Sam Schechter

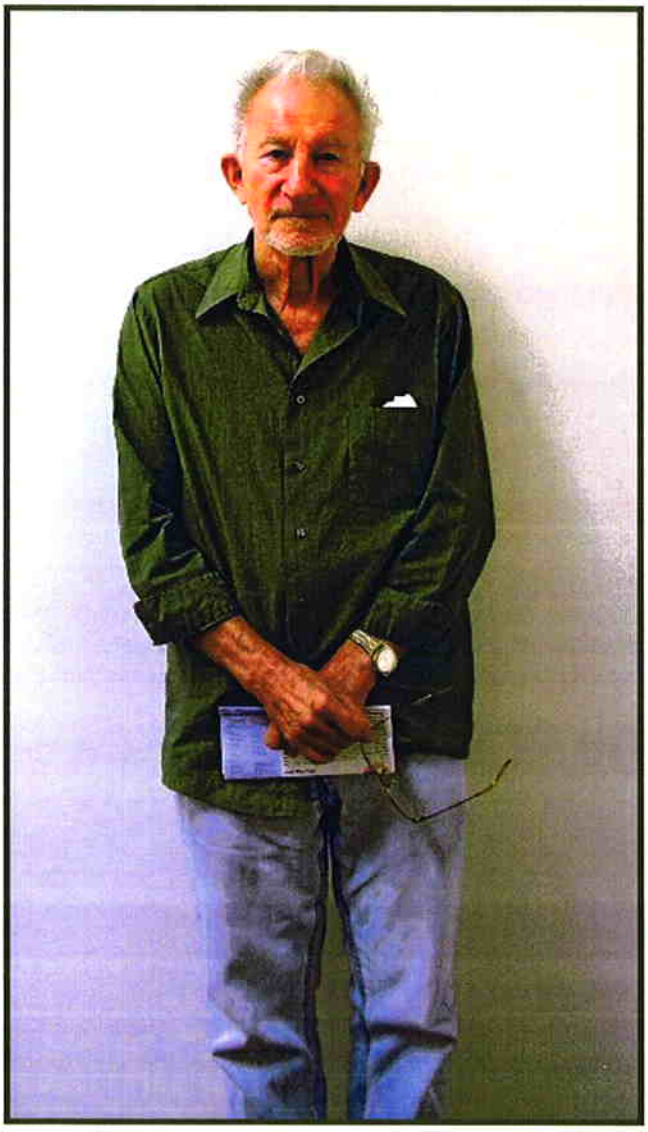
U. S. Army—Korean War
Sergeant, Motor Sgt.
3rd Division
3 Medical Battalion–Clearing Co.

Sam Schechter

Veterans
History
Project
Transcript

Interview conducted
October 24, 2007

Niles Public Library
Niles Public Library District
Niles, Illinois



Niles Public Library District
Veterans History Project Transcript

Veteran: **Sam Schechter** Rank: **Sergeant Motor Sergeant**

Branch of Service: **U.S. Army** Theater: **Korean War**

Unit: **3rd Division, 3rd Medical Battalion-Clearing Co.**

Interview Date: 10/24/2007, 2-4:30 p.m. Place: Group Study Room

Equipment: Philips Digital Pocket Memo Recorder Interviewer: Neil O'Shea

This Veterans History Project interview is being conducted on Wednesday, October the 24th, in the year 2007, here in the group study room at the Niles Public Library. My name is Neil O'Shea. I'm a member of the Reference Services staff here. And I'm speaking with Mr. Sam Schechter. Mr. Schechter was born on May 23rd, 1929, in Chicago. And we're most appreciative that he has found the time to come in today and to participate in the Veterans History Project here at the Niles Library. Mr. Schechter prepared for this interview and collected his thoughts. And he also has his-- there's also two ladies present in the room, Gail and Judith, who are both familiar with some of the stories that Mr. Schechter may be sharing with us. So, that kind of sets the stage here in the room. And now I'm going to proceed with the interview. Mr. Schechter, when did you enter the Service? (Italics indicate interviewer's questions.)

January of `51.

January of 1951, and, at that time, you were living in?

Chicago.

May I ask where you went to high school?

Tuley and Crane.

What were you doing before you entered the Service, do you recall?

I worked at various jobs which I don't recollect right now. I was sort of fishing to find myself.

So you would have gone into the Service then when you were about--

Twenty-one.

So, were you drafted, or did you--?

Drafted.

You were drafted, and you were drafted into what branch of service?

Army.

The Army. Were you happy-- Did it make any difference to you which branch of service that you went into?

No.

And when you were younger, you would have been growing up, I suppose, during World War II? And now there was another war under way.

Correct.

Did you have any thoughts about going to war, or having to serve in the military, or--

Well, I, of course, considered myself a patriotic American. And I wanted to serve my country. However, I had so many other irons in the fire as a civilian, and, so, I wasn't exactly gung ho to leave my civilian pursuits.

So where were you inducted into the Army?

I ended up, well, it's been, gosh, maybe about sixty years thereabouts, and I just remember being, taking basic in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

How was basic training? Was that a shock on the system or pretty much what you expected?

No. It was a kind of a snap. It was kind of a-- it was very easy. I think probably it was so easy, because at the time, as one general said, we needed quickly, warm bodies in Korea. We were very shorthanded over there, and the enemy was pushing us all around. So, they kind of, it seemed to me, they pushed us right through everything, and shipped us out as soon as they could.

Yes. Was that the first time you'd been away from home for any length of time?

No.

No. And so you had done a bit of traveling around the country before then, so--

I wasn't tied to my mother's apron strings.

Yes. So, boot camp was pretty much as you expected? And you didn't find it difficult adjusting to Army life or

Not at all.

different types of people that you might not normally encounter?

I thought it was a little bit of a waste of time. I didn't really learn much in basic.

So you wind up in the third division?

The third division, the third medic battalion, Clearing Company.

And you were assigned to that unit after basic training? Was that right?

No. I went over after basic. I didn't go over as a unit, but as a replacement as an individual to Inchon, Korea, where there was about 25,000 GIs. It was called a "repple depple" (replacement depot). And when other units needed replacements, they would call down to this repple depple in Inchon, Korea, for the amount of troops that they needed.

So, to get from the United States to Korea, that was by boat?

Boat.

And that docked in Japan then or--

Yes, I was in Japan, oh, maybe about five or six days, and next thing I knew, we were in Korea.

And then you landed at Inchon, or was that where the unit was stationed?

I believe I landed at Inchon in that repple depple.

Containing about 25-30,000 GIs.

So your, the duty or the purpose of the 3rd medical battalion and how you were deployed there--

It was like, did you ever watch MASH on TV?

Yes.

Well, that's the kind of outfit I was in. We had a very small outfit. We had one doctor and we had a total of maybe thirty personnel in the whole unit.

I interviewed one gentleman, and he was a dentist in Korea. And he used the same terms. He said if you saw that show MASH. He said that sort of was what it was like.

We didn't have such colorful personnel. Actually, we were all about twenty, twenty-one, years old, and nobody really knew anything about the Army. Nobody knew where Korea was on the map, nor did they care. We were all draftees. And most of us were not happy to be where we ended up at.

And why was that?

We were draftees.

Were you fearful? Were you afraid of the danger and--

Well, I wasn't looking for a hot war. I know if you get hit by a bullet, you know, you're in trouble.

Yes. Yes.

Where you were stationed in Korea now, was that a particular camp or--

One day, they, when I was at Inchon, the repple depple, they called my name out with along about 250 others, loaded us on a dozen two and a half ton trucks, and we headed up to the front line. And when I heard artillery, the vehicles all pulled to the side of the road. An officer opened up a metal folding table and started to interview each of us as to what our qualifications were. And what we did in civilian life, and those that had no professions that the military needed went to the line on the left. Those who knew something, like me, I was a mechanic, went to the line on the right. Those on the left, I understand, then immediately ended up on the front line. And those on the right, electricians, mechanics, and others, we ended up in those kind of jobs. And that's how I became a motor sergeant and I ended up taking care of all the vehicles,

Was it good equipment that you were working with, or was it-- new machinery or left over from World War II or--

No, the vehicles were all satisfactory. And when they needed parts why I would go to ordinance ammo where they had all kinds of equipment as far as the eye could see. And I would acquire, or some would say requisition, whatever parts I needed.

There is that new book out now, I think, by Halberstam on the Korean War. <u>The Coldest Year</u>. Was it hard? Was it-- were conditions cold or--?

Oh, yes, in wintertime, we had mid-twenties. We were usually in the mountains, so it was damp along with 25 below zero. And that cold dampness kind of got right into your bones.

You were still able to work, though, in the cold?

Yes, fortunately, we were all young and healthy, and, so, we managed to do what we had to do.

Yes. You didn't lose any weight or--

No.

Or gain any weight?

No. Actually, we had decent food and, gosh, about every couple of weeks, you know, it's been sixty-five, sixty-five years ago, so some of the thoughts are a little bit hazy in my mind. But I remember a lot of helicopters coming from Japan with fresh vegetables. I remember helicopters coming in with crates of gloves and hats sewn by these women auxiliary organizations, veteran auxiliary organizations, and we had so much of these, knitted gloves, and scarves, and stuff which was not really usable. The military gear we had was more than sufficient. We had very warm clothes. We had really everything we need. And we had, I know a lot of people probably are going to have trouble getting used to this idea, but we had so much brought in by helicopters. We had to dig holes in the ground to bury the stuff. I used to say to my company commander, "Can't we give it to the native villagers?" and all that. He says no. It's against military regulations. So every time we saw a helicopter, we knew we had to start digging holes to bury all that stuff that was coming in. We got fresh ice-cream from Japan. We got fresh vegetables. And what's interesting, we had two South Korean soldiers - they were called "ROCs," attached to our outfit. And then there was a native village, maybe three or four miles away, they would hustle over there, rather then eat our food. Well, they asked why. They said American food is not good for them. And, so unlike World War II, or perhaps other parts of the world, we really longed for nothing.

