONSTRATIONS GOING ON IN THE UNITED STATES? WERE YOU AWARE OF THAT AT ALL?

No.

YOU WERE TOTALLY IGNORANT OF IT?

I knew that there were people who didn't, I hear. We didn't think about that. I didn't have time to think about that. And if I knew that there was somebody back in the United States who didn't like war, I couldn't care less. I was trying to; all I wanted to do was breathe. I just wanted to keep on breathing. I didn't care where I got hit; I didn't care what happened. I just wanted to stay alive. I couldn't care. I didn't care if they were protesting the war or not.

DID YOU KNOW THAT THEY WERE PROTESTING?

Vague. Very vague.

IT DIDN'T GET TO THE POINT OF MAKING YOU ANGRY, SAYING HERE WE ARE OVER HERE?

No, not at all.

DIFFERENT PEOPLE HAVE SAID THAT BECAUSE THEY KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON AT HOME.

THEY WERE SAYING, "WELL WERE PUTTING IT ON THE LINE OVER HERE, AND SO FORTH, AND SO ON?"

No.

SO YOU DIDN'T GET INTO ANY OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE THAT WAS GOING ON AT HOME? SAY EUGENE McCARTNEY AND BOBBY KENNEDY? WHEN KENNEDY WAS SHOT AND THE BIG BATTLE IN CHICAGO AT THE CONVENTION? YOU DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT? AMONG THE DEMOCRATS AND THE PEACE MOVEMENT?

No.

THEN, OF COURSE, THERE WAS THE CAMPAIGN BETWEEN NIXON AND HUMPHREY IN '68. JOHNSON DECIDED NOT TO RUN AGAIN.

I didn't know about that. I didn't care.

IT WAS IN THE STARS AND STRIPES, BUT YOU JUST DIDN'T?

I didn't want to read that. I didn't have time. If I read the paper, I was worried about getting killed. That was so little; like a grain of sand. What Johnson was doing, I couldn't care less because he wasn't here with me. He wasn't in that bunker. He wasn't out there on patrol. It didn't help.

YOU MENTIONED ABOUT DRUGS. HOW ABOUT RACIAL CONFLICT? WAS THERE ANY OF THAT AMONG YOUR MEN THAT YOU WERE WITH, THAT YOU EXPERIENCED DURING VIETNAM?

Yes, at the time. They said, usually they thought the blacks might not, wouldn't take it to them. You know what I'm talking about, not taking it to them? The blacks might not take the fighting to them. But I don't feel that way now, because they are my brothers, now. Everyone of the Vietnam veterans are my brothers. I trust my life to every Vietnam vet.

BUT, OVER THERE, THERE WAS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF TENSION?

Just a little bit.

BUT IT WASN'T WARRANTED, THOUGH, YOU FEEL?

It wasn't even; you say this guy's black; he might not...

DID YOU HAVE A FEELING YOU HAD TO DEPEND ON EACH OTHER FOR SURVIVAL? WAS THERE ANY OF THAT SPIRIT OVER THERE WITH YOU?

When we were pinned down, I know I told a guy one time was out; we were under fire. I got a guy back to the bunker because I was afraid he was going to get killed. He'd just come into the country and he was amazed all this was going on. He got out of the bunker; I got him back in the bunker and told him to get down. I made another guy put out his cigarette. We, it felt good to have an American beside us, instead of a Ranger or a Korean. At least he was an American.

YOU KIND OF FELT SORRY FOR THESE NEW GUYS COMING IN AFTER YOU'D BEEN THERE?

Oh, yes.

WAS THERE A LOT OF CASUALTIES?

Yes.

A LOT OF GUYS YOU KNEW WERE KILLED?

Yes. I remember in our unit, there was a lot of guys hit, got wounded. Two of my very best friends were killed. That hurt me. Then, I remember, I knew it was rough one morning because we were coming in on a convoy. The troops were coming out, we were going in, they were coming out. There was a truck; a 2½ ton truck. It was full; the back was full of G.I.'s, wounded G.I.s. I remember the guys shot in the legs took their pants off. Instead of pulling up their pants and bandaging their wounds, they just took their pants off, their boots off. And they were lying in the 2½ ton truck. On the days I saw that I knew that, okay, here it goes. It is going to get hot; it's going to be really rough. This week or these three days or however long they're going to do this to us, it's going to be tough because I just seen this whole truck load of guys get shot. I know that i'm going in there from where they just came from. And you'd see the helicopters flying up in the air, and you'd know that people, they might be 100 yards away, but you'd know this guy just got shot, because you'd know they just came in and pulled him out. When all that starts going on, you know it's going to be rough on you too. They're not going to distinguish between you and this other person. That really worried me a lot; when I saw the people hit.

