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277

WHEN WERE YOU BORN?

March 21, 1946

WHERE?

Grayson

HOW LARGE OF A FAMILY DO YOU COME FROM?

Family of 6, 4, children.

WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S OCCUPATION?

Railroad worker for C & O Railroad.

DO YOU HAVE AN ESTIMATE AS TO HIS AVERAGE INCOME?

No. He worked 35 years for the railroad. My maother was a postmistress.

ARE YOU MARRIED?

Yes.

HAVE ANY CHILDREN?

Two.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE GROWING UP IN GRAYSON?

I didn't grow up in Grayson. I grew up in the rural area about ten miles out of Grayson. Just like any regular small community as far as I know of, small time life.

DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL IN GRAYSON?

Yes. My first four years I went to a one-room school. One teacher teaching for grades. When I went into 5th grade we had a two-room. They added another room and cafeteria, we we had two teachers. I came to high school at Pritchard here in Grayson.

WERE YOU IN HIGH SCHOOL JUST ABOUT THE TIME THE VIETNAM WAR BEGAN?

60-64 was when I was in high school.

60-64? WELL, YOU MIGHT REMEMBER A LITTLE BIT OF THOSE DAYS ABOUT JOHN F. KENNEDY?

Right. To tell you the truth, when I was in high school I don't know if I knew anything about the Vietnam War or where Vietnam was located. Maybe my senior year we had a lot of people being drafted that year and were concerned a lot that we didn't know why, or where they were going. Then in '65 one of the boys that graduated with me was killed in Vietnam. That brought it a little closer home, we knew then what it was.

BUT UP UNTIL THAT TIME YOU DIDN'T PAY ANY ATTEMTION TO IT? THAT'S JUST ABOUT THE WAY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE GENERALLY REACTED? WHEN YOU START TALKING ABOUT VIETNAM, THEY'D SAY WHERE IS THAT? WHEN YOU FINISHED HIGH SCHOOL DID YOU GO ON TO COLLEGE?

No, I didn't go to college. I went out to hunt a job and found out there were no jobs. Especially my age froup. I was eligible for the draft and no one wanted to hire me because of that reason. They didn't want to hire anyone that would possible be drafted six months after they hired them. Then the draft in '65 stated getting more people and I decided I would rather have the 2-5 deferment instead of the military so I went to college.

AT MOREHEAD?

Yes.

WHAT WAS YOUR MAJOR?

I think, History. I don't even know if I had a major or not. but then I changed.

WERE YOU INFLUENCED BY THE PROSPECT OF BEING DRAFTED?

68-

Mainly, probably that was 75% of the reason I'd say.

THEN YOU STAYED HOW LONG AT THE UNIVERSITY?

I stayed from '65 to '67. Then in the summer after I got out of school in the spring, I got a job, good paying job working with the C & O shops in Grayson at the railroad. I worked all that summer. I thought I'll work this fall and go back to school in the spring and they'll never miss me, the draft board will never catch this. Two weeks after school started, I got my draft notice. They were slicker than I thought they were. So I guess my own greed, I guess you could call it, got me.

THAT WAS IN '67? THAT SUMMER?

That was in '67. It was in November when I actually left- I got a notice early October.

HOW DID FIND THE NUMBER OF YOUNG FELLOW FROM THIS AREA AS FAR AS THE DRAFT IS CONCERNED, DID YOU FIND THAT DRAFT BOARD DECISION WHERE THEY HAD CHOSEN TONY POPE INSTEAD OF SOMEONE ELSE?

I always wondered why, you know, because let me tell you this. I graduated down here from a class of approximately 70 in our senior class. Approximately, maybe 35 were boys. Out of that 35, six went into the military. Now how the other 29 didn't go, I don't know.

NOW THIS IS THE GROUP THAT YOU THINK WERE DRAFTED- THESE 6 OUT OF THE 35?

No, some of them joined, a couple of them joined. I never could figure out why they particularly picked me, probably the reason on mine was Morehead notified the draft board that I was no longer in school- so that made my name stand right out, right quick. Why these others were not draged at all, I'll never know. This was when the draft board was here.

WERE THEY IN COLLEGE?

As far as I know a lot of them never went to college. Some of them were, some of them didn't.

YOU DON'T HAVE ANY EVIDENCE ON YOUR OWN?

No. I even appealed to the draft board saying I was going back the next semester, but that didn't work.

DID YOU EVER HAVE THE FEELING THAT IF YOU WERE POLITICALLY CONNECTED IT WOULD HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE?

Possibly, yes. There were certain families I know of that their children were not drafted. It was political, definitely, the draft board was.

SO DID YOU GO INTO THE SERVICE THEN OF KIND OF A FELLING OF IT BEING UNFAIR?

After I was already in, I didn't think anymore about it. I just put it behind me, that's it and I just as well make the best of it. I also went in the army with the attitude that I had two years of college, in every place that I went in most places, in my basic training and AITI was in the top 5% of the most educated of the group. In basics, I was squad leader, also inAIT. So I took it for granted, especially in basics, since I had all fo this and that I could get a job in the militart. I was better educated, I figured i'd be clerk of something. The army don't work that way, I found out. When we got our sorders, I was to to to infantry school.

FROM BASICS?

Right, from basic. Now I was given a choice. I was asked t:

three different times. They called twelve of us out wanting us to go to warrant officers flight training. Because of our test scores and everything, helicopter piolets. Good deal until it came right down to the last little thing they told us- now boys you're gonna have to re-enlist for so many more years. That's when everybody got up and walked out. This was done twice- once in my basic and once in my AIT.

OK. YOU HAD TWO YEARS OF COLLEGE BEFORE YOU GOT DRAFTED AN 11 BRAVO WAS YOU MOS.?

No. I was 11 H, which is heavy weapons in the infantry. We were the 106 Recoiless rifle, if you understand what I was talking about. Then, When in Vietnam, they didn't use them, so they made us regular foot shoulders. But that was about it. I was in the army about six months before I went to Vietnam.

WHEN WAS THAT, WHEN DID YOU GET TO VIETNAM?

I was drated in November. I spent about four weeks in Fort Knox, came home for Christmas, went back after about the first of the year, finished up my basic. I never got any leave after my basics because I'd got a leave at Christmas so I went straight to Fort Polk at Louisiana. There wasn't no doubt in my mind after we got there where we were going. Because there was a big sign up over the gate- "Home of Combat Infantry Men ofr Vietnam." So there was no doubt when you went there where you were going.

IT WAS A WELL KNOW FACT THAT WHEN YOU GOT ORDERS FOR FT. POLK, LOUISIANA, WHERE YOU WERE GOING, YOU WERE GONE?

Out of my basic training group of 200 men, 114 of us went to Fort Polk. Some down at Ft. Polk didn't go to Vietnam, and I didn't understand until I got to Vietnam why they did this I always thought that the people they put in infantry were undereducated, until I got to Vietnam. After that I understand they don't do that- they put the more well-educated people in because they are the ones who have to take care of themselves more and more and take care of more people. They have a little bit heavier responsibility and you want someone who can think and knows what they doing especially under pressure. The average education of when I took my training at Ft. Polk, out of 100 men the average education was something like 12-14 yrs. That's pretty good. I had a fellow in there, well, I was stationed with a couple of huys when I was in Vietnam that had a Master's degrees, college degrees and they were infantry men. They were drafted. Like I said, the army doesn't think that way.

