RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH JERALD JOSEPH MAKSYMOWICZ

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: … Your last name is pronounced Maksymowicz [pronounced "Mac-sim-o-wich"].

Jerald Joseph Maksymowicz: … Well, actually, there are two pronunciations. Maksymowicz [pronounced "Mick-sim-o-witz"] is the Anglicized pronunciation. Maksymowicz [pronounced "Maksym-ovich"] is the European pronunciation, or … what would you call it? the Cyrillic pronunciation, the Ukrainian pronunciation.

SI: Which do you prefer?

JM: I use both. Half the family uses one, half [uses the other]. My wife uses Maksymowicz [pronounced "Mick-sim-o-witz"]. So, that's fine, and, of course, in business, … everybody in this family has had an alias. … My father was Joseph "Mack" and I'm Jerry "Mack," and I was called that in business and, in fact, it was listed in my military records as a legal alias, just so you have that on record.

SI: Great. This begins an interview with Jerald Joseph Maksymowicz, in Ridgewood, New Jersey, on October 22, 2007. Thank you very much for having us here today and for your wonderful hospitality.

JM: Oh, more than glad to help.

SI: To begin, could you tell us where and when you were born?

JM: September 8, 1942, at the Margaret Hague Maternity Hospital in Jersey City, New Jersey.

SI: We would like to ask you a few questions about your family history, beginning with your parents.

JM: Sure.

SI: What were their names?

JM: My mother's name was Odaria Theodosia, what would you call it? her unmarried name was (Lohin?), and Maksymowicz [European version] or Maksymowicz [Anglicized version], and my father was Joseph John Maksymowicz. Actually, his was (Oseph?) Ivan Maksymowicz and hers was Odaria. Well, it's the same as it was [in] English or Ukrainian. My mother was born in Galicia, Poland, actually, now, but, back then, the lines always … were moving and they were Ukrainian. So, at that time, it was part of Ukraine. My grandfather's family, apparently, had a little money, because he went to the University of Heidelberg, studied there, but he was also the black sheep of the family. … So, when he married, what would you call it? below his class, he was given some money and told to disappear for awhile. So, he and his wife, and his relatively newborn child, left for the United States. He had been serving, while he was over there, in the Austrian Guard, and I even have a photograph, although I don't have it, my brother, right now, has it, though I might have it on the computer, of him on horseback, in full regalia. … Anyway, they came over here and it was going to be for a one-year visit, and, in fact, they came in and

visited a cousin, "cousin" used loosely, who was a priest, because the priests of the Ukrainian Catholic, or Eastern Rite Catholic, [Church] were allowed to marry or be married and that priest had a daughter a little bit older than my mother. They went visiting with her. … They apparently were together for a month or two, and then, the priest and his daughter went back to Ukraine and my father, who was visiting other people here, stayed. World War I broke out and they stayed permanently. World War I broke out and the cousin got locked behind the Iron Curtain. His daughter, however, was an American citizen, because she was born over here, but that's another story entirely. That's a separate little ditty. Let's see, what else? He [his father] worked for a Ukrainian-language newspaper, published in Jersey City, published as part of the Ukrainian National Association, which is still in Jersey City. … It fostered anti-Communism. It was definitely against the Russians. It was also an insurance company for Ukrainian nationals. Jersey City had a lot of Ukrainian nationals, as did Pennsylvania and [the] Canadian provinces. Manitoba and whatnot have a lot of them. They lived in Jersey City. My father and mother lived in Jersey City. Back then, as was the custom, my grandfather knew of some people who had some sons and my mother and father got together. They got married in Jersey City, true "Mutt-and-Jeff-type" situation, [a physically mismatched pair]. My mother was, well, she said five-foot-one, but there were times when she said she was four-[foot]-nine. So, she was rather short. My father was six-foot-two.

Jason Smith: Wow.

JM: As you can imagine. However, they seemed to get [along], you know, be a great match. My father, at the beginning, during World War II, was working in the shipyards in, I believe it was [the] Elizabeth/Bayonne area. I honestly don't know that much about it. My mother worked for the Ukrainian National Association. When he left that and when I got to be about four years old, four, five years old, I think, he went over and joined with another man and created the Printmark Company in New York City, which was down near City Hall, and, about that time, they started looking around for a place to move. … Let's see, I went to public school in Jersey City, initially. I don't remember the number or anything else. All I remember is having a great deal of trouble because, as was common in those type of communities, all I spoke was Ukrainian, and I didn't know any English until I was five. I don't know or, … let's put it this way, I'd have difficulty in Ukrainian today, because, once they found [out] how much trouble there was getting me to learn English, because I didn't want to learn English; who wants to [learn]? I knew what everything is. I spoke excellent Ukrainian at that time, because my grandfather would pull out a swatch and hit me if I didn't [know something], you know, and so, I always spoke very well in Ukrainian. So, there were problems in school. When I went to elementary school, what was it? oh, the teacher, you know, kindergarten, first grade, [the] teacher had a frog. Well, that's not a frog, that's a *zhaba* ["frog" in Ukrainian], because I knew it as a *zhaba*, I didn't know it as a "frog." "What's a frog?" and there were other problems in my first year. Because I was much larger than some of the other kids, they didn't start me in kindergarten, [they] started me in first grade, but made me stay there two years. Second year, I was bored out of my ever-loving mind, because I had learned, you know. She'd say, "Oh, you color," but I'd start coloring and I'd be listening to what she's teaching the other kids. I learned everything they learned and, oh, this was annoying as could be. I did not like that. … The second year I was in school, or was that second grade? … you know, things continued on. Math was my great [skill], my good skill. The teacher, the second grade teacher, who had me at that particular time, had to leave for the day,