YOU WERE GOING IN TO REPLACE WHERE THEY HAD BEEN?

I slept under an A-PC, armored personnel carrier, where the sargent was dead inside the A-PC. The blood was... They had an A-PC that hit it, and I stayed underneath of it all night long. One was killed; two were wounded in the A-PC. And I stayed under it all night with a machine gun. The guy was still; there was still blood and all of that stuff.

HAD YOU BEEN IN IT AT THE TIME? THE A-PC.

No. It came in, and it got hit when it came in.

THEY WEREN'T MUCH OF A PROTECTION FOR SOLDIERS, WERE THEY?

No, armor piercing ground would go through the side and blow up. Fragments would scatter all over the inside of it.

I UNDERSTAND GUYS WOULD RATHER RIDE ON TOP THAN GET INSIDE OF IT?

Oh, yes.

THEY'D JUMP OFF IF THEY HAD TO DO ANYTHING ELSE, WOULDN'T THEY?

Yes, I stayed underneath of it.

UNDERNEATH IT?

Yes, I wouldn't get on top of it or underneath it. When it stopped, I got underneath it.

YOU DIDN'T RIDE IN THEM?

No, I knew what would happen.

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE EQUIPMENT YOU HAD, LIKE YOUR MACHINE GUNS AND YOUR RIFLES, AND SO FORTH?

IS THIS A QUESTION THAT PARTICULARLY INTERESTS YOU? WHY DID WE LOSE THE WAR? DO YOU EVER LOOK AT THE WAR THAT WAY, OR IS IT YOUR OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN IT, THAT IS, WHAT YOU'RE MOSTLY CONCERNED ABOUT?

Well, I don't know if we lost the war or not; I don't know if we won, and I don't know why I was there. I don't know if we lost, or we won, or why we were there.

GENERALLY, WE WERE GIVEN THE VIEW THAT AMERICANS WERE IN VIETNAM TO SAVE SOUTH VIETNAM DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT FROM BEING OVERTHROWN BY THE COMMUNIST.

But that's not true.

WELL, THE POINT I'M MAKING WITH YOU IS, THAT'S WHAT I'M TOLD. THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE TOLD BACK THEN, IN HAND, IN SOME VERSION OF THAT?

They didn't have a government.

I SEE. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU'VE HEARD ALL THESE REASONS, BUT WHAT YOUR SAYING WHEN YOU SAY, "YOU DON'T KNOW," IS THAT YOU DON'T THINK ANY OF THEM ARE VERY PLAUSABLE WHEN YOUR LOOKING BACK AT THE SITUATION.

They can give me...; they have not discovered a reason that I understand.

They say save the South Vietnamese from communist aggression. That was a bunch of crap. They were communists, they were all communists. That was the way they lived. See, if we were saving South Vietnam from the communists, we would have had to kill everyone in South Vietnam.

WELL, YOU KNOW, YOU STARTED OUT TALKING TO ME IN TERMS OF IF AS A YOUNG FELLOW YOU DECIDED, BECAUSE YOUR FATHER AND YOUR FATHER'S FATHER HAD ALL WHEN THERE WAS A WAR, YOU WENT TO SERVE YOUR COUNTRY. AT WHAT POINT DID YOU LOSE THAT?

I don't think I lost it.

YOU STILL FEEL YOU'RE AS PATRIOTIC AS EVER?

Yes.

DESPITE WHAT YOU WENT THROUGH?

Yes, I think.

YOU DIDN'T LOSE FAITH THEN?

No, I know I've been lied to. I've been cheated. I've been abused. But, I'm a pretty down to earth fellow. There is a war; you have to do that. You have to fight. I got messed over, I know that, but I'd probably do it again. Probably. I've lost a lot of feelings for myself. I try to work hard. I love my job. I try to work hard. But as far as what I've seen, I care about my baby and my wife. But, myself, I don't feel too much about myself anymore, as far as things happening to me. All I want is for them to be protected. I want my family to be protected. Me, I don't care too much.