I SUPPOSE THE AGE, WHAT WAS THE AGE RANGE?

Now, I was older. I turned 21 in Vietnam-- and actually the guys averaged from 19. Well, I was older than most of them, becaus3 like I said, after I graduated from high school I spent a year looking for a job and the two years in college. Most of them were right out of high school, a lot of them, then again some of them went to college like I did.

YOU MENTIONED ABOUT VIETNAM THAT YOU HAD NO NOTION ABOUT VIETNAM AND I SUPPOSE...

Well, when I was in college even....

ALL YOU KNEW WAS THAT IT WAS A PLACE OT STAY AWAY RFOM?

Right, that's why I wanted to stay out of it. Why we were there I didn't know. Later on

WHAT ABOUT THE ARMY, DID THEY GIVE YOU ANY EDUCATION OF WHY YOU WERE THERE OR WHY THEY WERE SENDING YOU THERE?

Why we were there? Well, we were there to fight communism.
WELL, WAS THER ANY KIND OF INDOCTRINATION TO TRY TO GET YOU
NOT EVATED. WHY YOU WERE GCING THERE, WHY YOU MAY GET SHOT AT?
MAYBE GET KILLED?

280

Asfar as I know, no. They trained us to fight, fight the enemy.
They made sure, in other words to me it was up to them to tell
us who the emnemy were and we were to go out and fight.
theynever did say why, we just knew there was somebody but there
YOU DIDN'T HAVE A CLEAR CUT NOTION AS TO WHY YOU WERE THERE,
EXCEPT THIS A VAGUE IDEA YOU WERE GOING TO FIGHT THE COMMUNIST.
Right. Now after I got there awhile. I understood a little
bit more I think after being around the people and so on.
WAS THERE ANY INSTRUCTION WHEN YOU WERE THERE?

WE had kind of a week or two orientation, when we first got there. Mainly, it was to get us used to the climate before they sent you right out. They gave us a few classes about the Vietnames people and so on. So they did a little bit there, explain and show a little more. Differrnce kind of snales and so on.

281

BUT NON OF THE HISTORY OF THE INVOLVEMENT?

No

IN THE HISTORY, IF YOU WANT TO EXPLAIN SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED, SAY 1970, YOU GO BACK AND GET THE BACKGROUND SO YOU'LL UNDERSTAND THE POINT OF 1970. SO THAT WOULD BE THE GENERAL EDUCATIONAL APPROACH, YOU DIDN'T GET ANY OF THAT AT ALL DID YOU?

No. As far as I can remember, I don't remember hetting any of that type of information.

WHEN YOU WENT OVER THERE, WHAT WAS THE OUTFIT? TELL US A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT THAT.

First, I went to Ben Hoa for the 90th replacement. That's where everybody is assigned. Now I was with a buddy--a guy from here in Grayson--we went through everything together, and I never did figure out why we stayed together all the time. I finally realized what it was--his and my serial numbers were one digit different from each other's. When we were both drafted, we left here together, when we got in line to get our serial numbers and everything either he was standing in front of me or vice versa, but our numbers are just one digit different. Boht of our education is fairly comparable. Again, he was called out when we were called out for warrant flight school. We're pretty similar on our test scores. We went to Ft. Knox together. We were in the same company, went to Fort Polk together, he was in the spud and I was his spud and I was his squad leader. We flew to Vietnam together on the same plane, but once we got there they seperated us.

THEY BROKE YOU ALL UP, THEY DIDN'T KEEP YOU AS A UNIT?

Well, let me tell you a little story about this. They called us out, i went to the 9th infantry division, which is located in the Mekong Delta.

TELL US HOW--YOU WENT TO THE 9thINFANTRY DIVISION?

They would call us out in formation every day at the 9th replacement. they would call several hundred men, and they'd want that because they were up in the Nothern Parts and we heard kind of bad stories of what they were doing. And they would call off peoples' names, now you got to get on this truck, go get your stuff, come and get on this truck. They'd go and that'd be the last you'd see of them people.

WELL, YOU KNOW, TONY, I'M PUSHING THIS WITH YOU BECAUSE ONE OF THE CRITICISMS OF THE WAY THE ARMY FOUGHT THE WAR IN VIETNAM WAS A BASIC WEAKNESS OF USING THE PROCEDURE THAT YOU ARE DESCRIBING, THE GUYS THAT WENT OVER THERE DIDN'T GO OVER THERE AS A UNIT AS THEY DID IN PREVIOUS CONFLICTS, WORLD WAR II ESPECIALLY, WHERE YOU WOULD KNOW WVERYBODY IN YOUR PLATOON, YOU'D KNOW EVERYBODY IN YOUR COMPANY, YOU'D BEEN WORKING TOGETHER FOR AWHILE, YOU TRAINED TOGETHER, YOU HAD, GUESS YOU'D CALL IT, AND ESPREE DE CORPS, YOU KNOW WHERE GUYS KNEW EACH OTHER. THAT WAS THE FUNDAMENTAL WAY THAT THEY TRAINED MEN FOR WORLD WAR II, BUT THEY AS

YOU SAY, YOU'RE DESCRIBING WHAT WE ALL KNOW, THIS BUSINESS OF PICKING OUT THIS GROUP, YOU HERE AND THERE, SCATTERED AROUND.

28v

I never thought anything about it, the way they were doing it then.

YES, BUT DID YOU HAVE THAT FEELING THAT THE CLAIM WAS IN THE DRAFTEES WHEN THAT WELL, YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHERE YOU WERE GOING, YOU WERE IN A STRANGE GROUP, YOU DIDN'T KNOW A SOUL, HAD NO ANTICIPATION OF ANYBODY AROUND YOU THAT YOU COULD TALK TO OR RELY ON.

Now that developed later on as you were assigned to a unit. Because you stayed with that unit. But when you first went there no there was no, you didn't know where you were going. The only orders were, you were ordered to Vietnam and that was it. You didn't know where, what, where you were going to be located.

SO THERE WAS A SENSE OF BEWILDERMENT?

Definitely, I don't know... Did anything strike you about Vietnam when you stepped off that airplane? Did anything hit you right in the face when you stepped off?

M. D. Yes, I told many people that the country smelled. It's the smell. When you stepped off that plane, the odor hit you right in the face. I don't know what it was.

BODY ODOR?

No, it was just an odor. I landed at Manila before I got there at Clark Air Force Base. What got me there was the humidity like to killed me, but there was no smell, but when I got to Vietnam there was that smell. ...Possibly because they used a great deal of it but I don't think that was it because this was in a city, which they didn't use it there, it was in Siagon. Now after a day or two it just disappeared or I got used to it. I don't know what it was, but I've talked to many, many Veterans and everyone had the same experience.

WHAT EFFECT DID THIS HAVE ON YOU?