You were well supported.

We had everything.

Judith:

> You passed right over my favorite story. When he asked about the cold, why did you not tell the generator story?

Oh. Well, we had-- I was a mechanic, and I was also in charge of keeping the Company wired up electrically. We had a generator, and I, of course, was the only one who understood those things. And sometimes it would-- the engine would stop working, the lights would go out, two in the morning, twenty-seven below zero, and I would have to get out there and work on the cold metal parts and get the generators going again. And, you know, I enjoyed it. I tell you why. I felt very, very useful. I felt very, very capable. And I was proud of myself, knowing that I was pretty much indispensable, and it gave me a feeling of worth.

So the Army got that right. Anyway, they had the right man in the right place.

I was a pretty bad soldier in basic training, but, in Korea, I had a job. Nobody bothered me, and I rose to the challenge. And I've had a lot of those experiences before I got into the Service.

Were there any other--were there any particular humorous or funny events that you recall, anything very unusual that stands out in your mind?

Well, we had, many times, camp followers, as most armies usually have, and they were, I wouldn't say funny, but they were interesting.

So did they, all of a sudden, like these little shacks would spring up around the camp, and people would move in there and stay?

Not really.

No.

Not really, because we had to move, it seems, every month or two, something like communist guerrillas were working behind the lines attacking Service outfits and so, for some reason, we had to move like every month or two to a new location. And I would have to organize the convoy, take down the tents, and go out to the new area and spread a couple of hundred gallons of gasoline out on the field, and burn all the weeds, and things like this. And I don't know about funny, but, one time, a couple of times, I almost killed myself. I spread about two hundred gallons of gasoline all over this field where we were going to set up the new camp. And then I backed off about twenty-five feet, and I threw a match. Well, I didn't account for the fumes in the air. The whole horizon blew up in front of me, and blew me back about twenty-five feet. And I think I burnt some of the hair off my head. And that was not funny. That was really stupid.

Yes.

And then, another time, thinking I was a great swimmer, I took one of the, along with a few other truck drivers, we took our trucks down to a stream to wash them. And loving to swim, I decided to jump into this river. And my fellow truck driver said, "Sam, you better not. It's an awful strong current." But I was full of piss and vinegar, and loved water, and I jumped in to go for a swim. And, immediately, I knew I did the wrong thing. It felt like the Jolly Green Giant grabbed a hold of me and sucked me right out to the center. I tried to swim back to shore. I couldn't make one foot of headway. So I flattened out, and floated down with the current, about five miles down.

Wow!

You can't swim out of that kind of current. And then I'd seen a big flat rock, and I scooted up onto the rock. Now, I could have gotten in to shore, but I was afraid to do that, because, during the dry season, mines were planted under that river. And, so, I sat there considering my choices. And then a few of my buddies came with their trucks, and they backed off about a 150 feet, and threw me a line. They had these winches, you know, in the front of the trucks. And with the other end, I tied a bunch of logs that were by the edge of the river. And as they winched these logs a 150 feet towards the trucks, it gouged out the land. And so I walked into where it was gouged out and got back to the truck. And they said, "Well, that should teach you something!" And it did!

There was no disciplinary action taken or anything like that against you, or? No. Everybody was glad to see you back!

There was no discipline.

No. Do you know the name of the river? Was there-- was it--

Oh, I don't know. We didn't know the names of rivers.

Yes.

One of our-- I remember one of the vets was talking about the Imjin River, but--

I-- That doesn't ring any bells.

That was a strong river!

Oh, Yes, a strong current.

Was your unit ever fired upon?

At Kowang we had a couple of artillery shells that landed perhaps a few hundred yards away. Why, I don't know. And I don't know, we don't know where those shells came from. So after that, we were instructed to build foxholes, you call them. And then we put logs over the top. But they were very unsafe, because quite often they caved in.

So, I notice the, in here, and you've touched on some of these in the notes that you prepared for today's interview, which we appreciate, and I think you mentioned it on the phone, and I thought it was very interesting, was, during a dangerous period there, you had a special guest, or visitor.

Oh, yes. At one time, we got some information that communist guerillas were lurking behind the lines, eliminating, attacking, Service outfits. And about that time, I see a jeep coming up our, into our company area, and I notice there was an old guy. And an old guy with a beard. I'm thinking, who is this? It turned out, he gets out of his jeep, he says, "I'm looking for Schechter." And I says, "That's me." He says, "I'm Rabbi so and so." And he had a jar of kosher dill pickles, kosher salami, pumpernickel bread, and, gosh, a shopping bag full of stuff. And, just as quickly, he turned around, and got in his jeep, and off he went, heading north, I guess, to look up other Jewish guys in other outfits. And I took this foodstuff into my tent, and my Southern buddies said, "What's that?" And I said, "It's Jew food." And they, being Southern boys who are apt to eat anything, dug right into it. And within fifteen minutes, everything was gone!

That's a great story! Yes, you meet all kinds of people in the Army, don't you?

Surprisingly, I got along very well with the Southern boys, because they were, it seems, more wild and more game than the Yankee boys, as I was more game. More-- I walked into excitement and new things. Southern boys seemed to be like that, too.

Yes.

Yankee boys were a little more serious. And they pretty much wanted to get home.

I've heard some of the vets say that they came to value the company and the performance of the Southerners in battle situations, Yes.

You might call them like good old boys. And they all seemed to know how to sing and strum a "gee-tar."

We had a young Mexican guy in our tent, and he was always unusually quiet. And I knew there was something not normal. One day, he just blew up. Called it a nervous breakdown, or I guess he wasn't used to being away from home, and we had to ship him out.

Oh, a little bit of a mental problem.

And the guys I was with were not a very educated bunch. And I remember writing love letters for many of them to their girlfriends.

Oh.

They thought I had something to offer.

You're a man of many talents here. I wonder if any of those people ever got married.

I got a kick out of writing love letters.

Well, I'll tell you something else I used to do. I hope the military doesn't see me about this, but we had gas heaters in those days. The advantage of a gas heater in a vehicle, they gave you immediate heat. So, officers used to come from far and wide, majors, colonels, and bribe me to put heaters in their personal vehicles. And I'd say, "But don't you have mechanics in your units?" They said, "They just don't know how to do those things." And, of course, they pulled out a bottle. I learned in the Service, nothing is for nothing. One hand washes the other. And so after they asked me three or four times, I'd say, "Okay, Colonel," as I'd relieve him of the bottle. And I'd put the gas heater in their vehicle.

And my reputation spread. Many other officers came, so I, of course, had a lot of booze and beer for my outfit. And I didn't drink much myself and, stupidly, I didn't sell anything.

And then being motor sergeant, I would get-- I had time. And I, sometimes, would get bored, and I would write myself a trip ticket, which you needed, because we had checkpoints like every ten miles up and down the road and you couldn't drive a vehicle without some kind of authorization. The authorization was a "requested by whom," "purpose of whom," "driver name authorized by" and, of course, everything was me. Requested by same Sergeant Schechter, driver's name "Schechter, this same "Schechter." So, I had all this freedom. And we had a lot of, and I'm hesitant to say this, I would gather up some of our M1 carbines. And we had a number of different armies over there.

We had South Africans. We had Turks. We had Greeks. We had Puerto Ricans. We had-- and so on. And I quickly discovered everybody wants everybody else's guns. And, so, I would pull in to a English outfit. I'd hold up a gun. Automatically, everybody understood what this meant. And they'd come over with two or three cases of beer. And I'd give them a gun. So, my outfit was really well supplied with beer and booze and all.

So, you were popular for many reasons!

Well, I was a salesman, also, before I got into the Service. And I learned at an early age a little b.s. goes a long way.

When were you promoted to sergeant?

Well, how it worked, when my motor sergeant-- in a war zone, when my motor sergeant rotated home, the corporal became motor sergeant. When that sergeant rotated home, the PFC became corporal and so on.

Moved up.

Yes, if I wanted to become a master sergeant, I could have. If I'd stayed another nine months, I could have ended up a master sergeant. So, you get ranked very easily in a war zone.

And where I was at, it was in a war zone where we got, I think, four points a month. In the rear, you got two points a month. And the amount of points determined how quickly you would rotate home. So, I think I was there approximately twelve months. I got four points a month. That was, forty-eight points is what I think you needed to rotate home.

And there wasn't many places or much to do for entertainment except to go to Seoul, the capital, where the ladies were. And, interestingly, there wasn't, I don't remember one decent building in all of Seoul, which was the capital. I understand, before I got there, when they, MacArthur and the American troops, landed at Inchon, they just about leveled the city. And so there was a lot of little cubby holes that the ladies lived in. And that was as far as the, as much entertainment as we had. Oh, once in a while, we had American actresses would come and put on a little show.

But they weren't really very exciting, like we were able to find in Seoul.

And then I thought I needed certain like spark plugs and other things to repair the vehicles. And I would go where there was ordnance ammo to request these things. And I found it wasn't that easy. The guy in charge would say, "Well, what have you got for me?" And I says, "Listen, we're fighting a war here! I'm in the same war as you. I'm trying to keep these ambulances, these vehicles going." And to no avail. So, I had to, many times, resort to just acquiring and requisitioning the things that I needed. on my own in many different ways. Sometimes. I had to give a carton of cigarettes to get some parts I needed for trucks. And, so, it took a lot of imagination to operate efficiently.

Had you taken a lot of mechanical oriented courses in high school or--

No. No. I just grew up fixing my own car.

So, that really had an effect on your time in the Army, because of this mechanical aptitude that you developed.

I took to it like a duck to water.

Yes.

Of course, I grew up with a lot of Sicilians which gave me, enabled me, to get additional mechanical experience.

I love your expressions.

I'm afraid to say some of this!

Yes.

Mr. Schechter, on your biographical data form, there's a part here where it talks about your medals and your special service awards. So, you probably did receive some medals, right?