OF COURSE. YOU ARE THERE PROTECTOR. THEY WANT YOU.

Yes. But, like my life after I got back from Vietnam, life isn't that meaningful. It seems like anymore.

YOU CAME BACK IN DECEMBER OF '68?

Yes.

WELL, TELL ME ABOUT COMING BACK FROM VIETNAM AND THE TIME IN BETWEEN COMING BACK AND YOU WENT BACK TO SCHOOL? RIGHT?

I went on the road. I played music.

YES. TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF AFTER YOU CAME BACK FROM VIETNAM?

Okay. We left out of Vietnam. They were shelling the airport when I went in and shelling the airport when I left. I went to San Francisco, they were demonstrating, that's the first time I knew too much about the anti-war, was demonstration. I saw them outside Travis Air Force Base and the next thing, two later I was home in Flatwood, asleep on my mothers couch. I just woke up, I was home. And I still, you know. They were shooting at me two days before I was lying on my mothers couch at home taking a nap. Two days before that I was getting fired at, getting shot at.

AND TWO DAYS AFTER THAT YOU WERE HOME, SAFE?

I'm home.

BETWEEN NICE CLEAN SHEETS.

Yes, I look up in the hills, look for snipers. Look for fire. I'd say that would be a good place for a VC to shoot from. I'd drive my car down the road

and say, "boy if there was a VC in that building he would really have a good shot at me," driving through town. That goes on and on, that goes on today. YOU STILL HAVE THAT SAME?

Yes, The anxiety is almost unbelievable. Very, It's extremely, I dream about it all.

HAVE YOU HAD ANY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE OF ANY KIND? WHERE DID YOU GO TO THE ARMY VA HOSPITAL.

Private

HAVE THEY DONE ANY-THING FOR YOU?

I don't think ther's anything they can do.

IT'S JUST THERE- WERE ALL THAT WAY, OF COURSE YOUR'S WAS SUCH A TRAMATIC EXPERIENCE. IF YOU'RE DRIVING ALONG AND YOU JUST MISS BY A LITTLE BIT BEING BRUSHED BY A TRUCK COMING THE OTHER WAY YOU KNOW THAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE & DEATH AND YOU KNOW YOU'RE TO GO TO BED AT NIGHT, AND WAKE UP THINKING ABOUT IT. THAT'S THE KIND OF THING YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT, A HUNDRED TIMES.

More

MORE?

More every day- Every day twenty-four hours a day was like you was in a car wreck.

LIKE WHAT?

Car wreck.

THAT WAS WHAT YOU SAID ORIGINALLY.

Weak feeling in stomach, copper taste in your mouth, in the very back of your mouth you have a bitter taste. Your have a rea; bitter taste copperish type taste. I'm not a doctor, MD,so I don't know what that taste is. There is a taste there is a smell, you could smell things over there. I

SOME OF THE GUYS COMING BACK, AS SOON AS THEY GOT THERE WAS THAT SMELL.

Terrible smell, moldy, if you go to a place there has been a fight somebody, say ther has been a lot of fighting burns, stuff being burned , people being burned you could smell that and you always smelled the muskey smell. Wet tt was always wet, moldy type smell, and that taste, the taste was fear. I don't know what gland that comes out of.

WELL, YOU KNOW YOU COME BACK FROM VIETNAM AND TWO DAYS LATER YOU'RE HOME.

IN OTHER WORDS THE ARMY DIDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR YOU TO MAKE A CHANGE TO HELP YOU MAKE THAT CHANGE DID IT.

No, Nobody helped me at all. They just sent me home, and i didn't realize I was in the shape I was in. I had no ideal, I thought everybody was like that.