Well, you were scared... I was scared when I got there, I don't know about anybody else. Because the way they do you. They take you down and they've got these buses lined up, and they-all have steel cages around them and the guy driving has a helmet and black jacket on and they say get on. Then they take you from the airport to the Long Binh which is about a ten-mile ride and you go through these little villages and little streets. And you don't know if the enemy is hiding behind--well, they do but of course they don't tell you they're no there-- but you don't know. But, they always tell us, see this bus behind us, it's empty. If this bus gets hit, that other one will pull right beside and you all load on to that one quick and that of course scares you about ten times as bad. But of course, very seldom does that ever happens. It's probably just a precaution. I don't remember it ever happening. Then, like I said, after you get there they randomly pick people to go to different units and I was picked to go to the 9th infantry division. My buddy--I left before him--I didn't know where he went

until about three days later. They took me to Beat Cat which was the 9th infantry division headquarters at that time and we were picking up garbage or something and they brought in a mew trick load of replacements and he was on that trick. But once we got there, we were together maybe three or four days, he was also in the 9th infantry division, and then about three or four days later they assigned us to our particular units, whichever one we were going to stay with and he went to a different battalion, but in the same area. We worked in the same area. I saw him on the whole rest of the year I was there, one time, and that was at the Bob Hope show. We met there. That was the last time I saw him until I was getting ready to come home. Another different thing about me, I lived on board ship with the Navy. Did you ever hear of a force they had over there called the Mobile Riverine force. It was a tactic they used during the Civil War. They hauled infantry men around on boats and they would beach us with these beach crafts. I don't know, you see them come in, like the mission of Normandy, they drop the ramps and they come off. This was the type boats they hauled us in. And they would move us, since the Delta is nothing but a maze of rivers, that's what they used to haul us on.

And we lived with the Navy on board a big transport ship, anchored on the Mekong.

SO YOU WERE BELOW SIAGON?

I was 90 miles south of Siagon.

WHAT THEY CALL THE FOURTH CORP?

Yes. I was in the Fourth Corp. It was swamp, mud, mosquitoes. I had a ringworm from my wrist down, and it come from being wet almost constantly, the mud, bacteria in the water. And there was no way to get rid of it. We'd go out stay dry and we didn't stay dry long enough to get rid of it. We'd go out on three-day operations and we'd have a one day stand around. Somebody's bring us back to these ships. Now these ships were nice, they were air conditioned.

We got hot food, hot showers, and they were very secure. that was on area in Vietnam that I felt secure at, when I was on board those ships. You didn't have to worry about snipers or anything because we were anchored out in the middle of the Mekong and it was three miles wide where we were at.

OF COURSE, YOU'D GET MEDICAL ATTENTION THERE?

We had a hospital ship. There was a fleet of ships there. There were ten ships in our fleet. Some of them were supply ships, one of them in particular was a hospital ship. They had surgeons, because i went through that, I know. I was wounded and brought to that ship.

THE WAY I'M PICTURING IT, YOU WERE PUT IN WITH THIS OUTFIT THAT WAS ENGAGED IN THIS KIND OF OPERATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NAVY?

And I had never been trained. The only thing I had ever been trained in was infantry tactics, which we used. But nothing-- I never dreamed of the military having a unit like that and they said it was the first time this tactic was ever used, since the Civil War.

284
SO THEY WOULD GO UP AND DOWN THE RIVER WITH LOADS OF YOU GUYS?
Right. They would be--if they wanted to go. We went into the
U Mink rorest, which is a southern--The French lost a complete
Battalion in there. They just disappeared, they sent them in
there and they just disappeared.

WHAT ARE YOU CALLING IT?

U-M-I-N-T-H, Uminth.

THIS WAS THE NAME OF THE AREA?

Yes. It's the furtherst Southern tip of Vietnam.

IT'S ALL SWAMP AREA?

Swamp fores they call it. We went in there and we were the
first people to go in there since the French had disappeared.
Of course, we didn't find a great deal. We went in strength
though. We went in Brigade size which is 2,000 men, but the
French went in with maybe 300 men.

YOU COULD SPAN THE RIVER THEN IN HOW MANY BOATS? SORT OF A
THREE-DAY OPERATION, RIGHT?

Right, 25 or 30. We had lead boats, gun boats. They had
completely, if you've never seen, I've got papers and pictures.
We lived on board a ship which held about 300 men. There
was about 10 of these. Now our living conditions once we got
back to these ships were a lot better, because the Navy personnel
fed us. The Navy had better cooks than the Army, definitely
better food and facilities, in other words, we had clean
sheets every night, no mosquitoes, air conditioned, but that
was like one day out of every three.

SO, LET US HEAR FROM YOU ON DESCRIBING YOUR START OF ONE DAY.

We'd have what you call a search and destroy mession. We
went out and looked for the enemy, tried to find the, usually
we--80% of our casualties were from booby traps--very seldom
we had a man shot. We'd step on grenades or things like this.
They'd set booby traps for us in this area. Wenever, as far as
I know, ever came up against any NVA, shich is regular North
Vietnames soldiers. We fought mainly the iet Cong, where they
first orginated from. When I was there I didn't know that
though. But after I came back, I had done a little studying
on it, and that was where the Viet Cong were first organized
and so on, was in that little province.

SO YOU STARTED OUT ON ONE OF THOSE MISSIONS THAT LAND YOU
SOMEWHERE ALONG THIS SWAMPY SHORE?

Sometimes thay would take us in and we would go by helicoptere.
We went both ways, but mostly we traveled by ship.

BY 30 OR 40 MEN?

In a boat that's 100 men. Well, about 4 of these boats
were transport. Then we would have gun boats, escort. There
would either be 2 or 3 in front and one or two behind us,
because we did get ambushes,once in a while on those boats.
They would ambush us. Very seldom did they ever hurt us
because, like I said, these thing were like floating tanks,
they'd have to hit us with rockets or something before they
would actually penetrate. Small arms fire would bounce off.

DID YOU HAVE ANY LUCKY ESCAPES FROM ANY OF THESE AMBUSHES
YOURSELF?

Oh yes. We got hit one day and they got us on a little marror
river and someway they samk the front boat and they then sank
the back boat. What we usually did on these ambushes, we
would run them. We'd get fired at and they'd just steam up
and go a little faster. The gunners on the boat would open up,

spray the area and we'd just go on through, then continue where we were going. Well, this particular day, they knocked out of commission our front boat and we couldn't get around it, then we started backing up and they knocked out the back boat. HOW DID THEY DO THAT, WITH ROCKETS?

Rockets. They either knocked out the steering on it where it couldn't steer --none of them sank. And we did something that day we had never done before. They ordered us--we got the order that they were gonna beach us, right into one of those, they were gonna beach us and drop the ramp and we were to come off of there and charge toward those-- And of course the Viet Cong, they always knew we had done this before, had run them and it suprised them too, it took them by surprise whin we did come off there and charge. So they ran when we came off. It was lucky for us they didn't hold their position. If they had held their position, they could probably have hurt us pretty bad.

DID YOU HAVE ANDY CASUALTIES AT ALL THAT DAY?