Well, they were, you know, my uniform with the battle stars.

Yes.

Why we got battle stars, I don't know. I guess, it's like generals who fly over areas and they get ten more ribbons, you know, just being in that combat zone, we got battle stars and, so. You know, I really don't remember exactly what decorations, but we--

But you mention there about you had a truck ran over your foot.

Oh, Yes.

How did that happen?

Probably clumsiness. And it disturbed the piece of bone in my big toe. And when I got back to the States, I had a quickie operation on it by two very young doctors, which took a total of fifteen minutes, did a perfect job. In five days, I was brand new again. That operation, back here in the States in `07, probably would have cost me 5000 dollars.

I'm sure. Yes.

Of course, these young doctors, you know, in combat zones, they get lots of experience quick.

Yes. So, that operation on your foot, though, that took place in, back in Chicago?

In Fort McCoy. Fort McCoy, Wisconsin.

So, do you say here you are a little disabled as a result of that or anything?

Well, I get 115 dollars a month, being 10 percent disabled. Now, if the military thought I was not disabled, I might be relieved of that 10 percent disability, so, obviously, they feel I'm entitled to it.

Oh. Yes.

Physically. By that, I mean I understand certain GIs do lose their disability when they're returned to health and, of course, my toe still bothers me.

Yes. So, were you able to sort of grin and bear it and keep working in the garage?

Yes, I was very healthy, strong, capable, flexible, and I kind of enjoyed what I was doing. Nobody gave me any orders. And that's when I worked my best.
My company commander never said nothing to me.

Do you remember his name?

Clifton. Captain Clifton. He would give us a talk like once a month against the dangers of playing around with the girls, saying our antibiotics will not cure some of the diseases they have here. Immediately upon finishing his lecture, he came to the motor pool, said, "Schechter, you got my jeep?" and off he went to Seoul.

That's great!

Now, the other guys in the unit, they didn't have that freedom. He did, and I did, so--

So, how many miles was it? A long drive to the capital from there?

We usually were somewhere around the 38th parallel. And I don't remember exactly how far it was from there to Seoul. I would only guess maybe--

An hour's drive or?

Thirty-five miles, maybe.

But even though you're enjoying this type of Service for the Army and you're contributing to the greater good, you're still looking forward to going home, though, are you? Obviously.

I couldn't get-- I couldn't wait.

To get, even though they wanted to send me to OCS, Officer Candidate School, and train me to fly helicopters, I wanted to get back home to my Harley-Davidson and my wild-eyed, fun-loving girlfriends.

Oh, so you had a Harley-Davidson back then?

That's what I grew up on.

That's a descriptive detail, isn't it, Yes.

Who wants to go to school when you can have that kind of fun!

You spent almost a year and eleven months, and you accumulate all the points and then when the time comes to go back to the States and you looked forward to it.

Yes, I did. I did have-- some rest and recreation, or furlough, or leave in the capital city.

Did you get to go to Japan for any time for like a long weekend or a long week?

About five days.

Five days.

Out to Korea, and only about four or five days. In route back to America, we went over on the slow boat, and I think it was a boat going back to California. And from there, they flew us back to, excuse me, I'm having a senior moment, forty-five miles north of Chicago.

Fort Sheridan.

Fort Sheridan, I think, Yes. And then I ended up, I had another couple of months to go until my enlistment was over. And I was shipped to Fort McCoy, and they put me in charge of a large motor pool, since I had that M.O.S., which designates our job, and I was in charge of issuing driver's licenses for a good part of the camp. Until one day, the camp commander called me in, and he says, "Schechter, do you have a driver's license for this camp?" And I said, "No." And he said, "Oh, we've got to do something about that." I says, "After I'd issued about 2 or 300 driver's licenses?" And, somehow, I don't recall exactly, we worked it out.

Fort McCoy, is that in Kansas? Fort McCoy?

No, it's in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin, that's right.

Then I think the idea the Army had was to take combat returnees, like I was, to mix us in with the green troops, and that something good would wear off on the new recruits, but I don't think that worked out very well. They would put me in charge of Details. You go out to the woods and

break up some rocks or dig out a tree. It was really useless stuff. And so I would park my rear down on the ground with my back up against a tree. And, of course, the command detail would follow suit. And then, one day, they, a jeep came out with four officers and found us sitting on our rears. And that was the last time they put me in charge of Details. But then I only had another three or four weeks to go. But, you know, why work when it was really just meant to keep the troops busy?

Yes. Busy work.

So, they put you back to Fort Sheridan then, and you were discharged there right after this time in Fort McCoy?

I think so.

And did you have any-- you didn't have any trouble, it sounds like, readjusting to life as a civilian?

Not at all. Quite the contrary, compared to the Vietnamese vets who came back crying and walked around in fatigues for years making a job out of it, a business out of it, no, we Korean guys, we came back, and we said, "Well, okay," and just were back and took up where we left off at. Never thought of crying or feeling we were unfairly victimized. Never entered our minds.

Sometimes, I think the news media sometimes puts those, you might want to say the liberal media, puts those ideas into returnee soldiers for having something to write about. And so I think a lot of the soldiers picked this up in the paper and said, "Hey, we can use that. Look, look how we suffered," and kind of tried to wear that as some kind of badge of honor which it, in my opinion, was not. No, I never saw this with returnees from World War II, with a few exceptions, maybe soldiers who were in foxholes for four years, perhaps a few. I didn't see it with any Korean vets. We've only seen it with Vietnamese vets. I don't know, do you think that's interesting?

I do think it's interesting. Vietnam veterans, I haven't interviewed--We've interviewed one Vietnam veteran so far, and I didn't do the interview.

Your responsibility, your position of authority, up near the 38th parallel, you were the motor sergeant and you had quite a bit of authority in that position?

Yes. Motor sergeant is responsible for all the vehicles. If a vehicle was needed to be serviced, because if it wasn't, more damage would result to the vehicle, so they were, I think, what was called redlined. And nobody was able to use that vehicle. If they did and more damage occurred, they would directly be responsible for that. And, so, my company commander had to, for those reasons, ask me for a vehicle. And, of course, I always kept his vehicle in tip top shape, even if I had to run his vehicle off a cliff and go to ordinance ammo and get him a brand new one.

Wow! Now, were these jeeps, is this a jeep--

Jeeps. Three quarter tons, two and a half ton.

Yes. You worked on all those vehicles?

They were fairly simple in those days.

Were they made by General Motors, or Ford, or Cummings, or somebody?

I believe they were all American-made.

American-made.

We didn't do real heavy work like transmission or heavy motor work. Those kind of a jobs were sent to the rear where they had very big garages designed for that.

Yes. So, when you had to move the camp, you mentioned when you had to burn the field and then so you moved the camp, so all the vehicles have to move at that time, too?

Yes.

In a convoy or something?

Well, then, when there, are they parked in a tent, or parked just out in the open, or--

Our vehicles?

Yes.

They are just out in the open.

Well, I'd like to tell you something else. I don't know how it's going to go over with the authorities. But we got replacements, as the older guys rotated home.

Sure.

We got replacements, and it was up to me to make them truck drivers. And, many times, I'd say to these replacements, "Have you ever driven a truck before?" And they said no, and I would complain to my company commander that driving a truck through the mountains with full loads of ammunition, and, the reason for that, front line outfits sometimes would request service outfits to form convoys and bring them ammunition. So, sometimes, we would delegate maybe three, four of our trucks to go to a certain area, get loaded up with artillery shells, get into this convoy, and head up to the front line. Well, driving a truck fully loaded, through the mountains, with terrible, narrow dirt and partially washed-out roads, takes a lot of experience and know-how. And when I complained to my company commander, who was a really nice guy for an officer, that we're flirting with extreme danger here, he'd say, "Well, do you want to rotate home or not,

because, if we don't have new guys, you guys ain't going anywhere." And, so, I would try to break them in and tell them when you're going around turns, this load is apt to turn you over. And I've seen many go out and not come back. I still feel somewhat guilty about that.

Because they might have been, these drivers who went over the edge because of the unbalanced, the load, the way they were driving, some of those drivers, would, you would have tried to instruct them or advise them?

Yes, I tried, but you can't teach somebody to drive loaded ammunition trucks through the mountains on dirt washboard roads that sometimes would only accommodate one vehicle. And when you met an approaching vehicle from the other coming at you, you'd have to do a lot of backing up and all kinds of screwing around, somehow, to get by each other. One time I got--another time, I got bored being in a motor pool, and I took a vehicle, and I went to, got loaded up with ammunition, and got in this convoy, and headed up to the front line. And I'm going up one of these mountain roads. And coming down this mountain road, of course, in the other direction, was a jeep. I remember he was a captain. I saw the captain bars. He was sitting in the back. And the driver was an African American. They were coming down, and I'm going up. And they were coming around this turn and, somehow, they never made the turn. And I watched them sail right through midair. And I was shocked. There was no change of expression on the captain in the back or the driver at the front. And down they went until they were out of sight. And I'm sure nobody ever went looking for them.

Wow.

Lots of things like that. In fact, after that one trip through those mountain roads to bring ammunition to a front line outfit with all the experiences I've had, I drove cars, I drove motorcycles, and I drove trucks before I got in the army, after that one trip, there was not a hankering to volunteer again and take a truck through the mountains again. How those guys that survived, those that did survive, how they did it had to be an act of God, because I've had a lot of experience, and I wasn't hankering to do that again.

Yes.

We would, of course, had to stand guard. I forget exactly whether it was two or three hours, which was a little tough at 25 below zero, 18 inches of snow, until you were relieved. And, sometimes, you weren't. The one who was supposed to relieve you was asleep. You know, really, we were all kids, 19, 20, 21 years old, without much experience in life. And if mama wasn't around to wake some of their sons up, they never got up. So, sometimes, you would have to go into a tent and wake the guy up who was supposed to relieve you for guard duty.