And now, I didn't work in couseling and rehab at the party by yourself. Nobody tell can't help anybody whats on your mind. Cause they can't share that, they don't know why you're sitting among, or whats your thinking. the only person that knows is a another veteren, Vietnam Vetern, but your afraid to talk to him because your afraid of flash backs, the only person you can trust is someone that's been there with you but you don't want to talk to that person because-

IT WILL BRING IT BACK-

Cause this guy will say "you remember Plolone, Placue- a you remember DaNaige- and all of a sudden here all of a sudden you start remembering rounds comming. So you don't want to talk to him even though you know he's the only person you can trust he's been through it to, I've had so much anxiety about you comming up here to see me alot , all day,, I was nervous all morning I knew you were comming up here today I've been nervous since I got up this morning. I tried to get the house , me and my wife cleaned the house and we tried to het everything straightend up . Uou know I asked if you would like to have dinner, we have home stuff for sandwiches. But I've been just like this all day knowing you's going to be here. And I was hoing to have to talk to you about this.

I WOULD LIKE TO PICK UP THE STORY YOU CALLED FA YOUR MOTHER AND THEN WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THAT IM TO GO BACK AND DINISH YOUR EDUCATION. ISN'T THAT COMETHING, HOW MUCH TIME BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO PUT THINGS TOGETHER

Probably 6-8 months i went back to school.

TO MOREHEAD

Yeah- but it wasn't the same.

WHEN DID YOU GO BACK WAS IT IN-

Spring semester-

SPRING OF 69-

Yeah- I think thats when

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF LIVING FROM DOWN THERE EITH YOUR EXPEREINCES BEHIND YOU AND WAY YOU FELT.

I hated the people down there

DID YOU?

Yes. they were having, you were out there I think whin I went to School

I MUST HAVE BEEN, I CAME IN AUG. OF 69. I TAUGHT MY FIRST CLASS IN SEPT. DID YOU SEE NE DIWB TGERE?

Yes, My Wife remembers, she's a Morehead graduate. She said that she remembered you and then I said that I think that I remember.

WELL NOW THAT YOU'VE SEEN ME DO YOU REMEMBER ME?

Yes. I think so. They had a protest at Button aud.

GO AHEAD

I couldn't believe it. They were screaming, "get the troops out of Vietnam. And I said you people don't know, your setting here at Button Aud. and telling people to get out of Vietnam . Your little babies. You know, your little babies crying about something you don't know anything about, I said ther's guys over there, I home, the guys that went in after I gor home, they're getting killed right now and your setting here talking about it. You know your settubg here saying getting out of Vietnam. I remember Button Aud., they weren't sofa chairs, they weren't padded chairs, they were more less hard back seats.

I said your setting in a chair, no martor is going to come through the top of this building. I can almost guarentte you nobody's going to bust in this door and kill you, and your setting here and got the right to talk about this. Your talking about it and there's not one person who's going to bust in this door and kill you in any minute. And I thinking, shut up, your lucky. You know, you all just be quite, because if you were in Vietnam you'd be on the ground and this mortar round would be busting in on top of your head and half of you in here would be dead. I said you shouldn't be talking about Vietnam because its not over here, its over there. I'd say if the rounds were going off at Button Aud. the change in attitudes would be tremendons.

WE YOU, IN OTHER WORDS, WERE YOUR COMING BACK AND INTO SCHOOL LIKE THAT, WERE YOU A SUPPOROR OF THE CONTINUE OF THE WAS, THE CONTINUE FIGHTING OF THE WAR? IS THAT WHAT YOUR SAYING?

No, I sort of stayed away from the talk of the war. Recluse. I didn't talk about it. I haven't talked about it. I haven't talked to anyone about it.

Except, this guy called me and ask me to join Vietnam Vet. of America.

YES, WHAT'S HIS NAME

Dan Hickman.

YES THAT'S THE NAME BECAUSE GREG PENNINGTON MEANTIONED HE CALLED HIM TOO.

DAN HICKMAN?

Yes.

WE WENT TO A MEETING MONDAY NIGHT AND PEOPLE INTRODUCED THERESELVS AND V/ WHERE THEY WERE AT. OKAY, WERE IN OUR THRITIES. THESE PEOPLE WERE CRYING. GROWN MEN CRYING INTRODUCING THEMSELVES IN FRONT ON ANOTHER GROUP OF MEN. YOU KNOW THAT'S NO RIGHT.

No.

YOU DON'T GET UP AND SAY, "MY NAME IS MEL FERGUSON, AND THEN START CRYING.

No you don't.

Idon't think that's the way its supposed to be.