Few minor wounds, nothing major. I don't think we had anybody killed. We had some guys with scrapes and pieces of sharpnel, from where the rockets hit. I don't think we had anything major. But we did kill some of them. There was a very few time that we found body count when we we came off of there because we come off so quick. They didn't have time to drag their bodies away. Usually, after battle you very seldom ever found any of thier bodies, you found where they had dry them off.

WHAT KIND OF EQUIPMINT WERE YOU CARRYING?

Rifles.

WHAT KIND OF A RIFLE?

M16

M16. WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THAT?

A very good weapon, one of the best they make if you keep it clean.

NOW YOU'RE FULL OF MUS ALL THE TIME, HOW ABOUT THAT?

Yes. We carried a rod with us, strapped right on the side of it and when it got in the mud, we'd put it down in the water and shake it out and ram it out and go on. It fired. Of course, no weapon's going to fire if it gets jammed up with mud. I don't car what it is. But that's some of the criticisms the m 16's. The guys didn't know how to take care of them to begin with. When they first got them over there, they would get them jammed full of mud and still try to fire them and they wouldn't fire. But as long as you dept the mud out of them, out of the action, and you'd do them just like I said, you could soak them down in the water and it wouldn't hurt them.

SOME THAT WE'VE TALKED TO COMPLAINED AND SAID THE M16 JUST WASN'T THE RIFLE TO USE IN VEITNAM.

To me it was because of its--it had its drawbacks like any-other weapon but it had its good sides too- The good side of it, you can carry so much ammunition for it, more than you can carry for an m 14 or the AK 47, which the Viet Cong's carried. It was so light, that was the strength of it. Now as long as you kept it clean and just didn't get it completely jammed up with mud, it would fire. I never had any trouble with mine

I never had any trouble with mine firing. But like I said you couldn't just lay it down in the mud and pick it up and expect it to fire. I don't think too many rifles would have. WELL, THAT'S A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT THAN SOME OF THE OTHER FELLOWS HAVE TOLD US ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH THE M 16'S. Again, some people have different experiences, but had its drawbacks. I thought the others ort weighed its drawbacks. Now, when I first saw that thing I thought it was a little something Mattel had made. When it was first issued to us, we thought it was a toy because it was all plastic except for the barrel and the action. We thought it was a little toy.

DID YOU FIND YOU WERE USING YOUR RIFLE VERY MUCH?

Very seldom.

HOW MUCH CONTACT WOULD YOU HAVE WITH THE VIET CONG?

In a three-day operation, we might come in contact. We might gon one day of two days and never see anybody, never see nothing, Then the next day, we were likely to walk right-- and that was a bad thing because- weren't as alert as you should be maybe, you know, we never saw them then and were not going to see them today, and then all of a sudden, Wham, they hit you.

WHEN YOU DID COME IN CONTACT, WAS IT JUST FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME?

Very short period of time. There was no sustained fighting. It was just, at the most, 30 minutes. After that they'd just disapeat. You'd keep going, walk through two or three lines, come out and there'd be some old farmer over the shooting at you, but there wasn't any way you could prove it. Andeverybody had it in the back of their mind that he was the one doing ti probably.

YOU FELT THAT THERE ALMOST ONE INDIVIDUAL, AN INDIVIDUAL WAS FIRING AT YOU AND NOT A GROUP?

You never caught them over five of six in a group. They never would fight, they knoew better. If we could, that's what we'd have loved to have done was cought them in a group. But that's not the way they fight in real war. They don't fight in large groups unless they think they've got the advantage on you. Then they'll come at you in a large group and try to over run you. In other words, they fight when they have the advantage or just a hit and run, just harassment.

YOU DIDN'T KNOW THE AREA, THEY KNEW IT. THAT WAS A DISADVANTAGE WASN'T IT?

Dfinitely. Any time you're fighting on somebody's home terrain you're at a distinct disadvantage to them. Now that was the way all of Vietnam was. Now, we did compensate for this some, especially for the boobe traps. We had to have very good point men. They had to be very alert, watch every place they stepped. So to heop us out, we would get a detainee, a detainee is domebody that diesn't have an i.d. card and we would detain him for a day and he would walk pd. in front of us, a Vietnamese civilian, supposedly. He knew the territory. He knew where the booby traps were. He walked in front of us, and where he steeped, we'd step right behind hem. We did this a great deal.

HOW WOULD YOU FORCE HIN TO DO THAT?

By gunpoint or usually by bayonette point. It was done a great deal.

SO, YOU'D DO THIS DAY AFTER DAY, FOR HOW MANY MONTHS? Well, I was in the field for six months and then I got wounded.

HOW DID YOU GET WOUNDED?

We walked in to an ambush. We walked into a horseshoe ambush. We were lucky-- well, I don't know if we were or not to not get as many men. Out of my company, we had eight men killed and 32 wounded within an hour. We were what they called eagle fighting. They had what they called a people sniffer. It's a helicopter that has a very sensitive device underneath it that can pick up body odor. They would fly across an area, then they'd have population overlay mass. They knew how many people should be in there, and this device would pick up and estimate how many were in there. Now if there were a lot more in there when they flew over than there should be, then they'd eagle flight us in there to find out what it was. In other words, they figured it was a concentration of Viet Cong hid that area.

HOW MANY MEN WOULD GO IN?

Usually a company. This day we had two companies--approximately 200 men. We had wagle flighted all day long. They'd drop us in here and we'd search around for two or three hours. Didn't find a thing. They'd pick us up and say we've got a real high reading over here. They'd fly us maybe 30 miles over here and drop us in this area. We'd search around an hour or two. Nothing. We were getting a little complacent I guess you'd say. You know, we've got one more to go into-- it was getting close to dark. They dropped us in to this area and it was hot. We hit a battalion size ambush, walked right into to. They opened up on us and pinned us down to begin with. I don't think that anybody got hurt on the initial contact. We just got down and alyed there and then we called in our artillery and our gunships and everything to blast the area out. For some reason, or colonel had got us out of artillery range. He'd just stepped us too far out in the eagle flights. We had no artillery. So they brought in some jets and they couldn't hit close enough to hit them. Do you remember the part of the T.U. where the Viet Cong said the way to defeat the Americans was to get a hold of his belt buckle. When he was interviewing, do you understand what he meant by that? If he could stay close to you when they were fighting, then we couldn't use our superior fire power to get him, because it would injure our own troops too. As long as they could stay close to us, then we couldn't use our jets or bombs or artillery because we'd be taking the chance of hitting our own men and that's what he meant when he said as long as you could stay close to their belt buckle.

YOU KNOW HOW TRUE IT WAS IN THIS CASE THEN?

Right. So the jet couldn't come in close enough to hit them or they would have hit us.

YOU WERE OUTNUMBERED?