One time, we got a new lieutenant, who turned out to be a pretty nice guy, but it was two in the morning, the generator cranked out, the engine stopped, and the lights went out. Well, he comes into the tent, and he started pulling rank on me. "Get out there and start that thing!" and all that kind of stuff. And I didn't like his attitude, but, being a good soldier, I went out, and I worked on the engine until my fingers turned all white, which happened quite often, which bothered me for four, or five, or six years after I got out of the Service.

Yes.

It destroys the blood supply, you know, the fingers it used to turn them all white. So, I'd come in periodically and hang my fingers over the oil stove and jump around while they were defrosting. And the lieutenant would come in. "What are you doing in here? I told you to get that thing going!" And I said, "Well, lieutenant, tell you what, you think you can do better than me, feel free." So he went back into his tent, and I guess the captain told him, "That's not the way to go about talking to Mr. Schechter."

Beautiful!

So the lieutenant came back into the tent, and he said, "Listen, I apologize. You know I'm just new here." And I, you know, and, so like I said earlier, he turned out to be a really nice guy, he was just new, and I forgave him for that, you know.

And you got the generator going, or?

Yes. Eventually. Oh, I used to freeze my fingers all the time, but I was kind of used to that. When I was sixteen, seventeen, everybody had old cars, and they wouldn't start in wintertime. We had to take out the plugs, and throw ether into the combustion chambers, and use blow torches to heat up the plugs, and all that kind of stuff. So, I had a lot of this type of experience, but my fingers turning white all the time--

That was kind of scary.

I didn't bargain for that. But I was just, when I started a job, I had to finish it.

And it took me, oh, gosh, after being out of the Service four, five, six, years, if my fingers got a little cold, started turning white. And, finally, they seemed to have normalized after a half a dozen years.

But I suppose, whenever your hands feel really cold, it must take you back to-- it could take you back to those times in Korea when your hands got all white with the cold?

Not really. It was just thirteen months over there, kind of like being in a camp, on a bivouac.

Yes, when you--

And no psychological hang-ups. You're just out there sweating like hell in summer, freezing like hell in winter. And then after twelve, thirteen, months, it was over, and no big deal. I went back home.

I'm just sorry I wasn't able to spend more time in Japan. Speaking of Japan, that brings back something interesting. After I was there about five, six, seven months, I was given R & R, which was Rest and Recuperation, in Japan. And we got off the plane, and I'm looking at fifty beautiful

Japanese women all lined up in front of us. And while I'm wondering what this all means, there was a colonel to my left, and he says, "Don't even try bargaining with them. They're fifty bucks a week." And I thought 35 cents! And this is back in-- this colonel must have been making money on this or something. But you're only there for five, six days, or seven days, and we had all this money we could not spend. What the hell. It was only money!

Yes. Was that in Tokyo or--

I forgot what town that was in. And, so, this girl takes you by the hand and she takes you to mamasan's house, where they have kind of straw mats. Instead of Kleenex, for cleaning up, they had something that was like wax paper. I said, "Wax paper, we wrap sandwiches in wax paper!" And the mamasan would come in with a like a cup of tea, close the door, and open the door, which was built like out of balsa wood and tissue paper. And the girls were very obedient and very, very clean. Hygiene was a very, very big thing with the Japanese girls, far more hygienic than American girls. And she would put you in this big tub of hot water, you know, these big tubs, you know. And she jumps in. I stick my toe in and almost burnt my toe. She says, "Come on!" I says, "Well, you only live once," except she wouldn't have anything to do with me unless I cleaned up.

Yes.

So I jumped in and, pretty quick, you got used to the hot water, and she had these leaves, you know, tied together, and she would wash me all down. And I'm thinking, how come American girls didn't take care of us boys like this? And then we would relax and do what was natural. And then, at some point, I'd want some of the food from the American PX. And I'd give her a twenty dollar bill of American money to go to the PX to get me a malted, candy bar, or whatever. I wondered if she was going to come back with the money. I found out them gals were a lot more honest than the American girls were!

And, pretty soon, the week was up. And I couldn't wait to get back to where the women were reasonably priced. You know. interesting, even though Korea was war-torn, no facilities for bathing, not one decent house standing in Seoul, the girls were, kept themselves very clean and were very aware of not allowing themselves to become dirty or infected with anything.

Yes.

I came back with the conviction that Orientals were much more concerned about hygiene than Americans. (Please note that there was a lot of coughing at this point) Excuse me, I've got a postnasal drip. So, oh, I also found, while in Japan, on that R & R, though I was used to Harley Davidson, and reckless driving, and rig tailing, and all that kind of stuff, Japanese taxi drivers scared the living heck out of me. Couldn't believe that they were, drove that fast, and that reckless. And I thought I was a hellion on wheels! Those Japanese drivers scared me! I'm trying to think of what might also be important and along those lines.

Did you, when you came back home, did you have any interest or did it work out that you were able to maintain any friendships or contacts with people you met in the Service or--

Well, that's interesting. There was a half a dozen of us guys. We said, "Hey, when we're out of the Army, you know, we'll have to get together, have a, lift a few drinks, and talk about our experiences." And once we got out, we seemed to have no interest in those same people and gravitated back to our old friends with never a thought of what we promised to do.

Yes.

In basic training, there was a Japanese American, a really nice guy with a laid-back attitude, name was Vince. The cadre found out he was a martial arts expert and asked if he could give us a demonstration. And he says, "Okay, but one at a time." And approximately forty of us guys lined up and came at him one at a time. And nobody was able to touch him with a kick, with a punch, with a left, with a right. And after he parried all those blows, I noticed there wasn't one bead of perspiration on his forehead!

Wow.

I don't know what happened to him after that. But we got a little bit friendly in basic. And he told me how his brother and him have a school on South Wabash Avenue in Chicago 4, 5, 6, hundred South, and said, "Listen. You know, after you get out of the Army, come on in. We'll give you lessons." I said, "Well, I don't know if I'm going to be able to afford it, Vince." And he says, "Not to worry. I wouldn't charge you. You're okay." And so after I got out, I went down there for about a year on and off. I got judo lessons, but the novelty wore off. And later, during that time, I found his brother was an eighth degree black belt, which was as high as you can go, and likewise with him.

And about a year ago now, it's been, let's see, 1952, sixty, fifty-five, sixty years since I got out, you know, I thought of him a number of times. And I wondered what happened to him. Well, my friend, being a computer geek, I discussed it with her. Well, she located a judo school in Washington which referred me to a jujitsu school in Wyoming, which referred her to a judo school in Dallas, Texas, which said, yes, they know of him and he lives here. I said, "Boy, I'd appreciate his phone number," They said, "Listen, he has hundreds of people that would like to talk to him, and I can't give out his name," I said, "Listen, tell you what, you tell him who I am, the things we talked about, and he may want to talk to me." Within the hour, he called me. Oh, they said, "Okay, here's his phone number. You can call him." And, so, we talked for about an hour. And he's on dialysis. He goes three times a week. And I thought, boy, how unfair life is! This guy was so capable, such a smooth judo artist, and this is what he ends up with. He lives in Dallas. He goes for dialysis. And I gathered he is a little bit too sick to talk too often, so I only talked to him that time for about forty-five minutes. And I didn't want to call him again. I thought it would be somewhat of a bother, since he has hundreds, if not more, people wanting to communicate with him. And he's not too well.

He told me in basic training how he and his family were in detention camps in Wyoming or thereabouts and how they would get weekend passes sometimes. And five, six, seven, of his buddies would go into a local town, and the local guys would assault them, calling them gooks, Japanese, and, so, they got beat up. Well, a few weeks goes by, they got a pass. They went into

town again, and the local toughs would assault them again, and put, pound, lumps on them. Well, when they got back to camp, they decided, though the authorities don't like Japs, you know, during World War II, the climate was against them, they're not going to take this beating up anymore. They're going to fight back, and this was coming from a guy who has a really laid-back attitude. He said they decided they're not going to get beat up again, so they went into town a third time, and a gang of toughs assaulted them. He said, "Sam, I kid you not. In about two and a half minutes, seven guys were on the ground with broken limbs." He says, "You know, they didn't bother us again." Now, if I was able to do that, I would laugh and stick out my chest, and I would feel very proud of my exploits. But he was just the opposite. He regretted that they had to do this. Very respectful, very laid-back attitude. I can tell he wished so bad that they didn't have to break those guys' bones.

Yes.

So we talked a lot, him and I, and we seemed to get closer in basic training. And so that's why, after sixty years, I often times thought of him, and looked him up about a year ago, and talked to him, and found out he has a kidney condition and is on dialysis three times a week. And, boy, he is just a nice guy. And if I had a third kidney, I would certainly give it to him.

Mr. Schechter, how do you think your military service and your experiences in the military may have affected your life?

Excuse me. It certainly didn't hurt me, and it gave me a little more wider experience, made me think a little bit more worldly. It taught me a little bit more about different kinds of people, and being a little more responsible, and that the world didn't revolve just around me. I think it was a worthwhile experience. And though I didn't when I was in, after I was out, I came to realize I enjoyed it.

Do you think your experience in the military influenced your thinking about war or about armies or armed forces or--

Well, I found out that a lot of the information we got was not true. As an example, I read in *Stars and Stripes* and in a paper I got sent to me from back home in Chicago, a big battle took place at this particular spot in Korea. We killed 50, 000 Chinese and destroyed umpteen tanks and trucks. And I looked at the map, zeroed in, and I says, "You know, guys, it's just nine miles from here." Well, we jumped in a three quarter ton, and out we went. Trees were standing. The grass was all green. I asked some of the locals, "Where was this battle?" Battle, schmattle. "What are you talking about?" So, you know, I learned not to believe everything the *Stars and Stripes* told us, like killing a 100,000 Chinese in this battle, and 50,000 Chinese in another battle, when no battle there had ever really took place. Are you sure you want to record this?

I certainly do.