so, they combined my class in with the fifth grade class. … The teacher was giving the fifth graders a test and said, "Well, if any of you second graders want to … try it, it's a math test." "Oh, sure," and I'm going ahead, you know. He gives the problem, short, ten-question test, and I did it. I handed it in. Well, don't you know, the teacher pointed at me and said, "Why, you fifth graders can't seem to learn this stuff, but there's a second grader who passed all of the questions, who got a hundred percent on it." Oh, then, I started falling down, all those fifth graders all looking at me as if [to say], "Oh, we're going to give this guy a whacking after school," [laughter] but, anyway, third grade, we moved out here to Ridgewood. My father was doing well in his business, and so, we bought this house, this particular house. So, we watched it go up … every weekend. He'd drive out here and we'd examine it going up. So, I'm intimately knowledgeable with the area, and is there anything else?

SI: You mentioned that the community you were born into in Jersey City was very Ukrainian.

JM: Yes.

SI: Can you tell us a little bit more about that, what it was like?

JM: Oh, the central part; well, it was a very scattered community. … St. Peter and Paul's Ukrainian Catholic Church was located inside [the] Colgate-Palmolive factory, … down in Jersey City. The church was there next to Colgate-Palmolive, and then, Colgate-Palmolive sort of grew around it. Eventually, the church was demolished and Colgate-Palmolive got the ground, but that was the central hub, because all the Ukrainians [went there], you know. We went to dances. I remember being dragged to dances as a little kid and my parents, you know, saying, "Oh, lay down over there, and, you know, when we're ready, [we will get you]," give me their coats and I'd fall asleep in their coats, as a little kid, and there'd be Ukrainian dances, you know, Ukrainian food. This was a ritual thing. I can even remember, Easter, … you had to go to your grandparents and going to my grandfather's, my mother's father, and being there and I'm hungry. I want to eat. "Oh, we can't eat." "Well, when can we eat? I'm hungry." "When the priest arrives, not before." It didn't matter when he arrived, you couldn't eat until he did, and the priest went to everybody's home, because that was ritual. He had to bless the table. He had to bless all the food, then, you could eat, and he may have a little bite of something, because, then, he had another house to go to, one of these things. I can remember, one year, it was like five, six o'clock, and I was [very hungry]. You know, my mother had snuck me some food, you know, "Here, have some of this, have some of this," from the kitchen, but, you know, the table doesn't get touched. It might get cold, but it wouldn't get touched, and we'd also go up to, and when I say the community was spread out, … either of you know Ellenville, New York?

JS: No.

SI: No.

JM: Know where it is? It's up just a little ways, along Route 17, the [New York State] Thruway, going up north. Well, Ellenville had one of the campgrounds that we used and, to this day, it's a Ukrainian resort. It's called Soyuzivka [a Ukrainian National Association camp] and it is in Ellenville, New York, and I've attended weddings up there, other things. … You can stay up

there, you know, it's a nice country atmosphere, cooler than New York, if you want. You know, that was the thing to do back then. We did that, as kids, or as my parents did that, went up there and, also, the church [would] go out there for a picnic during … the hot part of the summer, on a Saturday, get everybody, you know, the whole church, together, and, on a Saturday, we'd go out to, as we called it, "Suzi-Q's," because that was [a nickname], and out to Suzi-Q's for [a day]. So, we'd do things like that. … My father, on the other hand, … actually was living in Hillside, New Jersey, but it was also part of this community. He had three brothers, a sister, plus the ones that didn't make it. … Let's see, three of the brothers served in the military, and my aunt is alive today in Mid-Jersey, … so is one of my uncles, my Uncle George. He lives in Brick. He goes over to AC [Atlantic City] almost, at least, once a week. He's one of those high-rollers down there. He likes to do things like that. Hey, that's good. … His side of the family seems to be very long-lived, for the most part. My mother's side, she had one, two, three sisters that I can remember, one that … I think I remember, although she died. Her name was (Luba?), but the other sisters, well, one lived [to be] quite old, one died of cancer and one, let's see, that's (Stephie?), (Vira?), who else? I don't remember; let's see, her brother, Joe, lived in, out at the lake. What's that lake out west of here, the big one?

SI: Hopatcong?