No, not really. Well, we might have been. We just guesstimated it was battalion size and it was getting dark So they lined us along the paddie dike and we were doing fine. We'd fire back

once in a while, waiting for them to get that artillery up. And they they started zeroing in on us with mortars, and they started dropping 60 millimeter mortarts on us, and the first 2 or 3 that fell, killed my Lieutenant. I was his radio operator. I carried his rakio. And it hit between him and a machine gunner and killed them both. It blew him right over on top of me, but I never got a scratch out of that. Then we moved on and itleft a artillery forward observer in command of our company because all of our officers were either hit or wounded. And he was a Second Lieutenant; he was artillery, he wasn't evern infantry. Of course he gave big orders to fall back. We were going to fall back and when were moving back, they were carrying wounded and they were across a little banana ditch. They hollered for me to come over there and help them carry this huy. They always preached to us a Cardinal Sin is never to bunch up because one mortar will hit you all. There was about five of them carrying this bag and they needed help, so I went across and just as I come up the other side that mortar round hit. All I saw was a big flash of fire ho up in front of me and it blew me back in that ditch. It shook me up for a minute or two and finally I got up. I make sure I had everything, both arms, hands, legs, and I didn't feel a So I went down and all five of them got hit. Most of them weren't hurt, just small pieces. Well, we helped carry them back and just about the time we got back to where we were going that's when the artillery came in. That was the last mortar round to hit. When our artillery came in, that was it. The fire fight was over with because they started moving out. Then they started bringing in helicopters to pick up our wounded and dead, and I sat down and was talking to our company commander. He was asking me about how my Lieutenant got killed and I was telling him. When those helicopters land they turn those spotlights on, and I started scratching. My chest was itching for some reason or another. Then that light come on, I had a big handful of blook, it had already clotted and that mortor wound had hit me-too, but I didn't see, didn't even feel it. It was 30 minutes before I even knew I was hit and I had nine pieces of shrapnel in me, my neck, my arm, ,y legs, one over my eye. My whole face was streaked with blood, but I didn't know it. I was soaking wet. I was scared, and I didn't even realize I was hit until that light come on. Then he loked at me real funny, because he couldn't see in the dark either. Then they just put me on that ship and medivac'd out with the rest of the, and they flew us to those hospital ships, which they did surgery on me right there on that ship, tool all the shrapnel out. They've got very good doctors. From the time I got on that helicopter until the time I was in a fully equipped hospitial was like ten minutes. That's why the Vietnam War produced so many pari plegics where other wars they would have died probably But they had such good medical and such fast medical attention that we had so many guys that probably would have died in any other war wxcept this one. I know of cases where other guys were wounded and within five minutes were in a very well equipped hospital. They had

brain surgeons, they had heart surgeons. These hospital ships were equipped. They had every type surgeon that they needed. Plus, they needed to know what type wound you had so they'd know which hospital to take you to. So, I got there. I didn't stay in the hospital, but overnight. Went back to my unit, not out in the field though. I stayed on board that ship for 30 days, recuperating until all my wounds healed. The funny thing, over there they could not not a deep wound. I had one on my leg to one on my arm, where they had to go in deep to get out the shrapnel. They packed that, they wouldn't stitch up. They kept a pack to it for four days letting it heal from inside. Because over there with the humidity and stuff, infection was a problem. So they wouldn't sew one up and I had to go back everyday and get those packs changed and that was probably the worst part of getting wounded, getting those bandages changed everyday. That was the most painful thing.

YOU'D GO BACK AND FORTH TO THE HOSPITAL SHIP?

No. We had a sick bay on our ship. The medics did that.

THIS WAS ONE ENGAGEMENT, ONE FIRE FIGHT?

Yes, that's the one I got wounded in?

IN SIX MONTHS?

That was after six months. Then after the thirty day period, I went back out on one more operation. Then I went on R & R. I went to Hawaii to see my wife for a week. When I went back to Vietnam, I went to report to my company and they said you don't belong to us anymore. They said I'd been transferred to headquarters company and for the rest of the time I was in Vietnam I worked for headquarters company. I worked in a great big concrete bunker, and I ran radios and kept maps. I never went back out in the field again. The reason they chose me for this job and the way they did this was they'd pick guys who had combat experience and had been wounded would get the rear jobs and the new fellows would go on out. I guess they picked the ones they'd figured had seen the combat had been wounded and took them out.

IN ALL OF THIS SIX MONTHS, THEN IN ONE ENGAGEMENT GOING THROUGH ALL THAT YOU DID GO THROUGH WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE? WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE STRATEGY IN THIS KIND OF WAR?

The overall strategy I never thought of at all. I just thought about the day to day strategy. It wasn't-- probably didn't think about it until I came home and saw it on the news what they were actually doing. Didn't realize what we would do, and then I got to thinking about what we would do. We'd go in and clean out an area and then leave it. They'd come back in and we'd have to go back two or three times and re-clean that area out of the Viet Cong again instead of leaving a unit there to hold that area and keep them from going back in. We'd continually keep going back in.

SO YOU HAD AN AWFUL LOT OF SEARCHING DIDN'T YOU?

Yes.

HOW MUCH DESTROYING DID YOU DO?

Probably. I would say the American soldier is probably one of the most brutal soldiers there are. Most of the guys when I was over there, it didn't bother them anything they did. You never thoght about doing it. You never thought about setting fire to somebody's house and burning it to the ground.

YOU SAW SOME OF THAT?

Definitely. All you kad to do was find amything that resembled that they might be symphathic to the Viet Cong and you destroyed everything. New, I never saw any outright killings. I'm talking about destruction of property, not people, not civilians. I did see a case where a guy was killed once. To me, in my opinion, he deserved to be killed. He was a civilian, I guess. We had benn walking up this road and they blew a Claymoar mine on us and it killed one of our boys, wounded a couple of others and this boy that was killed, his buddy who he had come from the same hometown with was there and it just tore him up. And we detained two or three Vietnamese while we were trying to get these others medivac'd out. I noticed it myself. One of these Vietnamese that we detained was squatting over there and he was smiling thw whole time. Finally, this boy saw him doing it and he just turned around and shot him on the spot. Now, whether he had anythin to do with it or he was involved with it, I don't know, but the boy was emotionally, completely drained because he'd just saw his buddy get killed. Now this was from his hometown it wasn't somebody he'd just met over there.

AS FAR AS ASSESSING WHAT YOU ACCOMPLISHED GIVEN ALL THE TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE THAT YOU HAD TO GO THROUGH, IT DIDN'T STRIKE YOU, YOU JUST DID IT DAY AFTER DAY WITHOUR THINKING ABOUT IT?

You survived it, you were there for twelve months. You'd do what you were told and you'd survive. You looked our mainly for your close buddies and old number one and let everything else go. You took care of yourself. Like I said, you became a survivor-- you become numb to anything else but surviving.

IN RETROSPECT, WHEN YOU LOOK BACK DID YOU THINK OF IT AS A USELESS KIND OF WAY TO FIGHT A WAR IS THAT WHAT YOU CAME UP WITH?

It was definitely not fought to win, I don't think. It seemed like to me that the politicians put you there in a situation that was a no win situation.

THE POLITICIANS DIDN'T DECIDE ON THE SEARCH AND DESTROY TACTIC DID THEY?

Partically I think so, because they put restrictions on what the military could do and couldn't do.

WHAT WERE SOME OF THESE RESTRICTIONS?