See, I was a motor sergeant. I can come and go whenever I want. And I went all over and I talked to, unlike Iraq, I walked myself, with my carbine slung around my shoulder, into a great

number of South Korean villages and towns, never meeting hostile people, never worrying that a sniper might be picking me off, probably because I was young and foolish and thinking nothing could hurt me, nobody was going to hurt me. And, so, I really went all over.

And they had little shops all over selling kimonos and things like this. And even though I didn't need it, I enjoyed rapping with the people. I enjoyed socializing with them. I enjoyed bargaining with them. If they wanted, I think we got 360 yen for the dollar, if they wanted 90 yen for a scarf or something, I enjoyed bargaining them, chewing them down to maybe 40 yen, even though I really didn't want it. And I enjoyed the, oh, what would you call it, socializing maybe.

Yes. So, you found the Korean people were--

Not hostile at all.

And, oh, yes, one day I'm in Seoul, I found this old mamasan, that's an old lady, she was sitting on a sidewalk back up against a building selling pencils for some money, looked very poor, and just when I was coming up upon her, I was going to drop some yen into her lap, there was the South Korean national police, real son of a bitches they were. They reminded me of the German Gestapo of World War II. Tall black boots, black pants, tall, and he stopped, looked at her, and he barked a conversation at her, which, of course, I didn't understand, probably insulting her, telling her to get off the sidewalk, she should be ashamed of herself and all this, and then gave her a kick in her legs. Oh, I felt so bad about that, how that son of a bitch kicked that poor old defenseless woman. And I had no authority over him. But he looked at me and I looked at him, and he looked at me and I looked at him. And I think if I wasn't there staring at him, he might have worked that old lady over more, and, so, he just continued walking down the sidewalk. And I thought, you rotten son of a bitch, kicking that poor old Korean lady in the legs like that! And so I dropped her a bunch of yen in her lap, I think maybe 5, 6, 7 hundred yen, which I think was about 360 to the American dollar.

Another thing I resented, every payday, we'd come into our officers' tent, and our captain would have a bucket there, American Red Cross, and he looked at me like, as we got our check, as we got our script that they gave us…

Military script, Yes

and I'd say, "Captain, you know this is no good," and he indicated unless he got donations from the troops they reflected badly on him. So, I'd drop a buck in there. And another reason I didn't want to give to the Red Cross, because of all the freedom I had, I used to see American Red Cross ladies driving around in new American station wagons with majors and colonels next to them. And the scuttlebutt that was going around, they were getting a hundred dollars a night. Now, that doesn't seem like a lot of money now, but it was then. And that they, them gals, went back with a lot of money. How they got brand new American station wagons to ride around with is beyond me. And they of course wouldn't look at us noncommissioned officers, noncommissioned guys, they wouldn't even talk to us. It seemed pretty obvious they were intent on making money. Even at the USO shows, there was never any Red Cross workers there. Never got a cup of coffee. We got off the ship in San Francisco. There was the Salvation Army. They

had coffee and doughnuts for us. I said, "Where's the Red Cross?" Nobody'd ever seen any Red Cross workers. And many of my fellow soldiers we, like me, we didn't rate those that Red Cross operation very highly. If it was up to me, I would have banned them from the whole of Korea, because I couldn't see one bit of good they did, except get rich. To this day, I always drop something into the kettles of the other one.

Salvation Army.

Yes, I really have a bad feeling in my gut about those Red Cross workers.

And, you know, they flew us back from California to I forget exactly what camp. It could have been Fort McCoy. Midroute, I started to get chills and fever, alternating chills and fever, and, I guess, I was looking pretty bad, so the stewardess told the pilot to land somewhere midroute, a little dirt air field. Then I'd seen an ambulance pulling up. Just then, a feeling of well-being came over me. I refused to get off the plane. And the plane took off again. Well, later on, I found out it was a touch of malaria. And what made me mad, I had 30 days leave. I believe half of those 30 days, I was home sick with appeared to be malaria, hot and cold chills half the time. I'd go out with the guys and all that. After two or three days, jeeze, I got chills, I got fever, and I ended back home. Never went to the VA. And then, when I was due to get back to camp after that 30 day leave, disgustingly, I returned to health. I never had a touch of what I think was malaria again. And, so, I've been, except for that one touch, I've been very healthy all my life. And you're going to laugh at this, but I sometimes wonder if it wasn't for the fact when I was eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen years old, me and my buddies, we used to swim in the Chicago River when it was really a sewer. It smelled like a sewer. And everything imaginable would be floating down the river. We must have been pretty stupid, but we swam in that river, and we did scuba diving in that river.

And you know what, nobody ever got sick, and all those guys and myself never contracted anything, and we're healthy and strong the rest of our lives, knock on wood! I think, as a layman, I probably contacted all this disease, but, having a healthy body, built up an immunity to it. Consequently, we never contracted anything the rest of our lives. We had to be pretty stupid to swim in that stupid Chicago River!

Nowadays, I think if you fall in the river they want to take you to the--

Nowadays, it's 300 percent cleaner then it was.

When I got out of the Army, I had the GI bill coming. And I, because of the friends I had, I never thought about going back to school. Since some of my friends were flying, I took flying lessons under the GI bill. And, you might say, flew it away. And for a couple of years, I just flew around from one airport to the next, and played around with airplanes, and repaired airplanes. And with my Harley-Davidson motorcycle, that kind of life, long before those movies about the wild ones and the Hell's Angels and people like that, and before there was a word called hippies, we were doing all these things, just we didn't know what we were. And, of course, people in those days had a bad view of motorcycle riders due to all the existing propaganda, so we were kind of looked upon as a motley lot, as somebody to avoid, but we weren't really bad. We were just out

for enjoyment. We never hurt anybody. We never thought we were very tough. We just liked to ride, trail ride, go through the woods, swim, look for girls to ravish, and all that, which was, you know, what all guys want. And then, well, finally, we got our bellyful and settled down for a while, which was normal. Then we began to grow up and began to concentrate on more grown-up things.

Getting back to the military--

Yes, if there is anything you'd like to add that we haven't covered--

When I was in, they must have been taking everybody, because I almost got killed twice in basic training. They lined up like forty guys on one line and forty on an opposing line. And we were supposed to have bayonet practice. And I looked at the guy confronting me, and I said, Sam, he looks like he's got crazy eyes! And we're supposed to lunge, and you parry the blow, and then, you know, you lunge, and he parries the blow. And you make sure you're not going to stick anybody with the bayonet. And I looked at this guy, and I knew something was wrong. He lunged at me, and, if I wasn't fast and stepped out of the way, he would have ran me right through. I ran up to the cadre and I says," I ain't staying next to this guy. He's nuts!" They were taking everybody at the time. There was one guy, he, the glasses that he had looked like the bottoms of milk bottles.

Wow.

Then we had this night problem. The cadre was up on this hill, and we're going up the hill firing our blanks, and they were firing blanks down at us to simulate an assault on the hill. And, all of a sudden, I hear a bang. My helmet blows off my head. I turn and I look. There is this dummy with the milk-bottle eyes. He fires his gun. Good thing it was a blank! He fired it right into my head. If we had real ammunition, I would have been dead twice.

The obstacle course, the filtration course, embarrassed me. I felt the Boy Scouts really did tougher things. Which I think gets back to what I had read at the time. The American Army says we need warm bodies over there, and we need them quick, so they took everybody. The training I had, I knew more about firing guns, and knives, and driving, and mechanics, much more than I ever learned in basic training. Frankly, the military ain't going to like this. This is training? I couldn't believe it! I couldn't believe it! My girlfriend could have done all of this stuff we had in basic training with one hand.

Really?

Really.

You had to get up at like six o'clock in the morning and run five miles with a pack on your back, or something, or crawl on your stomach through the brush?

It was purely child's play.

Oh.

Yes. I used to think, well, let me tell you something a little more important. We were in Korea and my company commander would say, you know, "Communist guerillas are lurking around attacking service outfits in the rear. Take a few guys and go on patrol." And we were the, we were not, in my opinion, we were not soldiers. I'd go take the men. We'd go on the first hill out of sight of the company headquarters. And there was a vast flat expanse of land. If you had a cigarette in your mouth, you would see that cigarette four miles away. And these guys are coughing, and lighting cigarettes, and farting, and blowing their nose. I says, "Guys, if there's some enemy out here, we're dead!" And there it is. Good night! And it's real quiet. And this buddy next to me starts coughing. Oh, God, I says, you know, I ain't going any further! These guys are going to get me killed! We dug a hole, three foot hole, four foot hole. And I climbed in. We climbed in that hole. And we had these half a tent shelter half, or whatever they call it, and I put it over the hole, and I stayed in that hole with these guys for a half hour, forty minutes. I peeked out, didn't see nothing, and slid back down the hill to company headquarters. I wasn't going on patrol with those guys! I grew up with a pretty sneaky bunch of guys. So, I knew these guys, you know, with milk bottles in their eyes and all that, I would not want to go on patrol with!

You know what I used to think? These guys were so unsoldierlike, I used to think, you know, six guys from my old crowd formed into a unit, we'd be able to go around and annihilate one Service, one Service outfit after the other, eliminate everybody, without never incurring any damage to ourselves. They were that sneaky. And the guys I was in were so untrained and unsoldierlike.

Yes. Were you from a particular neighborhood in Chicago? The old neighborhood, was it--

North Avenue and California.

North and California.

I used to think, I don't think you want to record this, I used to think, this is an Army?

Yes.

Half a dozen guys from my neighborhood, we'd wipe out all these guys. There were a couple of the guys were, I don't know where they got the stuff, but they were on drugs. And one guy we called Bebop, because he was, he never knew what was going on. He was bebopping.

Wow.

And, believe me, they were not soldiers. I was not going to go on patrol with them. I would go myself if I had to. I wouldn't go with them! And, as far as being in good physical shape, not at all! I don't think any of them were ever in a fight.