JM: Yes, Lake Hopatcong, that's where he lived. He passed away recently from a heart condition, but he served in the military also. Now, my father's three brothers served in World War II, he [his mother's brother, Joe], served in Korea. So, you know, there's a background of military service in the family, everything from my grandfather to my uncles on one side to my uncle on the other side. So, I had no qualms about military service. I went to school here [Ridgewood] before military service, through elementary school, junior high school and high school here. … First, to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, I was there a year-and-a-half. … As any good student first going to school who came from a very rigid background, I went [wild]; that was a very good party school, so, I partied a lot. So, my father decided that, well, maybe it'd be better if I attended something more local; zip, zip, down to St. Peter's. I was a physics major up there [at Rensselaer], a chemistry major at St. Peter's, only because I didn't like their physics program there.

SI: Before we go much further, what got you interested in the sciences? You mentioned that you had a very strong math background very early on.

JM: Well, I did well in all the sciences at school. I mean, it's just [that] I seemed to have a facility for it, you know, whether it was biology, chemistry [or] physics. I had that structured, mathematical mind that made at least the chemistry and the physics easy to follow. … Biology really wasn't that much different, except there was a little bit more memorization involved with that one. I found schoolwork to be extremely easy, which, … actually, became one of my problems, rather than something that was real great. My brother, on the other hand, had a harder time. My brother would always grumble, you know, about the teacher saying, "How great you were and, here, I have to work so hard to keep up with you." My brother, on the other hand, learned how to study well, because he had to, and proved himself by going on to become an MD and a psychiatrist. So, where[as] me, I got my math degree, my computer science; of course, that, I got my math degree and computer science degree after my military [service]. I was

working at the New York World's Fair, as a bartender. [Editor's Note: The New York's World Fair was held in Queens from 1964 to 1965.] My father knew somebody and says, "Well, why don't you apply over there?" I went over there and I went to work as a bar boy, initially. … My first weekend there, they said, "Well, we don't need you this weekend, but we're having a party here." Okay, they had a party there, but what I didn't realize was that the company that these people worked for was watching, because they were missing money, and what they found was that a lot of the bartenders were, [Mr. Maksymowicz imitates the bartenders stealing money], in, and during this party is where they caught everybody. … They fired the senior bartender and about a half a dozen other bartenders, because this was the Transportation and Travel Pavilion of the World's Fair, and it had five bars in it, five separate bars. Now, the people who worked the lounge, they hadn't worked that night. So, they were safe. So, they offered the senior bartender's position to them. … They didn't want the position. They liked doing their thing at the cocktail lounge. "Okay, who's next in line?" Well, here's this bar boy who knows how to mix drinks, and I found myself senior bartender for the whole place, and they hired new bartenders and they all reported to me, but, since I was a school kid, I'd work sixty, eighty hours a week and think nothing of it. You know, I mean, "Hey, this is all good money for college, in my pocket," [Mr. Maksymowicz claps his hand against his pocket], you know, and they didn't mind me working these hours. Hey, the only thing they didn't do was pay time-and-a-half, like they were supposed to do; they just paid straight time. Okay, I didn't care, and all the cocktail waitresses were basically my age. Hey, this was a prime area, [laughter] I mean, here I was. So, I worked there for one summer, and then, it was closed during the winter and I was back at school. … 1965, '65-'64, rolled around and I was ready to start up again. They contacted me, "Hey, you want to come back? We really loved the way you worked," and, don't you know, I couldn't. Uncle Sam sent me this Selective Service notice and I said, "Yes, but I'm in college." Well, apparently, there was a period of about two months where the 2-S classification [an exemption from the draft due to being in school] was taken off. It was removed, just because they needed people. Guess who got caught? So, I went and I said, "Well, what can I do to insure that I get something I'd like?" and the recruiter in Newark said, "Well, what do you want?" and I says, "Well, what's [available in] chemical?" They said, "Well, we've got chemical positions." I said, "Okay." He says, "But, that means you sign up for three years." Well, don't you know, I signed the papers; came the day I was supposed to go, you know, actually report in, he says, "The chemical position fell through. … We can't give it to you. Now, you can either go back to two years, I'll tear up the papers, or you can stay three years and I'll give you Medical Service [Corps]," you know, become a medic. "Eh, that's not bad." So, that's what I did. I went to Fort Dix, New Jersey, took basic at Fort Dix, and then, they sent me off for Medical Field Service training in Fort Sam Houston, Texas. That's where it is, Fort Sam Houston. So, when I took the plane, I booked my own flight and [I figured], "Well, where would Fort Sam Houston be? That'd be in Houston, Texas." No, it's not in Houston, Texas; it's in San Antonio. So, I flew into Houston, Texas. I says, "How do I get to Fort Sam Houston from here?" They said, "Well, you can catch a bus over there. It'll only take about two-and-a-half hours." "What?" "Yes." Well, I caught a bus from there and got where I was going, but Fort Sam Houston, beautiful, beautiful post. They've got all the new doctors coming in, going there. They've got the burn center, of the world, at Fort Sam Houston, and here I was. … I had done so well in basic training; basic training, one little incident happened. We went home for Thanksgiving. When we came back, they weren't set up to sign us in. So, I collected up the papers and me and another guy, a couple of guys, we set up a table and [said], "Everybody sign in here," you know, we made every[one sign in]. You know,