Supposedly you could not fire unless you were fired upon first that was the most silliest thing I ever heard of. If they shoot you first you can shoot back. There were certain areas of Vietnam that we couldn't fire artillery in, for no reason. It was a heavily populated area, and of course the Viet Cong knew.

SUPPOSE IT WAS ALRIGHT TO DO THOSE THINGS, WOULD THAT HAVE MADE THE DIFFERENCE, TONY?

I don't think it does. I didn't know then, today thinking about it, it was a no win situation all around.

WHO CREATED THE NO WIN SITUATION IN YOUR OPINION? LOOKING BACK AT IT FROM YOUR TIME OVER THERE.

You mean from my being in Vietnam, I didn't really know who's fault it was then now I blame some people for their ignorance of the area and of the Vietnamese people. Our politicians, starting back with Truman, possibly not knowing wnought about the area to commit aides, to allowing the French to go back in and reoccupy the area after world war II that too was a big problem.

TONY WHERE WAS YOU...?

But, I can tell by the (deed) he dows know a great deal of detail. I don't know where, I've either read this or heard it, but wasn't it Roosevelt at one of the Big 3 meetings, didn't they convienece the other two not to allow the French to go back into Vietnam, then he died. Then Potsdam. Truman came in not knowing anything about this and then they allowed the French to go back in. And I always tell my students possibly if Roosevelt had not died there would hever have been possibly a Vietnam. (Possibly) I don't think those people, Truman, Kennedy , Eisenhower, any of them had any reason it was just ignorance of the Vietnamese people.

SO YOU KNOW WHILE WE'RE ON THIS QUESTION, WE ALWAYS ASK FELLOWS, NAMELY WHY DID WE LOPE IN VIETNAM? ITS A MATTER OF BLAMING SOMEBODY I SUPPOSE.

You can't fight a war as we fought and win anything- you have to either fight an all out war, I'm talking about Invasion of North Vietnam, invasion of the areas and Sanokeays of Cambodia and Laos where they brought their supplies in. That would have been the only way possible to me to be an all out war in that area. I don't know if it would have helped matters anyway after we had probably went in if maybe defeated the North Vietmanes army we would still have had a Korea type situation - where you have the two Koreas now.

THE WAY YOU'RE DESCRIBING THE SEARCH AND DESTROY MISSION THEY SEEM TO BE SO USELESS -FOR ALL THEAT YOU PUT INTO IF HOW LITTLE YOU GOT OUT IF IT.

They were. We would ho in we would clean the viet cong out of this area then we would go to another area and when we'd pull out of that area they'd just unfilltrate right back in to the area we just came from.

YET THE MILITARY CONTINUED TO USE KIND OF TACTICS.

It was used for the entire war I think.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR OFFICERS DID YOU FEEL THAT THEY WERE COMPETENT Which were you lower ranking of higher ranking? Some of our higher ranking officers I had a little doubt as to them.

BUT YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERIORS.

Our Leiutenantants our captains were very capable I thought,

the ones I came in contact with. We had a few, of course you have your 10% in every... But they had to learn just like we did. When they came-- I had been over there about four months and we got a new Lieutenant, they rotated after six months, and officer was only in field command for six months then they would rotate them out to a recr job. Then you had a fresh new Lieutenant and you had to break him in not him break you in. He had fought by the book, the book didn't work over there. But once you got him broke in and if he was alright it was O.K.

BUT, NEVERTHELESS THIS WAS A WEAKNESS IN THE COMMAND STRUCTURE WASN'T THAT KIND OF VIOLATION?

Idon't know why they did if. They said if weas too much pressure on them to command for more than six months at a time - Under pressure on them.

WHAT ABOUT, DID YOU RUN INTO THE PROBLEMS OF DRUGS IN YOUR TIME OVER THERE?

When I was over there in '68 the drug problem was not that bad. It was after, I think it started agter the Vietmanese took over the fighting and our people didn't do nothing but set around. We had some marijuana smoking, but no hard drugs DID YOU GANE MANY BLACK GUYS IN YOUR OUTFIT.

A few, of course they were in about the right percentage. HOW MUCH PERCENTAGE.

In my platoon of 30 men 6 or 7, 8-10 something like that. HOW DID YOU GET ALONG WITH THEM?

Some were very good friends of mine. They were very good soldiers. Some of teh were, well I'll put if this way, it was from what region of the country they were from how they acted. How they were different in their actions. the blacks from the north would fefuse to do anything or something like that. They, of course they had their view also, of course there were a lot of whites just like them, that did things, they weren't doing it just because they were black. SO, YOU DIDN'T FIND MUCH RACIAL TENSION OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

No. Now again they stuck with their people most of the time. That was when we were back, when we were out in the field we fought as a unit - we were very close out there, It didn't make any difference if he was black white or green out there. Now it was a little different situation when we came back they stayed in their area and we stayed in ours. When we were out there actually, when your life depended on that other fellow we were very close. We got along well. I never noticed any friction. I think later on, again when they got to not doing much, later yes of our involvement, thats when the drugs, the racial conlect the bragging, all of that came in.

YOU WERE THERE FROM?

'68 to - I was a replacement for the Jet offensive. It took place in Feb. and i arrived in May.

THAT ALL QUITED DOWN BY THAT TIME.

Yesm we were on the av erage I think about 350 a week being killed the year I was there.

WERE YOU AWARE THAT SENTIMENT WAS CHANGING AT HOME?

Not really, not until I aame back. Really around here it wasn't that bad anyway. What I saw on t.v. I came back, I was assigned to Bort Benning, Georgia, only had 3 months

move over there, he just couldn't relax. I was that way to some extent but not quite as bad as he was. It might have taken me 6 months and it took him a year to a year and half to get that out of his system realizing that you didn't have to duck every time you heard a loud noise or something. It was just a condition that you built your body into. When you'd walk along you'd always look for a hole to get into or something. Constanly in your mind, what you thought about when you got home it was sitll there to some extent. OF course Carl stayed in the field eleven months. He didn't get a scratch. He and I both went over a private and he come home E 6, that's awful good. I come home at E5, but he come home at E6, he was a staff seargent. So he made the rank fast. You don't make rank like that today. It'd take you five years now but he made it in 18 months but that was because he survived the rest were killed in his unit and they had to promote people right there.

DID YOU HAVE TO GET ANY MEDICATION OR ANYTHING FOR YOUR NERVES?

No. I'm talking about- being able to relax and sit down and not worry about anything. It took you awhile to get used to not- because let me tell you something you were snatched right out of that area and brought here: within 48 hours you were back in the United States and that was...

DO YOU THINK THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN SOME KIND OF A BETTER TRANSETION FOR YOU?

I don't know. We were wanting out of there, we didn't care how bad we got out of there.

BUT THEY DIDN'T PREPARE YOU AT ALL THOUGH?

No let me tell you what happened. When we got there we had orders to leave on a certain day. When we got there they just took those orders and tore them up. They said we had too many guys going out and we had not scheduled enough planes so you just going to have to take a stand by basis and we'll call you when your planes in. So we stayed there three days waiting on a plane.