YOU KNOW WHAT THIS GUY SAID TO ME, I'LL JUST TELL YOU WHAT HE SAID, THIS IS , YOU DON'T KNOW HIM SO , HE SAID, " I DON'T WANT TO GO TO THESE MEETINGS, BECAUSR I DON'T WANT TO LIVE THIS ALL OVER AGAIN. I JUST WANT TO FORGET A

ABOUT IT." HE'S AFRAID TO GO TO THE MEETINGS.

I am the same here.

FOR THAT REASON THAT YOU JUST DESCRIBED. IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT HE WAS AFRAID OF, YOU'VE ALREADY EXPERIENCED BY GOING TO THE MEETING?

I went to just one meeting.

WOULD YOU GO AGAIN?

It took me, that was Monday, nad l'm just now getting over it and here we go again. I want to go again if I think it can help these guys that are in a lot of trouble. If I can help my brothers, they are my brothers, l'll go.

HOW MANY WERE THERE THEIR?

Twenty , twenty-five

TWENTY, ARE THEY. DO THEY HAVE JOBS?

No

YOUR ONE OF THE FEW WHOSE GOT A CAREER?

THREE, three out of twenty.

THREE OUT OF TWENTY.

One guy couldn't even remember what unit he was with. They all started crying Some of them were passive, some of them were aggressive. I've never seen the feeling that was in that room, it was in the public liabray. There was enough emotions in there to blow the building up, out of only twenty men. They were just bouncing off the walls. Everybody was smoking cig., drinking coffee, and just crying. Coming home, being in a building with another bunch of Vietnam vets. and they were crying. And your not supposed to do that.

NO, ARE THEY GOING TO CONTINUE TO MEET?

Yes, until we get legislation and maybe get some of them jobs.

IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT FIRST OF ALL, JOBS?

obs. And we want to be reconized as supporters of our nation. and people w who forget, I don't know what we fought for, but we did fight under some pretense the govt. told us. We fought. We want to be recongized , we want to get jobs, we don't want people to think that were crazy, we don't want people to think we go around killing people and blowing up buildings. We don't want that-impression. We want the stigma taken off of us. That Vietnam Vets. crazy

A-Team television type thing. We want that taken away. We don't want people making fun of us like the modern dress is kackys and fatigus. On television you see, even Calvin Kline, you know they have the kacky uniforms are now very, it costs a whole bunch of money to wear them, We don't want tnat.

WHAT IS THAT A TYPE OF ARMY OUTFIT, IS THAT WHAT IT IS, CALVIN KLINE IS DESIGNER CLOTHES.

No Calvin Kline is Designer Clothes.

I KNOW THAT. YES

But, they've come out with camoflauge type clothing.

COST YOU FIFTY BUCKS?

Yes, so bucks and we burnt it. We used to burn the stuff. We son't like that. THAT KIND...

That's making fun of us.

SO, WE HAVE YOU IN SCHOOL. DID YOU GO BACK TO MOUR AG.

Yes.

SO, YOU FINISHED IT?

I had a rough time of it.

GO AHEAD.

I-know, your a proffessor. Okay, I'm not going to say you did this, because i don't know. I don't know what you do for a living, I know that your a prof-fessor. This guys giving you a test and you've been out of Vietnam six months. He's giving you a test and you make a D or a F on it. What is that. What is that test. I didn't understand.

WHAT'S TO UNDERSTAND?

Well anything. You write your name on it. He gives you a test after you've just been tested. You know, your life's been tested. All of a sudden you have to put it down with pencil and paper.

Yes. And they don't, you've got some guy that, emotional he hits those books everynight, you know, not a thing. And your setting there thinking about Vietnam and what's happened to you and stuff. And you don't study as well as he does. And there, its insulting to thinking that your setting beside this guy.

THERE WAS NO HELP AT THE UNIVERSITY FOR GUYS THEN?

None. The University didn't care. And I don't know that they still do, you know/ They pushed all of the stuff under the carpet.

THEY DIDN'T WANT TO RECONIZE IS WHAT YOUR SAYING, WHAT YOU WENT THROUGH, AND THAT YOU NEEDED, YOU REALLY NEEDED SOME UNDERSTANDING FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WHAT YOU'VE GONE THROUGH, THAT THERE WAS SOME TIME NEEDED FOR AJUSTMENT TO GET BACK INTO YOUR BOOKS AND ALL THE REST OF IT.