we sat there and we signed people in. They were so impressed with that that they bumped my assignment from medic up to dental technician, you know. "Hey, well, you know, we'll give you something even cushier." So, when I was at Fort Sam Houston, the first thing they did is run you through medic's training, because everybody gets medic's training as enlisted [personnel], and then, they sent me up to the dental technician's school, which is at Fort Sam Houston. Now, what I liked about it [was], it was co-ed. Everything else was, you know, guys with guys. … Dental tech, you're wearing whites … and there are girls in class, because they were WACs [Women's Army Corps members], and we were all going, you know, doing this class. … About the only thing wrong with it, it was during the summertime and it was during one of the years where they had cicadas, crickets, all of those things. Well, these things were, you know, this big and they'd make a layer about this thick on the ground every night, and they'd have street sweepers come through and clear them away, but you'd be walking, "Bang, bang, bang," you know. They're flying all over the [place], but, anyway, you know, at night, we'd go down to the local on-base facility and have a few beers, you know, whatnot, and we'd all stay together, because we all knew each other. We worked together, we were in class together, and, about that time, I started getting into making sure that I got a good job and one way, I knew, was to make sure I passed this class, [and did] well. Well, one of the hardest parts of the whole course was the instruments that you use as a dental technician. … You had to know all the names and what they were used for and all of this, and you could check out the instruments. They'd give you a bag of the current instruments you're studying. You'd check them out and … you could, you know, quiz yourself and whatnot. Well, I'd sometimes take these down to the local PX [post exchange], where they had the bar set up and everything, and I'd be sitting there and the guys'd be around me and, you know, pull out these and we'd be talking, this, this and this, and someone'd say, "Oh, yes, what is that one?" I'd say, "Oh, that, that's the tool that the dentist uses to scrape the tartar off your teeth. It's called," a this or a that, you know, and this kind of thing. After awhile, the other guys in the class were calling me, "Professor, what's this? Professor, what's that?" Well, I kind of liked that. So, what I started doing was, before the big tests that we used to have, I would checkout a complete set of instruments and notify all the rest of the guys, "Hey, if you want to, I've got a room over at the library," because I'd check with the librarian. … We'd go over to the library, you know, in one of these private, little rooms, about this big, around a table, and we'd … play, you know, with the instruments, discuss them, do all kinds of things like this, and the group started with, you know, half a dozen people, and then, it's up to, you know, a dozen. The class only was a dozen-and-a-half, two dozen people. … For the final exam, [if] you didn't pass it, you didn't graduate, [that] type of thing. I did the same thing, and it was a Sunday morning. I got the room; that's the only time I could get the room. So, I said, "Well, this is when I got the room. You know, tomorrow's the test. Anybody that wants to come up and study with me, you know, we'll have it." Well, I almost had the whole class there, plus, three other people I never expected. … Our instructor was there, at the back of the room, and, apparently, the commandant of the school was there, and another doctor/dentist. … They just sat at the back and listened, because I asked them if we could help them and they said, "No, we just want to watch, if that's okay." I said, "Oh, no problem," you know, and we went ahead and we did our thing. When I graduated the dental technician course, they gave me a special assignment over to the dependent dental clinic in Fort Meade, Maryland. Fort Meade was, at that time, CIA Headquarters [National Security Agency Headquarters]. … So, I was there, but it was a cushy assignment, I mean, extremely cushy, but we were dealing with the wives of military, the daughters and sons of military. I worked there for, I don't remember exactly how long, but I was