WHERE WERE YOU AT?

TonsonRut which is the airport. They had transit _____ there we stayed in but it was nerve racking. We were wanting to go home we knew we was going home, but it was just when. So they lined us all up and called our names off. Carl wasn't on the flight. They called my name to leave, but they didn't call his. So he told me when you get home you tell my wife that I'm some where close behind you. They were calling about every 4 hours a flight. They had to unload the plane which was bring guys over and then load us on. And they said when thats unloaded boys we want you to march orderly out and get on that plane. That was like telling us-orderly- are just ran to get on that plane. That plane taxied out it was a 707. I think there were 212 of us on it. All soldiers. We took off and you could have heard a pin drop, it was complete silence. When that thing lifted off the ground you could just hear a big sigh release though the whole plane. It took about an hour to leave the coast of Vietnam. It was during the day-

293
in the army. I was a battalion clerk down there, well actually I was an aide for a sergeant Major, I didn't do anything actually I got a 88 day drop to go back to school--i got out of the ' rmy 88 days before I was supposed to get out to go back to school that fall.

SO, WHENEVER YOUR TIME WAS UP THEY JUST FLEW YOU OUT?

No, we knew, everybody had short timers calendars I've still got mine somewhere- I marked off every day. You start out with 365 and end up with zero, so we knew when it was getting close. The last 2 weeks I doubt that I got over 3 hours sleep a night. And I was in a secure area. It was just nerves. You get to the situation I made it this long I've only got this much farther to go - We were called short timers, we were a very nervous group. I was still on board ship - I was telling you about my buddy- that went over there with me from my hometown We had these little boats that we went from one ship to the other Well when I got my orders to report to Saigon to be shipped home, I packed up all my baggage on the ship and told everybody goodbye and we were to come into our base camp which was Dong Tam and after a flight to Saigon. Well there were two of us leaving about that same time off that ship and we loaded our baggage on this little boat, they were taking us to Dong Tam. When we hit the bank there I was picking up my bags to lift them on to the bank and somebody just reached down and got a hold of the bag and picked it up and I looked up and it was Carl, the boy that I had come over with, he was there getting ready to leave also. He saw my boat coming ashore and that's the first time I'd seen him in 3 or 4 months.

IS HE IN TOWN NOW?

Yes, he lives here, works for Armco Steel, he has a family.

DID HE GO TO SCHOOL?

No, Well Carl worked at Armco when he got drafted, so when he come back he just went back to work at Armco. They made good money. He didn't think he needed to go to school. Now, he did use some of this G I Bill in going to night classes.

HOW ABOUT PSYCHOLOGICALLY, THE STORY ABOUT THE PSYCHIATRIC PROBLEMS SOLDIERS HAVE COMING BACK FROM VIETNAM.

I've got my own opinion of that.

TELL US IF YOU WANT.

To me, I saw probably as much killing and maybe not as much as some did but I saw my share. To me the people who have problems now, had problems before they went. I think that they would have had problems even if they hadn't went to Vietnam now it might have added something to it, but not to the extent they're building it up now.

DO YOU THINK A LOT OF PEOPLE USE IT AS A CRUTCH?

Right, exactly.

DID YOU RUN IN TO ANY OF THOSE GUYS?

Oh yes, sure.

AND MANY OF THEM, WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION ABOUT THEM?

They were... I'm not saying the war didn't contribute to their problems but they had serious problems, I think mentally and something before they even come to Vietnam. Now Vietnam just agitated it a lot more. Now I had problems readjusting. It didn't take me very long. Nerves, my buddy was worse than me. He never smoked at all before he went to Vietnam and he was a chain smoker when he come back. He'd come in for a week or two after we got home, -and he'd sit here and then he'd

time they kind of banked - we were going to (Tokyo) because they did not prepare for us on that plane they had no food nothing because they didn't expect to take anybody back with them. It was a flying high lines- one of their jets. When we left the coast
Then we flew into Tokyo . We had jungle fatigues on- some of us hadn't changed in a day or two we were a pretty scrowngy looking bunch. We didn't care.

YOU DIDN'T HAVE WEAPONS DID YOU?

Oh no, they took our weapons. But they landed us in Tokyo International and they said now you've got to get off boys while we refull. And we went in that airport and you never saw so many stares in your life. People looking at us- we were a pretty grody looking bunch. Then we flew on and landed in Seattle, Washington.

I SUPPOSE THEY GAVE YOU A GOOD MEAL AT TOKYO?

No, we didn't get any meal until we got back on the plane and geaded back. Then we flew non-stop for eight hours. We were supposed to land in Anchorage, Alaska. We flew the some flight that this Korean Airliner was shot down, we flew that flight. But as we got over Anchorage the pilot came on and said boys were got enough fuel to go on to Seattle if you don't want to land. We said no, go on we didn't want to take anymore time. So he flew us on in and we landed in Seattle about 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

BACK INTO THE WORLD?

Back into the world. Something we didn't understand was when we landed they wouldn't let us off the plane, they said just sit here a few minutes. We kept hearing noises underneath the plane like they were moving something, in a few minutes we looked out and what they were doing was unloading bodys caskets off the plane and we didn;t know it. We didn't even know they were on that plane. And they unloaded those first then they let us off. Plus they gave us orders when we got off not to kiss the ground- we were not supposed to do that. We landed at an Air Force Base. Then they took us in the first thing they did was take us to this big warehouse- we had no class A uniforms or nothing-they said we're going to fit you allfor uniforms right now and we thoght my God were going to be here for a week. But they took us through there and within one hour we had class uniforms with patches, everything sewed on them and ready to leave that place and that was the best fitting uniform I ever got in the military. And while they there sewing everything they gave us a ticket and told us to go over to this little resturant and they gave us a steak dinner. The from ther they said you can go, go home. So four or five of us got a taxi into Seattle and took the first Flight out. This guy told us all I've got first class to Chicago and we told him we'd take it, we didn't care what. We had plenty of money.

WHO PAID FOR IT?

Well we paid for it but the government gave us it, well in other words I was going to be stationed at Ft. Benning, Georgia, so they gave me money from SEattle to Ft. Benning. So I had flight pay. But we didn't care if it was first class or what it was as long as we got a flight out. It was about 10 minutes before the flight took off and I called my wife, which was about 2 o'clock in the morning back here. And I told her I'd be

arriving in Cincinnati at a certain time and for her to pucker me up. And then me _____ boy that war with me he called his parents and we flew back to Cincinnati. I had about three months left in the Army. I went to Fort Benning, Georgia which I didn't do anything there, just waiting my time. And I came back and started back to school at Morehead. Morehead hadn't got into the fads and demonstrations and all that. Morehead didn't get into that.

WHEN DID YOU COME BACK TO SCHOOL?

I started in the fall of 69. When I first came back there wasn't much going on. Plus I commuted. I never stayed over there my last two years.

WELL HOW DID YOU FIND MAKING THAT ADJUSTMENT BACK TO SCHOOL?

It was a little bit hard to begin with. I'll tell you this much from the first time I was there 65-67 I had about a 1.2 grade point standing after I came back from Vietnam I'd matured a great deal and I raised that up to almost a 3.0. You can see there was a difference in me.