Yes. They say okay your failing this class, your just like everybody else. They didn't ask why you were failing the test. You tell them your still worried , You walk sown the campus on Morehead and you think, well this would be a good place right here for a sniper position. You got to go into a classroom and take a test. They didn't take that into consideration. Because they were protisting

HOW DID YOU DO IN YOUR CLASSES?

Okay, In my Undergradute work, very poorly, maybe around the 2.0. Then in the last, since I've got married and since I've been teaching school, I've made B's andA's. They've been real good grades. Real good grades. All my graguate work was 3.5 to 3.6. All good grades.

WHEN YOU GRADUATED FROM MOREHEAD, DID YOU GET YOUR JOB IN GREENUP CO.?

No, No. I went to work for a factory.

WHAT DID YOU DO?

Janitor.

JANITOR, HOW LONG?

About 4]/2 Yrs.

AND IN THE MEAN TIME YOU WERE LOOKING FOR A TEACHING JOB?

No, I didn't know what I wanted. I knew I was making some money.

AND THEN, DO YOU GET MARRIED IN THES TIME?

No, I've only been married three years.

THREE YEARS. SO \$ [?@YEARS. AT A JANITOR, SO WHAT WAS NEXT, TEACHING

Yes. I went into sub. teaching.

HOW DID YOU GET TO SUB. TEACHING?

I was really disturbed because I couldn't be anything but a janitor and I wasn't a very good janitor. I- was a very poor janitor. Probably one of the worst janitors they ever had. I hadn't been trained to be a good janitor. And that was my life. That was going to be the rest of my life, was a janitor. And I thought, I have a great deal of love for children. and I wanted to teach children. So, I said I'm hoing to give up all the money I'm making and I'm making and I'm going to teach kids. And that's what I do.

AND EVENTUALLY FROM BEING ON PART-TIME THEY TOOK YOU ON FULL-TIME.

The first year there was a teacher having a problem and I started teaching civics. I tought about a year. He was only there about a year and I tought the rest of the year him.

YES

Okay. Finally I sub. another year. And I worked everyday. And last year I get my student teaching and completed the hours towards my master degree.

WHERE?

Morehead.

ARE YOU STILL GOING BACK AND FORTH TO THERE?

No, I finished. I think I have 30 hrs. for my graduate work. I have to take my orals. and they tell me not to take my orals because that't another jump in the pay scale where I get my 10 yr..

AND WHAT ARE YOU GETTING YOUR MASTERS IN ED.?

Yes. Vocational ed.

VOC. ED. ARE YOU TEACHIN AG. AT THE...

No,, I don't have the oppurtunity to do that. Because, all of the positions are filled. I'm teaching science and biology.

I BET YOU LIKE THAT THOUGH?

Yes, I love it. Yes, I really like that.

THEN WERE YOU TEACHING AND THEN GOT MARRIED, OR JUST BEFORE THAT?

I met my wife at the school.

AT THE SCHOOL. IS SHE TEACHING THERE TOO?

Yes, 11 years now.

She's an algebra teacher.

ALGEBRA. WHAT WAS HER NAME BEFORE SHE GOT MARRIED?

Wallace

WHAT'S HER FIRST NAME?

Lynn

LYNN WALLACE.

She had a twil sister. All my relatives, mother, aunts, and uncles are Morehead graduates. All of us.

AND THEN YOU HAVE A BABY?

Yes.

HOW OLD IS THE BABY?

Our baby was 2 years old in Oct.

WHAT IS IT BOY OR GIRL?

Girl.

WHAT DO YOU CALL GER?