Half of them were, in my opinion, still tied to their mothers' apron strings. And one guy definitely was. He used to holler at us guys. "You're going to get diseased," you know, "going out with these girls! You're insulting your mother! What would your mother say?" One day, he really was a sweet, nice kid, clean-cut as they come, I got this most beautiful Korean girl, gave her a bath, a shower, and we gave her extra money, and it was like eight, nine o'clock at night, we put her in a sleeping bag. And I said, "No matter what he says, you do not get out of that sleeping bag. If you're in that sleeping bag in the morning, I'm going to give you mucho guam." One of us had money. So, we're all in our bunks, and in comes Eddie. Should I mention his name? There comes Emerich, I still remember his last name. And we were waiting to hear him screaming, and yelling, and kicking her out. And we were waiting, and we're waiting, and, pretty soon, we all fell asleep. We get up in the morning, and there he is with a big grin, steady grin, on his face, you know. We created a monster! After that, every day, "Guys, let's go to town and get some girls! Come on, guys!" I'd say, "Emerich, Emerich, take it easy! You know, you can't go wild with this kind of stuff, you know!" "I know. Come on. Let's go get some girls! Come on! Get the vehicle!" "Emerich, please!" These guys said, "Sam, you created a monster! He's going to get back home. His mother's going to say, what did the Army do to him!" That was his first encounter with a female.

I wonder if he's being interviewed!

I don't know.

That's quite a story!

I don't know how much I can tell you. Some other things I did over there, but I don't know!

I think we got the flavor.

I liked explosions. I liked shooting. And I used to go in our supply room and gather up a whole armload of carbines, and hand grenades, and thousands of rounds of ammunition. And I used to target practice. I liked it. And when one gun stock was smoking, I'd throw it outside and grab the other one, make beer cans jump up and down, and throw hand grenades. And one day, I come in the supply room, and I open up this big chest. And, oh my gosh, I can't believe it! I almost had nothing left there. In case we were ever attacked, we had nothing left to defend ourselves. And I used to think, oh, my God, if we're ever attacked, we're all going to run for this ammunition and guns, and we're all going to be wiped out. And in the court-martial, they're going to say, "What did you do with everything?"

I says, so right away, I went to ordnance ammo with a couple of cartons of cigarettes. And I got a whole cache of guns and ammunition again and refilled our supply room. So, it's kind of, what I mean, kind of like an experience!

Kind of like an experience!

Like motorcycle riding and, you know,--

Yes.

You're only limited by your own imagination.

That's a good statement. Yes.

And then I got a tent, and, before, we just had a hole in the ground. Well, then I made a box which was like a toilet. And then I requisitioned, acquired a tent. So, I put this tent up, and we had a toilet now, a washroom, a toilet, you know, with a tent, with a box, and a hole in the ground. And, again, you're only limited by your own imagination. And I used to secure a lot of, no, I won't go into that, a lot of things for my company commander, who was a doctor, a really nice guy. And, you know, there was really almost everything available. It was just a matter of how much you wanted something, how persistent and how determined you are. I guess the same thing works in civilian life. It just depends on how badly you want something.

I have to get another tape. Is that okay?

Yes. Sure.

So, after training, we were given a ticket to California. I couldn't get on a troop train, but I managed to get a civilian ticket. And I think it was Camp Stoneman. And, you know what, I found girls over there too! I got a-- I had a sixth sense on where to search for girls. So after that, we got to Japan, and we got into a camp, and I guess it was built for Japanese troops. And it wasn't used for a long time, because everything was dusty. And they say, "Okay, you guys, you got to clean up this whole barracks here." Well, I thought that was kind of a thing, going over to Korea, now they're going to put me to work cleaning! So, I mosey out. What are they going to do to me? I'm going to Korea. Are they going to put me in the guardhouse? No! So, I moseyed around, and I see the cyclone fence at the edge of camp, and there was this beautiful Japanese girl smiling at me. So, I naturally gravitated over there. She motions to me. About twenty feet away, there is a big hole in the cyclone fence. So I walk over there. And I see fifteen, twenty Japanese, pretty Japanese girls laying on beautiful blankets. And there was this Japanese guard. He had a gun. I don't know if it was loaded. He was marching the perimeter. And I says to this girl, and she says, "Okay, okay, you don't have to worry." So, I climbed through this fence, and I see this Japanese guard looking back. And, so, there I was with her on this beautiful, colorful blanket getting an initiation into Japan. So, I go back. I call my buddies. "Come on, you guys!" They say, "No, we'll get in trouble!" "Come on!" So I brought another ten, fifteen guys over. They all go through the fence. And the girls ended up with a lot of business. And, then, so we go back to the barracks. And some officer comes back in about four or five hours. He looks. "Looks like nothing was done here! What are you guys doing?" I says, "Sarge, there's some beautiful girls outside the cyclone fence!" He turned around and walked out. He wasn't going to argue with us. And, so, girls are all over. You just got to know where to look. Yes.

My first initiation to girls in Korea, the second, third day in Korea, oh, I'm in Seoul, and I look across the street. The street was a dirt road, I think, and two pretty girls, I'm looking at them, because they're pretty, and I hadn't seen a girl, or had one, for a few days. And I was shocked. She picks up her dress, squats, and urinated. I says, wow, never seen that back home!

And then four or five, four or five, days later, I went to this river to take a swim. And there was Korean women on both sides of the river doing their clothes with a flat board pounding their clothes out on flat rocks, no soap, and there was about twenty-five guys in this river completely in the nude, up to their knees, washing. And I thought, wow, all in the nude in front of maybe a few hundred women! And this river couldn't have been more than fifty feet wide. And I thought, wow! You know, within a couple of a days, I was doing the same thing and never thought anything of it. And when they, by the way, washed those clothes as I described, they smelled fresher than any clothes we wash here in washing machines with soap. It smelled like the river. It smelled like the fresh air.

And then, later on, I would get a whole barracks bag of my clothes washed by these mamasans for a bar of soap, a big bar of soap, a Hershey bar, and because I was so bighearted, I would flip her a what amounted to a quarter in American money. And she was just overjoyed. She called me the big spender, the last of the big spenders. I felt sorry for them.

And the money we had meant nothing to me. And everything was so cheap. And they desperately needed help. And instead of giving it to the Red Cross and those charlatans, I felt better giving it to those poor old local mamasans.

And then I, well, let's see, did you want to shut that off for a moment? Allow me to collect my thoughts.

Yes.

They treated the Chinese prisoners terribly and they were-- do you want me to record that?

Yes.

The Orientals, Chinese prisoners or soldiers, to me, they looked like they were like maybe fifteen. But I come to realize that they just looked a lot younger. They were maybe like us, eighteen, nineteen, but they looked young to us. And these African Americans, African Americans, had these three Chinese, what looked like really young kids, on the hood of their jeep. And they were, and they were, our guys were so tall, and these Chinese were so small and innocent looking. And they got them on the hood of this jeep. And they'd go down the road like twenty miles an hour, slam on their brakes, and these three Chinese would slide off. And then they'd get out there, and they would yell, "Stupid Chinese, can't you stay on!," this kind of crap, and, of course, I had no authority over them. And then they would make those Chinese get onto the hood of the jeep again, and then go down the road, twenty miles an hour, and slam on the brakes. And then, the Chinese would slide off the hood again. And they would get out there, and these America soldiers of ours, soldiers, would show these poor, little, defenseless Chinese prisoners what great, big, tough American soldiers they were. They would kick them, punch them around, and throw them back on the hood of the jeep. And I lost sight of what happened after that. That really made me mad. I discussed it with my company commander. He said best to forget it.

I found out some swimming holes in Korea, beautiful nice little swimming holes, the type Americans pay a few thousand dollars to go visit, make great resorts today. And in one of these places, I found, we found a couple of Korean babies. They had maggots stuffed in their eyes, in their mouths, and in their ears. And I understand that when the people felt they were unable to take care of their children, they did this. Why they didn't just drown them, or shoot them, or whatever, I don't know. But they were stuffed with maggots, or maybe just abandoned, and the maggots just happened. I'm not sure which. Well, one of my guys said, "Well, let's take them back to the hospital." I said, "Look, if the people wanted to abandon the child, you know, that's their prerogative. I don't think we should interfere." Well, a couple of the guys I was with said, "No, no, no. They can't destroy life like this." And, so, we took the two kids back to where they could get treatment. I don't know if they got treatment. I don't know what happened to them.

And then drove into Seoul a number of times and, to my surprise, it was chock-full of able-bodied men walking around. Civilians, at least in civilian clothes. And I thought to myself, why are we here, brought in from America, when, look, Seoul, tens of thousands of able-bodied Koreans walking around here as civilians? And that was interesting.

And then, on a couple of these trips into Seoul, I had some Koreans approach me very nicely. "Listen, can we steal your truck? We're willing to give you x amount of money." Because when we, I, went to Seoul, I chained up the vehicle to a lamppost. And I decided against it. I didn't need no money. I didn't like money. I didn't need money to have fun in Korea or back home. Some of the best times of my life, never had a dime in my pocket. When you get a situation like that, your mind works in a different plane or something like that. So, a couple of times, I was offered money to let them, don't lock the lock so they can steal the vehicle. But I didn't go for that. Maybe if they'd offered me their sister, it might have been different! And, again, full of able-bodied men walking around. And they had to take us twenty-year-old kids from the States and bring us here to fight? And many of these Koreans were bigger, stronger looking than we were. Interesting.

And then I'd seen such terrible waste, the parking lots, as far as the eye could see, just loaded with trucks, and tanks, and planes. And I used to think, oh my gosh, it staggered the imagination! And I had an imagination at that time! And I used to think, who could ever use all this equipment?