HOW DID THE ATTITUDE AT HOME STRIKE YOU DID IT HURT YOU A LOT WHEN YOU GOT BACK IN THE COMMUNITY?

I felt hostile toward those people.

WHY?

I don't know.

DID YOU EVER THINK THAT THEY WERE RIGHT?

No I never thought that at all.

BEING AGAINST THE WAR?

I thought they were totally wrong, in everything.

I MEAN THEY WANTED TO END THE WAR RIGHT.

Right. I don't know...

WAS IT A MATTER OF RESENTMENT.

Possibly.

YOU HAD BEEN THROUGH IT.

Right. I thought their main reason for protesting the war was so they wouldn't have to go, individually, not because the war was right or wrong but they were doing it to stay out for personal reasons, not for any political reasons or anything else. Yes, I resent that. I thought they were totally wrong.

AS YOU LOOK BACK NOW, DO YOU THINK THAT OUR INVOLVEMENT THERE WAS A MISTAKE? GIVEN THESE !) YEARS TO THINK IT OVER.

I don't think we should ever put the American soldier in a situation like that again. In a situation where, there's a no win situation to it. Either put them in to win or don't put them in at all.

DO YOU THINK THERE'S A PARALLEL WITH VIETNAM AND TODAY'S SITUATION WITH LEBANON AND EL SALVADOR?

Not in El Salvador in the respect that it's too close. Vietnam was 10,000 miles away--they were no threat to our security whether they went communist or not--we can tell that now. But I think possibly if El Salvador did go communist-- I'm not saying that they did or will or would if it did fall-- more than likely they would -- I think it would be a threat. I'm not saying-- I don't think we should commit American troops there. I think we should, I'm not saying support the government in power but we should try to keep the communist from getting their hold on the country too. I'm not saying we're going at it the right way--someday we should keep them from getting in there. I'm saying we're doing the right thing now.

DO YOU SEE ANY PARALLEL BETWEEN LEBANON AND VIETNAM ? HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT SITUATION?

The Marines in Lebanon are in the very particular situation that we were in. They're not allowed to fight. They were put in there in a very sticky dituation-- another no win situation but again once their there, they should never have been sent. but once they were there I think it would be a bad situation if the U. S. pulled out right now. It would put a wrong attitude.

SOME SAY, THE LONGER THEY STAY THERE THE MORE DIFFICULT IT WOULD BE.

I grant you that. That was what happened in Vietnam. Maybe if--I think they should put them in a safer area. I think they should pull them back on board those ships, then if they are needed, to help maybe-- I'm not saying they're supporting the right government...

ONE OF THE OTHER QWUSTIONS THAT COMES UP TONY THAT WE DON'T LIKE TO TALK ABOUT IS THE SECURITY OF THE NATION--THAT TODAY THERS A LOT OF CONTROVERSY OVER WHETHER OR NOT WE HAVE A RELIABLE ARMY, UNDER THE VOLUNTEER SYSTEM, OR WHETHER WE SHOULD GO BACK TO THE DRAFT. HOW DO YOU FEEL DO YOU HAVE ANY OPINION?

My opinion is that if we reinstated the draft--not under the situation which I was in but with under the lottery system -- I think that every able bodied person should have at least one year of military training right out of high school This way I think we can reduce our nuclear deterant and build up our conventional forces in that respect and we wouldn't have to rely on the nuclear deterrant.

THEY SAY THAT IT IS JUST POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO REES-TABLISH THE DRAFT.

To me it would mature most of these people, these younger fight our of high school and make them-- maybe after they spend a year in the military, just to go get training, I'm just saying a year is all they have to spend, just enought to get their training and then let them go back and fo to college or what ever they want to do. And then in case of an emergency, if we were attacked or something you'd have this heavy reserve to fall back on, already trained and ready to go.

DO YOU BELONG TO A RESERVE UNIT NOW?

No.

SOME OF THEM HAVE THAT WE''VE TALKED TO AND SAY THAT WHEN THEY GO SOWN TO FT. KNOX AND SO FORTH AND LOOK AT THE VOLUNTEER ARMY OUTFITS, THEY ARE A LITTLE SKEPTIC ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT EHY''RE GOIN TO BE ABLE TO DO THE JOB. BUT YOU DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF EXPERIENCE?

No, the only experience that I have in it now, I think the mili-tary ought now is in a real good shape, but the reason they're in a good shape is because we had a recession in this country and the people who were qualified couldn't find jobs, so they we went into the military. But if we get back into good times again, then the military is going to be made up of people who cannot do anything else but get in the military. And that's a bad situation.

SOMEBODY'S ASKED THE QUESTION -DO YOU THINK IT'S KIND OF A TWIST ON SOMETHING REAGAN SAID BACK IN 1980 WHDN HE ASKED THE COUNTRY IN ACCOMPANIMENT WITH HES DEBATES WITH CARTER, "WELL DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU'RE BETTER OFF NOW THAN UOU WERE FOUR YEARS AGO? SO PEOPLE ARE ASKING NOW, DO YOU THINK WE'ER MORE SECURE UNDER REAGAN THAN WE WERE BEFORE HE TOOK OFFICE?

I think our military's in a bett4et shape, but whether we'er any more secure, I don't know. I think he has strengthered our military. I don't agree with his nuclear build up. Its to expensive, the mt I don't agree with it. I agree with building the conventional forces. We've got enough nuclear weapons, forget about bulking those..

DO YOU FAVOR A NUCLEAR FREEQE, FOR EXAMPLE?

Not a unilaterl freeze people are naive if they think the Russians are going to just.

I DON'T THINK THE FREEZE PWOOLE ARE ADVOCATING THAT EITHER, EXCEPT IF YOU'RE REALLY...

Sure I would like to do away with all neclear weapons if we possibly could. I would like to see if where we would never have to send people into the situation I was in -I wouldn't want anybody to participate in that. Any of my students that I have or anybody- I tell them that- you see it on T.V. and its a lot of fun. These guys are having fun -it's not that way. its's not fun, people are getting killed. I wouldn't want them to have to go through what I did.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF REAGANS EMPHASIS ON BULIDING UP NUCLEAR FORCES YOU KNOW SPENDING ALL THIS MONEY _DO YOU THINK THAT, THAT'S PUTTING MONEY IN THE WRONG PLACE?

I think they're putting it in a rat hole _____. To me we have enough nuclear weapons. I don't think a window of vulnerability ever existed. I agree with some of Reagan's policy -I'm a republican -I voted for Reagan - but I don't agree with all of his policy's Some of them I do agree with -some I don't.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE MESSELS IN EUROPE NOW? HOW DOES THAT STRIKE YOU?

Well the Eropean leadership asked for those far different against the SSSO's. If putting those missiles in Europe will cause the Russjans maybe to pull out some of their's from Wester Europe. If used as a bargaining chip I agree with it if it's just there to add more nuclear weapons and tot going to use them as some kind of bargaining chip, no I disagree with them. but if their going touse it to get the Russians to pull out some of theirs it it might be a good bargaining chip.