there … until I realized that the officers had the really cushy stuff. … They went home to private apartments, … you know, all of this kind of stuff, where, here, I had to go back to a barracks. We had to worry about keeping [it warm], and this barracks was an old barracks; it still had coal-fired heat. So, somebody had to get up and stoke the fire and all of these kinds of things, oh, a real pain in the butt. So, you know, … I got a little tired of that. That's when I applied for Officers Candidate School. Now, of course, what happened in [Fort Meade], while I was there, before Officers Candidate School, was nice, or interesting. … Let's see, I used to assist on the surgeries. I didn't do periodontal work. One of the girls actually got that; she ended up liking it. Why? It's one of the bloodiest things you can do, but that's beside the point, and I used to do cleanings, a lot of cleanings, and I said, "Now, how am I going to get these kids to really brush their teeth?" Well, in the surgery area, where we remove teeth, we used to keep a jar, about this big, this big around, and it was brown colored, filled with formaldehyde. … As a tooth'd be pulled, unless the person wanted it for some reason, it'd get thrown in the formaldehyde jar and closed up. I'd have to pull night duty in the clinic, and that's for anybody, you know, emergencies that happened at night. There'd be a dentist there, but … the dentist'd sleep on the cot and I'd have to be awake all night, or whoever is on, you know, the enlisted guy who was on duty'd have to be awake, and, while you're awake and just sitting around, what's there to do? I mean, there's only so much you can do. Well, I started pulling out teeth, out of the jar, since they were, you know, no good in the jar. … I'd clean them off, any stuff that was on it, any flesh, and I'd bleach them in concentrated hydrogen peroxide, which is what the bleaching agent that they use on teeth is. … Hey, I had a whole bunch there, some of them with unusual cavities and whatnot, and I'd put them in plaster and, you know, set them in plaster, and then, I'd drill them out. … While the dentist was awake, I'd [say], "Hey, is that right?" and he'd tell me, "No, you didn't do that right. You have to do this or you have to do [that]." They didn't care; you know, if I was interested, "Go ahead." So, I learned how to do all of that kind of stuff, but, also, … some of the teeth were pulled not because they had decay, but because of, like, periodontal reasons. They needed to get pulled, or they … had to be pulled because of orthodontics, you know, moving the teeth around, whatnot, and they had nothing wrong with them. I'd take the ones that had nothing wrong with them, I'd drill a hole, after I cleaned them, drilled a hole through the roots. Then, I'd paint them with clear nail polish, take a piece of dental floss and I had a necklace of them. Now, when I was cleaning the teeth of the kids, I'd put the necklace on. … I'd be cleaning the teeth and, you know, they'd look at [it], and, when I'd notice that they were looking at it, I'd say, "Oh, you noticed my necklace?" and [Mr. Maksymowicz imitates the kids mumbling in agreement]. As I'm cleaning their teeth, all they could do is shake their heads, and I'd say, "Yes, I have this necklace of all [teeth from] people who don't take care of their teeth, don't brush. … When they don't brush, the dentist has to pull the teeth, and then, it comes right to my necklace," and, oh, the eyes'd bulge out like [crazy]. … I'd talk to them afterwards, "Are you going to brush your teeth?" and they'd be looking at the necklace as they went, "Yes, I'm going to brush my teeth." [laughter] So, I used it as a training tool, if you will, for the kids, but, after that, I went to OCS. I went, and, of course, since I was already in, you know, the medical side of the thing, I said, "Well, why don't I go [into that field]?" you know. "Is there anything that they could give me?" and they says, "Well, you have to choose one of these OCS-es," and I says, "Well, I like to ride around, so, let me put artillery first," … or not artillery, tanks. Then, artillery was second and last was infantry. So, of course, they sent me off to Fort Benning, Georgia, to the Infantry School, and I went to school there in the … 73rd OCS Company down there.

SI: Around what time did you go? I believe 1967 was when you wrote you went into OCS.

JM: '66 is actually when [I went there]. June of '66 is when I went down there. I graduated in … January of '67, and I was the academic graduate from my class, which meant that my GPA was the highest of anybody in my company. So, I graduated [as the] academic graduate. So, they said, "Well, academic graduate, you get a choice. Where do you want to go? You get three choices there, or, you know, if you want any special consideration for going … into something else." I said, "Yes, … Chemical Corps," put that at the top, and they made me make three choices. I don't even remember what all the choices were that I made, but Chemical Corps was my first, and they said, "Well, where do you want to go?" "Well, I'd like to go to Germany, first choice." … They said, "Well, we're going to give you one or the other, and I can't … guarantee you'll get your first choice, but [it will be] somewhere in that list." So, the day I was commissioned into the military, I was informed I was being branch commissioned into the Chemical Corps. So, I says, "Oh, they gave me that." They sent me off to Alabama, which is where the Chemical School was, is, is/was, I don't really [know], Fort McClellan, Alabama. [Editor's Note: The US Army Chemical School has since been relocated to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri.] That's where it was, and I went to school there, for, what would you call it? … chemical officer's basic training, if you will. … In fact, see that little spot there on my arm? That's where they put, what was it? mustard gas, because everybody got to feel what mustard gas felt like, and it leaves a little [scar]. It left this permanent scar, but it, you know, blistered the skin, and so, we knew what, generally, we were talking about. Of course, mustard gas was used during World War I, hasn't been used since, … or at least by our guys, anyway. So, you know, we got to do all these things, learn how to conduct tear gas training, how to inject ourselves with the auto-injector or with the; oh, the old ones were really miserable. They were a little, it looks like a little tube of glue, … or what would you call it? toothpaste, except it was only about this long and it had a needle on the end. … What you had to do is, you had to push a little thing into [it], the needle, sort of break the seal, pull it out, stick it in your leg, and then, squeeze out all the stuff that was in the tube into your leg. The auto-injectors have replaced them. Auto-injector is, looks like a pen, about this big, this big around, and it's got a safety cap on the back. You pull it out, [Mr. Maksymowicz slaps his thigh], hit your leg with it. When you hit, the spring loaded front end indents just a little bit, releases the needle and the fluid, which goes right into your leg automatically. Now, this is a hundred percent better than the other [manual injectors], because the other [way], when you're attacked with nerve gas, you start shaking. Now, how are you going to give yourself a needle when you're shaking? It's almost impossible, but that's all they had, initially. The auto-injector, if you're shaking, as long as you can slap your leg, that's all you had to do. It at least shot the atropine into your body. Atropine is great for other things, too. We used to [take them]. At the Chemical School, they used to keep bottles of, big bottles of, atropine pills around and, if you ever got a cold, "Gulp." Those things would clear up your sinuses like you wouldn't believe, but the amount of atropine that's in this, because it was designed for nerve gas, versus the atropine that you get if a doctor prescribes it, is night and day. A doctor prescribes, you know, this much and these pills had that much in it. So, you take one of these pills, boy, would it clear up your nose fast, and there were a couple of guys who were working there who actually had to take the pills on a regular basis, because of exposure, accidental, to nerve gasses and had to watch out, you know, [in terms of] what they were doing and all of this other kind of stuff. … After that, they shipped me off to Germany. … The