One day, I'm walking around in my company area near the 38th parallel, maybe 30 miles behind the front line, and there's a strange guy walking around. I says, "Hey, who are you?" Well, he's a pilot, and he is stationed at this airport that's about fifteen miles to our rear. I says, "Oh, that's nice. What do you fly?" I think he says those, they were called L-19s, metal-bodied plane, metal, not the Irish linen that light planes were made out of at that time. He said, "Would you like to fly with me sometime?" I said, "Sure." Me and my big mouth! Because I'll tell you what happened next. I'm flying around with him, and I'm looking down, and I'm seeing white explosions, flashes of white. I says, "Hey, what's that?" He says, "They're firing at us." I says, "Who?" He says, "The enemy." I says, "Where are we at?" And he says, "Over enemy territory." I'm his fodder. Oh my gosh! Another time, I didn't have my thinking cap on. I expected a bullet to come flying underneath this plane and right into my rear end! And I says, "If they're firing at us, why are we flying around here? They're bound to hit us." And I didn't get an answer that I remember.

I says, "How long are we going to be over this enemy territory?" "Oh, not long." I said, "I sure hope so! Listen, guy, I got to tell you, I'm scared of getting a bullet up my rear end." He didn't answer. And I don't know how long we were over enemy territory, but I was on needles and pins, because this plane, had, you know, thin metal skin, you know. Finally, we turned around, and we headed back. We landed. I got out of the plane. I didn't say good-bye to him. This guy never told me where we were going. Boy, was I mad at him! Let me tell you! After that, I made sure I kept my thinking cap on!

And then, how I got into flying when I got-- I was stationed at Fort McCoy, I met a couple of local guys. They had a Piper Cub on their farm. You could look through one side and see the other. It was, linen was what they covered those light planes with at the time. And on the fuselage, the body of the plane, half of it was missing. And they says, "You like to take a ride with us?" I was still in uniform. I says, Wait a minute! Look at this plane! It's got holes all over it. They said, "That's okay. That's not important. It's the wings. It's the wings that make it fly." I didn't see any holes in the wings. So, I went up with them. It's true, you know. You don't need any covering on the fuselage. All you need is the wings and the engine. And we flew around. And then, so that's another reason I think I started flying under the GI bill.

And, you know, the memories don't come so quick after fifty-five years, fifty--

I think you have an amazing treasure trove of memories.

The jokes.

Oh, that's a great-- great stories. I have two questions. I think the pictures that you brought in today that's taken, that's you?

On the motor pool. See, "No smoking." I'm smoking.

Yes.

I never take orders very well. Yes, that's me.

So you never thought of making a career of the Army then, or anything?

You have to take orders. It was too regimented of a life. It did not provide enough freedom for me.

Yes. Now, this picture, you're here with three othe,r

Yes.

soldiers.

And this is me.

Yes, second from the left.

And this guy was a mechanic, but lazy. I'd find-- I was in charge. I'd find him laying underneath a truck. I'd say, "Why don't you get to work?" You know, I don't like to work. I'm the type of guy that likes to get all the work done. Ah, now I can be lazy! Not have a guilty conscience.

Yes.

Do whatever I want. But, some people, they just like to drag it out, drag it out. And I used to say, I thought I always had his name, "Come on, why you don't get the job done? Get it done! Get all this work done, so we can do whatever we want after that!" And so I always--

That was the first guy?

Yes.

I think these guys were truck drivers.

Okay. And this is in-- this is in Korea?

Oh, yes. Sure. This was motor pool tent. And you had to bring the vehicles in there.

The other question that occurs to me--

This was a gas can.

Yes. The other question that occurs to me is you mentioned about the guys from the old neighborhood what a unit, what a unit, they would have constituted on a field.

They were deadly.

Did any of them have to go in the Service, and how did they do?

Yes, many of them did end up in the Service, drafted like me. Most of them ended up in prison. One guy was in sent to Germany. He ended up in Heidelberg Prison.

Oh.

He tried to hijack an Army truck loaded with supplies and sell it. Another guy, they were a real mutinous crew, they were very, entrepreneur-ish

Another guy, he was thrown out under a Section 8, means undesirable. Another guy, let's see what happened to him. They, none of them made good Army material the way the Army was set up. But if we could have been set up in one special group, we would have been deadly, you know, kind of like "The Dirty Dozen."

Yes, that comes to mind.

Well, as an example, one of my buddies, old buddies, named Kevin: now in certain neighborhoods, three story buildings were separated, only had maybe about a two and a half foot walk between them.

Yes.

When he put his feet on one building and on the other, and, with his hands, he'd go all the way up to the third flight and hold himself there with his feet, get a piece of pie the woman puts on the window sill. "Sam, are you ready?" I says, "Yes." He would throw the pie. I mean, this was the kind of exercise I and my buddies were used to, and nobody I was with in basic training was able to do those things. I was able to walk a rope a hundred feet across a river and all that kind of stuff. And no sooner guys got out to this rope, they were two feet, they'd drop into the river or on the ground, you know. Very bad Army material. Like I said, they were taking everybody, because they needed warm bodies in Korea. And the other guy, let's see, the name was Mantoo, See, what the military, I think, ought to do is like sharp management, or sharp CEO, a sharp guy, head of a company, you find out a specific thing that person can do. Don't give them a job that's not suited for them. Everybody knows something. Everybody's good at something. And you find out where he's best suited. And that, I think, is what would make a good Army.

Yes. I had one vet tell me he remembered being in line, and the guy in front of him was a fireman, and they made a truck driver out of him, the next guy in line was a truck driver, and they made a fireman out of him.

Yes. I didn't want to, when I told you that officer who set up that table in the middle of that road, he was asking everybody what they did, and those who did nothing worthwhile went off to the left line, those who had some worthwhile went to the right. I had my thinking cap on. Couldn't think of what they wanted. I just saw trucks and told them I was a truck mechanic. And some of those guys, by the way, which went to the line on the left, they were wrapped up like cordwood. I saw some of them about a month and a half later. They were stacked up like cordwood outside some officer's tent. And it was on the front there, I forgot why, and I was a real, like I said, nosy guy, I was always moving around, and I was always looking for adventure, always looking for new things, and always trying to find out what's going on. And so I used to see a lot of these things. And I used to think, gosh, these poor guys, twenty-one-years old, twenty, they didn't know from nothing. They don't know what the world is all about. They don't know where Korea was on the map. They didn't even care.

They didn't know that South Korea, and this is controversial, we were there defending South Korea, but they were ruled by a guy named Syngman Rhee, who was a bloodthirsty dictator and killed tens of thousands of his own people. You know about Syngman Rhee? Oh, you do. Well, I give you one. And, of course, that's, this one South Korean soldier attached to my outfit, he used to say, well, he's probably dead now. I'm sure of it. We called him, I called him Rufus. He used to say, "Pretty soon, Syngman Rhee's going to die, and then we're going to have peace." And it was obvious what he meant. And the people, the South Koreans who we supposedly were fighting for, didn't like their Syngman Rhee and didn't like their national police, which I

previously told you about. They were ruled by this Syngman Rhee, a bloody dictatorship who used to put people into tiger cages and then spread lye on them and sit and listen to them in agony. And that's why, when the North Koreans attacked, the Chinese, the South Koreans, the South Koreans quickly would throw off their uniforms and resort to being civilians, because they didn't want to fight for the people we were there to help, which was Syngman Rhee and his cronies. You really want to record this?

Iit's a soldier's view of the conflict.

If this was during the McCarthy era, 1950, `52, they'd probably be locking me up.

Yes.

How did this Communist get into the Army? But I can only tell you what these Korean soldiers told me. And I always meant, I said, "Rufus, I'm going to come back someday, and I'm going to look you up." And he says, "You won't come back." I was 21. He was like 45. I thought he was an old man at 45. Here I am 78, and I thought 45 was an old man! And I was, and I would have gone back to visit, but I lost his address, you know, motorcycle riding, and all that kind of stuff. Nothing was settled, and I was lucky I didn't lose my pants in those days, so I never, so I did lose track of him. And you know what I thought? You know, he was nicer, and I had a better chemistry with him than I did with all my uncles and aunts, and he was a Korean.

He was a Korean gentleman, Yes.

So I guess that's what they mean when they say sometimes a friend can be a much better friend than, you know, family.

Yes.

We had a real good relationship. One time he says, "How would you like to visit my brother?" I don't know of any other American soldiers that had a relationship with Korean soldiers. And I says, "Okay, Rufus, well, it's about fifty miles this way." He had a flat face, flat, you know, like Mongolians, you know.

Yes.

What a gentle, nice person. Now, I'm wondering is he an enemy in disguise, you know, where's he taking me? Yes, so I take a jeep, I said, "Rufus, you know, we've got a lot of shit here," thinking, you know, the Koreans are starving. They don't have anything. "Should I take some food, anything, take some blankets." "Nothing," he says. "Nothing?" "Nothing." So, we drive down to his brother. He had a very respectful, obedient, clean wife, three nice little children. I think the oldest was about six or seven. And I had my M1 carbine. I didn't want to appear like a threat. I didn't want to leave myself defenseless, because I'm still not so sure about what's going on. And I took the ammo out of my carbine and laid it up against a wall so nobody could pick it up and shoot me. I took the ammo out of it, and I did that to show them that I'm no threat to them. And I go to sit down, and his wife comes, and she wipes off the chair real nice, you know.

Well, to make a long story short, they gave me food - kimchee. And this is hard to describe, but they had a refined culture I never saw in America. You know what I mean by that.

Mmm hmm.

They were so courteous and so respectful. They were, I don't know, I'd say today they might call them beautiful people, but very respectful, very nice, very courteous. And I says, my gosh, I come to realize I'm a slob compared to these people! I'm crude. I'm coarse. I never realized how crude that I am, having met these people. And I says to myself, Sam, this could be an awakening for you. You really must refine yourself. And, so, we had this kimchee. I was a little, I'm not used to that kind of food, so I just ate a little bit and pushed it away. They kind of laughed at me. They figured, you know, GI, you know, they figured I wouldn't be able to eat the food. And we had a nice visit. And Rufus, he thanked me for taking him to visit his brother and family. And we drove back to company headquarters.