Ruby

RUBY. THE, WELL, IT SUMS TO ME. I'D BE BERY ENCOURAGED THE FACT YOU'VE GOT YOUR FEET ON THE GROUND WITH YOUR JOB AND YOUR FAMILY AND ALL THE REST OF IT. I'D IMAGINE YOUR FAR, FAR AHEAD THAN A LOT OF THESE GUYS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO MAKE THOSE AJUSTMENT'S. I'M SURE YOU RECONIZE THIS FOR YOURSELF

Sure

I THINK THAT IS TERMINDOUS. WELL, HERE WE ARE, TODAY, IN THIS WORLD OF OURS. HOW DO YOU SEE THIS WORLD OF OURS. HOW DO YOU SEE THIS WORLD OF OURS. HOW DO YOU WEE THIS WORLD TODAY. WHAT DO YOU THINK, FOR EXAMPLE, THE ARMS RACE. DO YOU CONCERN YOURSELF AT ALL WITH THAT? OF WORRY ABOUT IT AT ALL?

Not myself. I don't worry about myself. I don't worry about myself. Now, I don't want my daughyer to be paranoid. I son't care, me , I've already...

ARE YOU CONCERNED PRIMARILY ABOUT THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING?

No, I'm concernped primarily about my family.

WELL IN THE SENSE, FOR YOUR FAMILY?

I'd like things to be okay. I don't know what the chances are, I'd say slim.

I'd like for my daughter to be raised in a peaceful enironment. That's what I prayed for. But, for me, I don't care.

HOW ABOUT, DO YOU PAY AN ATTENTION TO LEBONON OR ELSALVIDOR?

No.

YOU JUST LET THAT PART OF THE WORLD SLID BY.

Yes.

DO YOU GET INTERESTED IN POLITICIS AT ALL? YOU KNOW, DO YOU THINK ABOUT WERE THEN YOU"LL VOTE FOR REAGAN OF?

No.

YOU DON'T THINK YOU WILL VOTE?

I'll go vote, but it's not that important to me.

IN A SINCE WHAT?

Because, I've been lied to, sheated.

WHERE DOES MOST OF THE LIES COME FROM? HOW DO YOU MEAN THAT?

WHY Htd they make me do all of htis stuff. You know. Why did they treat me like that. I come home and I find out that my friends can't get a job. My

Vietnam brothers cannot get a job, all the pain all the stuff we go through and nobody cares. No one cares. This guy, Reagan, called the winners of the Super Bowl. Okay. \$ 1 million dollars a minute was the air time. All we are asking for is a job. And he stays on the telephone three minutes, spending three million bucks, which would give, three million would sure help out vietnam vets.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN IT WAS \$3MILLION, FOR WHAT?

That was the air time for the Super Bowl, it was \$1 million a minute.

OH, OH,

And Reagan calls and congratulates the coach of the Raiders, of whoever won the damned game and he didn't. And Martha Layne Collins what does she say about the Vietnam Vets.

WHAT IS SHE SAYING ABOUT THEM?

I haven't heard anything.

NOTHING.

Nothing.

SIDE 4

THEY HAVE, THE LEGISLATURE, THEY HAVE A COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS. HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THEY DON'T WANT TO GIVE THE VETS, CERTAIN BENEFITS. VETS OF VIETNAM ANY BENEFITS, BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT IN WAR? THE ONLY KIND OF A WAR SO CALLED IS A DECLARED WAR. VIETNAM WAS A CONFLICT.

You know, to be, so we can get everything really on the table. Okay. I don't want any disability. I don't want any kind of payment for being in Vietnam. I don't want any of that stuff. I'd just like to be treated fairly, with consideration to my anxieties. That's all. I don't want any money. I don't want anything. All I want is just to be treated according to the anxiety and frustration that I have. I want that with me. I want to say here's Mel Furganar and here is his anxiety, here's what's he's been through. That's him. That's what he's been through. That's him. That's the whole person. And not having that being negative, I don't want money. I don't want to be paid for that.

DO YOU THINK YOUR GETTING ANY OF WHAT YOUR LOOKING FOR?

No. I don't think anybody cares if I was in Vietnam or not. I can't think of anybody that cares.

WELL, YOUR PROBABLY RIGHT. YOUR PROBABLY RIGHT.

When I was telling you about that KET thing.

YES, WE WERE GOING TO TALK ABOUT THAT. DID YOU WATCH IT ALL?

No, I watched half of it.

OKAY.

I told my principal that I was watching it on television. And he said when are you going to forget about all of that stuff.

I BET THAT REALLY CURLED YOU UP INSIDE DIDN'T IT?

I said, I thought to myself, you know he's my boss, you don't tell your boss anything.

YOU JUST WALKED AWAY I SUPPOSE?