Sergeant, as he gave me my orders and sent me off, said, "Well, you'll only probably be there six months before you'll be in Vietnam." … I kind of [knew], that's what I expected, to be honest. I went off to Germany, went to the 81st Light Equipment Maintenance Company. Now, light equipment maintenance companies are very big units, but, … if you break something in the military, they fix it. You break a rifle, or a rifle breaks, or a truck breaks or a generator breaks, it's got to [be fixed]. Now, they have what are called support units and, you know, [when] a generator breaks, take it to the support unit, write it up and [say], "Here, take this into the support unit." Piece of chemical equipment breaks, "Write it up, give it to the support unit." Well, they've got regular support, and then, they've got general support. General support is when this support unit here can't fix it. [If] it's too badly damaged or it needs something that's beyond their capability, it goes up to a general support maintenance unit. General support is the last level before it has to go back for a total rebuild … to a factory. A light equipment maintenance company handled generators, quartermaster equipment, chemical equipment, everything except guns and vehicles. Guns and vehicles were handled by a heavy equipment maintenance company. So, when I went to a light equipment maintenance company, it was appropriate. They had chemical equipment, but a light equipment maintenance company; you know military companies and how they're organized, you know, with platoons and squads, squads, platoons, and, you know, etc., on up? Well, you know how many people are normally in a company?

SI: About eighty to a hundred.

JM: Yes, okay, well, and there are, what? about five officers, maybe, and you may have four platoons, with an officer in each platoon and a company commander. I mean, if you're really lucky, you may have a company XO [executive officer], but, usually, one of these four is the company XO and a platoon leader, and then, you will have squads with sergeants being the leader of those, etc. Well, a light equipment maintenance company is organized a little differently. They're organized by types of equipment that they support. So, there was a chemical platoon, there was a quartermaster platoon, there was this platoon, a signal platoon, there was this platoon, and the number of officers was different. We actually had thirteen officers. We had a number of warrant officers. A warrant officer is somebody who is lower than a second lieutenant, but higher than a sergeant. He is somebody who deserves to be an officer, but isn't. I can't understand that. … Most warrant officers I met deserved to be an officer and should be. … They've got four grades of warrant officer, but warrant officers usually are extremely technical people. They have some particular knowledge that makes them warrant being that high. So, we would have warrant officers because we'd have, like, a signal warrant officer; he was almost an electrical engineer, this guy. We'd have, you know, somebody for the other equipment, etc. Well, when I first came in this light equipment maintenance company, which was in a place called Sullivan Barracks, in Mannheim, Germany, … other than the commanding officer, I was the only other commissioned officer. So, I automatically became XO. … The XO of a light equipment maintenance company was called the shop officer, and because each [component was called a] shop, you know, … this shop, that shop, etc. Well, the shop officer controlled all the shops. Okay, I was there for one year. During that year, did anything special happen? yes, the Six-Day War. [Editor's Note: From June 5 to June 10, 1967, Israel and neighboring Arab nations were embroiled in the conflict known as the Six-Day War.]

JS: Yes.

SI: Yes.