And Rufus used to say, well, then, he also told me about the Korean national police, sons of bitches. They murder people. They torture Koreans. They're son of a bitches, and all that. And I'd say, "Rufus, aren't you worried about talking to me like this? Aren't you worried that I might tell somebody what you said?" "No," he says. "You are different from the other GIs. I know I can trust you." He was right. Yes. They were ruled by a bloody dictator and we went over to keep him in power.

Same thing in Vietnam. Vietnam was ruled by this bloody dictator named, forgot his name, and they went through one bloody dictator after the next, who again murdered and tortured, from what I hear and read, thousands of his own people, which is why we all read stories how the South Vietnamese Army was not much of a fighting force. When the North Koreans approached, like the Koreans, ripped off their uniforms and deserted. So, we, of course, were there, because we were crazy about Communists in those days. We were really paranoic on Communism. And I had friends who used to say, "You know, Sam, better dead than red." I'd say, "Wait a minute. If you're dead, you can never change the system. What are you talking about?" Did you ever hear that, "Better red than dead." Boy, America was so brainwashed in the late forties and early fifties. What do you mean, "Better red than dead?" So, what's the matter with a red girl? It's all the same.

You strike me as somebody who can appreciate a good joke.

Sure. Should I turn this--

It's up to you. These two dogs, a Great Dane and a small toy terrier, are at the veterinarian office. And the Great Dane says to the little toy terrier, "You're here to be put to sleep?" And the toy terrier says, "Yes. Let me tell you, my master's kids got kind of rough with me, and I accidentally bit one, so they sent me here to be put to sleep." So the toy terrier says to the Great Dane, "And you here to be put to sleep?" The Great Dane says, "Well, let me tell you, it's a little bit of a story. My master's a female, beautiful woman, and she's walking around in the nude, and then decides to clean the bathtub and leans over. And I looked at that, and I just lost it." "Oh, so that's why she sent you here to be put to sleep." He says, "No. I'm getting my nails clipped."

That's one of those misdirection jokes.

There-- you want me to keep talking?

That's fine.

Like religious jokes?

Oh, do they relate to Korea? Sure.

This rabbi and priest are going to go golfing. The priest says, "On second thought, Rabbi, it's such a nice day, even though it's such a nice day, I've got too many people coming in for confession. I don't think I m going to be able to go." The rabbi says, "Oh, gosh, what a shame. It's such a nice day." The priest says, "Tell you what. You get in one confessional box. I'll get in the other, and we'll take care of the people twice as quick, and we'll have time to go golfing." Rabbi says, "People come in for confession, I don't know what to say." Priest says, "Not to worry. It's all written inside the box. Somebody comes in and says they stole a car, and you look. Thirteen Hail Marys. Somebody comes in and says they murdered somebody. You look on the list. Forty-four Hail Marys." Rabbi says, "Okay." Rabbi gets in the confessional box. Somebody comes in and says, "I beat up my wife." He looks down the list, "Six Hail Marys." Somebody comes in and says, "I stole a car." Rabbi looks. "Ah, stealing a car. Nineteen Holy Hail Marys." Next guy comes in, says, "Just got a blow job." Rabbi looks down the list. Nothing under that. Just then, he sees two altar boys going by. He opens the door and he says, "Hey, kids, what do you get for blow jobs around here?" They said, "It costs you a coke and a Hershey bar." That came about with all these priests abusing people.

Yes.

Hear the one about this priest pulls into town late and goes in up to his hotel room, washes up, opens the Bible, reads the first page, closes it up, goes downstairs, sees the hat-checker, and says, "Hey, how about coming up to my room with me?" Hat-checker says, "Father, I can't do that. What's the matter. You're a priest!" "It's okay. It's okay. It is written. It is written." He goes. He eats. He comes back. He sees her again. He says, "How about coming up to my room with me?" She says, "Father, you're a priest! I can't do that!" He says, "It's okay. It's written. It's written. It's okay." He goes in to the café and he gets her a cup of coffee. He comes back. He looks at her. He says, "How about coming up to the room?" She says, "Father, you're a priest. I can't do that." He says, "It's okay. It's okay. It is written. It is written." Finally, she relents. She goes up and they have an affair. When it's over, she says, "Hey, what is this crap about it is written?" He brings her the Bible, opens the first page, somebody wrote in there, "the hat-checker puts out."

This is kind of like Army humor, too, right?

No, it wasn't all that, civilian life.

Is there anything else you'd like to ?

About the military?

Yes.

We really covered a lot.

Yes. Once I start talking, I find it hard to stop.

No, no, no. That's-- you have kind of a unique perspective.

I think our disaster in Korea can really be traced to MacArthur. As we defeated the North Korean Army and we were advancing to the Yellow River, which was the Chinese border, there was really nothing left of the North Korean Army. The Chinese warned us six times, stay twenty miles away from the Chinese border. Six times, they warned us. And Truman, who was the president, ordered MacArthur, stay twenty miles away from the Chinese border. No need to go to the Chinese border. There was no Korean Army left. Well, MacArthur, being the war hawk that he was, said, "The Chinese are scared of us. They won't do anything." And he marched the American troops right into the Yellow River. There's pictures of the American troops wading themselves in knee-deep water in the Yellow River. And guess what, the Chinese made good on their promise.

Here.

Have a piece of paper?

Yes.

They devastated the American Army so quickly. Here is the Yellow River. Three roads roughly, I'm not an expert, three roads, it was all mountainous. North Korea was pretty mountainous. So, there are three roads leading up to the Chinese border. Everything else was mountainous. The Chinese soldiers, with sticks of dynamite, slid down these mountain roads, disabled the first American vehicle and the last. The rest were sitting ducks. No way to maneuver on narrow mountain roads. Hundreds of tanks, armored vehicles of all types, trucks, didn't stand a chance. You can see that. No way to fight. They were just devastated. The vaunted First Division supposedly had a great reputation in World War II and all that. Nothing was left for them. If it wasn't for the great American fleet, Korea's a peninsula, the American fleet was here. The American fleet was here, and they picked up stragglers. All the equipment, everything was left behind. American troops froze by the hundreds of thousands. It was the middle of winter. And thousands of armored vehicles were left behind and blown up. Thousands of American troops were left wounded and frozen in the soil. Contrary to what the news would tell you, that we brought out all the wounded and all that, there was nothing left but stragglers came back. I talked to these guys. It happened just - I got there just as the disaster unfolded. And that's why Truman fired MacArthur. Oh, you know about that.

Yes.

He thought he was so big he didn't have to take orders, and that led to our disaster in Korea. Otherwise, the war was won.

He just disobeyed what Truman said.

Yes.

Truman said. MacArthur said, "They're scared of us. The Chinese will never do nothing." And that's the disaster that unfolded. And, so, Truman had no other choice but to can him. And Congress gave him such a big ovation, when that general in Russia would have been put up against a wall. Here, every time one of our generals, and we're getting kind of controversial here, but you take Vietnam, every general we had there continued to lose the war more and more. And they'd come back here, they were given an additional star. Another general was sent to Southeast Asia to continue the war, and he loses the war more and more, and he comes back home, they give him another star. And then we send a third general down there, and he's going to run the war, and, of course, really ended up failing. And all these generals that ran the war down there all ended up to be four or five star generals, rewarded. Rewarded for what? In Russia, they would have been put up against the wall for losing. We really reward our military men who screw up as long as they follow orders, as long as they don't criticize their superiors, you know, kind of like the Chicago police force. You get away with anything as long as you don't criticize the system. In fact, our police force isn't even really police. They're really robbers in police uniforms.

That's pretty strong!

I get in trouble with my mouth sometimes, as you can plainly see, and--

But you live in, you don't live in Chicago now, right?

Des Plaines.

Des Plaines.

Oh, heavens, if I lived in Chicago, I would never say those things about the Chicago police force. But, you know, they find somebody who causes trouble for them, they don't care where you live. They'll be sending you tickets. They can get all the information on you. But, listen, our police force is like a not much different than the Los Angeles police force or police forces around the world. Maybe worse. I'm sure you read the papers. Out of 10,000 complaints against the Chicago police, four are investigated. One is suspended for a couple of weeks. And one gets a censure. Out of 10,000 complaints. Well, you know this. You know that. I won't tell you that. And, so, but, then again, I think corruption is rampant all over the world.

Yes.

I think we will-- will we conclude the interview now, do you think? Shall we conclude it now?

I can't think of a better time. Well, next thing, I think we are in what some people might call World War III or World War IV. I'm talking about the Islamofascists, as President Bush one time used that expression, Islamofascists. I think the Christian world is asleep, and I think the European Christians, if they don't wake up, in another twenty years, Europe is going to be an Islamic continent. And why these people don't seem to care is beyond me. I don't have any particularly love for the Vatican, but I think the only hope for Christian Europe is probably the Vatican and Catholicism. The other Christian sects are of no consequence, and they're so liberal they would probably be kissing these Islamofascists as they're ready to come with their scimitars to chop off their heads. I'd be interested if you have any comments on that.

Yes. I'm, as a librarian, I read a lot of, do a lot of reading in reviews, and, Yes, I would-- there is certainly writing to that effect. Birthrates in Europe, and what constitutes being European, future European civilization, the large unassimilated minorities in various countries, Yes, those are all problematic.

May I ask, are you Catholic?

Oh, Yes. Yes.

Well, then you pretty much know what I mean. The Protestants, many of them--

Shall we just-- Do you think we have reached the end of the interview?

I think so.

Yes. That was a wonderful interview. I've-- that view of war and the Army I haven't heard of that, so colorfully told--

Kind of unorthodox.

Unorthodox, Yes. That's unorthodox, Yes, Yes, but I still think it's-- I mean, somebody wants to read what it was like being in Korea, I think that, and the Syngman Rhee, and that I think that was a good point, so thank you, Mr. Schechter.