I walked away and then I thought I'm never going to forget it. He said when are you going to forget that.

THATS A CRUEL THING TO SAY.

He said when are you going to forget about that and I was thinking I wish I could. I'd give anything if I could just be you, and not worry about that, and he don't know, he has no ideal I can't forget, then somebody says when are you going to forget about that. That's ridiculous.

WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT THE SERIES ON VIETNAM. HOW DID YOU REACT TO IT. I ASKED THE SAME QUESTION TO GREG TODAY AND HE SAYS, "AS SOON AS HE HEARD THE HELICOPTERS HE TURNED THE DAMN THING OFF." NOW I DON'T WANT TO ENCOURAGE PERTURANCE, BUT THAT'S WHEN HE QUIT.

I quit when they started about the tet offensive. I stopped.

AT THAT POINT.

I had a friend over, he was marine he's disabled Marine, he was over the same time I was. We both got too nervous, we couldn't talk, we turned it off.

HAVE YOU READ ANY BOOKS ON VIETNAM

No. Three pages in my history book, ther's only three pages at the end of the chapter.

I MEAN THERES MANY BOOKS OUT.

No, I've never read any of em. I've seen some pictures of weapons thats all. THERES QUITE A NUMBER OF PRETTY GOOD BOOKS ON VIETNAM, I USE SOME OF THEM IN MY CLASSES, THATS THE WAY WE TEACH. I TRY TO EVERY SEMESTER TO GET SOME OF THE VETERNS, NOW I DON'T HAVE VERY MANY VETERNS IN THE CLASS. IF ANY AT ALL LAST TWO I HAD ONE WAS FORTY NINE YEARS OLE, GUY, THE OTHER GUY WAS CLOSE TO THAT, THE FIRST GUY WAS AN REGULAR ARMY MAN, HAD BEEN IN THE SERVICE FOR SOMETHING LIKE TEN YEARS, AND HE WAS IN VIETNAM IN ONE OF THESE PACIFICATION KINDS OF COMPANY, REAL INTERESTING. HOW ABOUT MOVIES, HAVE YOU SEEN ANY OF THE MOVIES ABOUT VIETNAM.

I don't watch em.

APPOCLUS NOW.

No. I won't watch those. No I don't like to see'em, I don't like to see things get killed.

HOW LING HAVE YOU BEEN LIVING HERE.

We moved here in Fall.

FALL.

Fall this year.

YOU HAD A HARD WINTER?

Yeah- they were pretty tough.

SHE LIKES IT ALRIGHT?

Yeah- We love it out here.

ARE THEY AROUND NOW YOUR WIFE AND...

Well my daughter, they knew you were comming, and my daughter she's just two years old. I don't think we could have conversed with her.

I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN.

So they made arrangements to Grandpa & Grandma's. And I don't talk to wife about tjis either.

NO

No, She don't understand, and thats a shame, I can't tell her. I can't tell no one.

WELL YOU SEEM TO _ WHERE DID YOU GET THESE PICTURES GOLEE_ LOOK AT THIS.

This is my hobbie- theres some that are old beautiful.

I WOULD SAY SO.

I got one here I'm very proud of-

SOME PEOPLE COLLECT GUNS AND COLLECT PICTURES.

This is my wife. I've got my American flag og course.

AND YOU'VE GOT ALL OF YOUR HATS.

You , what do you read.

Mostly how to do books. Then I read my ag. books. Most of it is USBA- then all of my teachings.

SO IT WILL BE A LITTLE TIME BEFORE YOU SETTLE IN, YOU AREN'T DEPENDING ON THIS FOR LIVELY HOOD, THIS IS.

No this is just something I like.

HOW DO YOU GET IN AND OUT OF HERE ON BAD DAYS?

No school.

I WAS THINKING OF THAT AS I WAS COMING UP THE ROAD. BOY ANY ONE LIVING UP HERE. You can't do it this road is see we don't get much sunshine up here because of the hills. I think we, I moved down here to get away from people. To get away.

WELL IT'S NOT TO BAD, YOU SEE ALOT OF KIDS IN CLASS ALL DAY LONG . THATS GOOD FOR YOU.

You haven't disturbed me, I don't know how you feel about the war. I don't know any of those things.