JM: Okay, during the Six-Day War, they handed me orders, told me to pick out my jeep and my trailer, load it up with our chemical equipment, take one, two, three, four men and go up to, I think it was Karlsruhe, and they had an airborne unit there. So, I drove up to them. No problem, I drove, you know, you give me orders. The only thing the orders said was [that] … we were supposed to get certain shots before we left. We went to the dispensary and I remember the guy, the doctor there, saying, "Oh, well, next time we're due to give those shots are in two weeks." I says, "I'm leaving in two hours. We need the [shots]. We," meaning all me and my men, "need these shots now," and he looked. He took the orders, looked at them and he says, "Yes, sir, right with you." So, here I am, a brand-new second lieutenant, you know, just over there, and we all got these yellow fever shots and all of that kind of stuff. We got up to Karlsruhe. We got into the unit's area and the first thing that happened was, as my jeep pulled in, a sergeant looked at the jeep, says, "Pull it over there." … I pulled it over there and they had some mechanics with drills drilling holes in my jeep's bumpers and whatnot. I'm going, "Wait a minute, what's happening? What are you doing?" He says, "Getting it ready … for parachute fittings." I'm going, [whispers], "Parachute fittings? [To the sergeant] Me and my men, we're not airborne qualified." He says, "After this, you will be." [laughter] I went, "Oh?" Well, the first thing they did, when I got there, was check my security clearance. Back then, I didn't have a top secret, I only had a secret clearance. They took us, they took the top secret people over there, secret people over here, "We've got to brief you on what's happening." Basically, we're getting ready, if they needed us, to go … for the Six-Day War and, for the people on the secret side, we were told we're going to go in support of our airbase in Libya, [Wheelus Air Force Base]. [At] that time, we had an airbase in Libya, "Because we believe we may have to pull out," and that's what our job would be. That's what they said and they, you know, told us a few things and gave us a stack of maps. I opened up the stack of maps and [Mr. Maksymowicz claps] [the] map on top said, "Gaza Strip." I just closed it back up and I says, "Oh, yes, that's where we're going, okay," [laughter] and put it away. … Anyway, while I was up there in Karlsruhe, they had me set up and run a tear gas training [program] for the entire, oh, that must have been a brigade. So, for five days, I was living in a tear gas tent, with a gas mask on and, you know, constantly having tear [gas exposure], you know, those tear gas pellets. … My men, I'd rotate, but I stayed in it the whole time. … While I was up there, I remember, one incident occurred. I went up to the mess hall and the mess sergeants, who're used to dealing with under, what would you call them? under officers, you know, I went to the back door, I knocked and I says, "Can I speak to the Mess Sergeant?" Mess Sergeant, [in a harsh tone of voice], "Yes, what can I do for you?" I says, "Do you think you could have somebody come and get me my lunch for me and bring it out here? I don't want to disturb your lunch hall." He said, "What's the matter, you got a broken hand?" he said. I says, "No, but, if you go downwind of me," … and I moved upwind of him, and the tear gas coming off my uniform whiffed over to him. He said, "Oh, yes, sir, you just wait out here. I'll have somebody out here with your meal in a minute," because I didn't have time to shower and change uniforms between [sessions], because, after eating, I'd go right back into the gas mask tent again. I mean, as it was, after that thing was over, I'd have to spend about an hour in the shower, because all that stuff'd seep into your skin and you're [uncomfortable]. As soon as … I take my gas mask off, I'm crying and all this kind of stuff. So, I did that for three or four

days and, of course, [the] war ended, the Six-Day War ended, so, we went back to our unit. What else?

SI: Did you have to shower off every day, or every twenty-four hours?

JM: Oh, yes, oh, yes, every day, because I only ran the gas mask thing, basically, from after breakfast until sometime before supper, and I tried to set enough time aside so that I could wash and actually go to supper myself. … Now, after that, I was promoted; well, while I was there, I got promoted to first lieutenant and I was XO of the unit, as I said. I got promoted again to captain and, well, … later on, I got promoted to captain, but I got given a new job, which was commanding officer of the 91st Light Equipment Maintenance Company, which … was in Kaiserslautern, Germany. Since I knew the work, I went over there. Now, it was a little different situation. The men there were a little more disorganized. I had to whip them, a little bit, into shape, and, also, the barracks we were in were being replaced; not replaced, done away with. … We got moved into another place and they put a missile battery in with us, a missile group. They had a commanding general and it was a battalion-size [unit], and he says, "Well, you're a company and we're a battalion, and I've got so many companies under me, so, I need such a percent of the place that we're moving into and you can have the rest." I says, "Well, wait a minute, sir, you've got to understand. We've got a little situation here." I says, "How many vehicles do you have?" He told me how many vehicles he had. I says, "Well, this is how many vehicles I've got. How many men do you have?" He told me how many men he had, and I says, "I have 253 men." He looked at me, "You've got 253 men?" "Yes, in my company, I've got 253 men." So, we had to make readjustments. … He had to give us one big building and another little, smaller building over here, for housing of troops, where he was going to use this as part of his headquarters and, all of a sudden, his things changed. He had to give me half of the motor pool, because I needed it for maintenance of mobile electronic equipment. The vans had to pull in, they had to work on them, and he was going to take over [the whole thing]. He was going to give us three bays; instead of [that], he had to give us half the motor pool. He didn't care for that, because he wanted all that extra room for himself. That's the way the ball bounced. So, anyway, while we were there, he, I had a little problem with, because he believed his men were [better]. … All the time, all they did was train. My men, all the time, all they did was work. Training was sort of, for my men, … almost relaxation, because my men were constantly fixing things. That was their job and they were, shall we say, a little more, a little scruffier? at times. So, he brought a couple of my men up on charges of failure to salute, not wearing their caps when they should, and all this other kind of stuff, and he and I had it out a couple of times, but, you know, respectfully. Now, I had to be careful. He was a general, I was only a captain, but he and I [had some issues], you know. … So, after my year there, I was moved to a post in brigade headquarters. The 81st Maintenance Battalion was the headquarters for the 81st Light Equipment Maintenance Company and the 91st Light Equipment Maintenance Company. It was also located in Mannheim, okay, but, in the same area that they were located, there was First Brigade Headquarters. First Brigade Headquarters included the 81st Maintenance Battalion. It included other maintenance battalions, and a transportation unit and a few other things. So, I got moved up to brigade headquarters and I worked in, as light equipment maintenance officer, at brigade headquarters, and also had responsibility for a little thing called "the graveyard net." Now, the graveyard net was, at that time, well, still, even today, if we were to go to nuclear war, the President has to personally give the order, and how do you give [orders] personally to a guy

in Germany or into this place? How do you personally give the order? Well, you get on the radio and you personally have to give the order. That's a requirement of Congress. The graveyard net was a communication net that was designed just for that purpose, aptly named "graveyard net." … The First Support Brigade had the responsibility of assigning one person who would be responsible for checking to make sure all these sites had everything they needed, so that they'd never go off the air. If they went off the air for more than two minutes, I had to personally respond to the Commander-in-Chief of Europe. If it went off for more than five minutes, I had to respond to the Pentagon. So, needless to say, I spent a lot of my time checking on these sites. Basically, this meant, the few critical parts that they had, I had to make sure that they had them. If it went [bad], if one went bad, they had always had a spare. Then, they'd order the spare, if [they had to], you know, to replace the one they used. My job was to make sure that spare got in as fast as possible, so that if it went out again, they could replace it. My area of responsibility went from Copenhagen, Denmark, down to Asmara, Ethiopia, [now Eritrea], from England to India and Pakistan. … So, I'd, you know, fly, you know, and I set it up, strangely enough, I'd always set it up so that I'd fly out on a Thursday and do everything I needed to do on a Friday, and then, I'd fly home on Sunday or maybe Monday, you know. … So, it'd be off to Italy this weekend. Another weekend, it'd be off to Greece, and, now, off to [somewhere else]. Now, the only one I had a little problem with was when I went off to Pakistan and India. I didn't realize the restrictions. So, I flew into Pakistan and I checked on what we had there, and then, got on a plane, you know, went back to the airport and said, "I need to go to India." They said, "Good. You'll arrive in … Turkey on such-and-such a [flight]." "What do you mean, Turkey? I want to [go to India]. Don't we have a direct flight to [India]?" "No, Pakistan and India are at war. We're not allowed to fly directly. We have to fly to another place, [laughter] and then, fly this way." So, I had to catch a plane here to here, and then, from there, back into India, where I then inspected our spot there. "Okay," [Mr. Maksymowicz stretches the word], and then, you know, I go back. I only had one site to go down on me for more than a minute, and that was in Turkey, and I'm not mentioning specific places, because I don't know if it's still classified or not.

SI: Okay.

JM: … Everything I'm telling you is basically unclassified at this time, because that graveyard net's since been replaced with another even better thing, but that was in Turkey. One of our sites got hit with an earthquake, and so, as fast I could, I sent off a TWX to the Commander-in-Chief in Europe, and then, … I sent it off to him, so that he'd have it. Then, I sent off another one to the Pentagon, saying, "This is what it is; projected recovery date unknown at this time," and, oh, they didn't come back up for over a week, but, then, again, they were totally [devastated]. I mean, the United States knew they were out. We even sent aid over, because the area was devastated. Okay, so, that covers the last year I was in Europe, and then, I got orders to go to Vietnam. I went to; where was it? I went over to Fort Benning, Georgia, … where they had some pre-training before you go over to Vietnam, and it's a couple of months. They gave me orders, said, you know, "Go over and take command of a light equipment maintenance company in Vietnam." I says, "Oh, well, I mean, I've got all the training for this," and I got on a plane and off I flew … to Vietnam. I got there, I handed them my orders and they went, [Mr. Maksymowicz makes tearing sounds] tore them up and gave me new orders. They said, "You're going up to Quang Tri." I said, "Where is Quang Tri?" They said, "Well, you're down here," and I was [in] Saigon, "You go way up there." I said, "Okay, wherever you're sending me, you

know, that's great. What am I going to do up there?" "You're going to become the commander of a chemical detachment." That sounds interesting. I didn't know what it entailed, but, hey, that's [life]. They gave me my in-country uniform and I changed and off I flew … up to Quang Tri. Quang Tri was a military base, had an airport right in it, a landing strip. No, actually, I flew up to Da Nang, and then, from Da Nang, they had another plane take us up to Quang Tri; got to Quang Tri and the guy who was the commander of the chemical detachment, a captain, met me, says, "Come on." He took me in, signed me in and I had a five-man chemical detachment, or he did. I was his [executive officer]. We were overlapping for one week, and he showed me what I had to do. He says, "You're not going to do much. You're going to spend most of your time sitting in this office." I said, "Oh, that's not bad," you know, if I got to be in 'Nam, that couldn't be that bad. … He says, "And you're going to fly, twice a day." I said, "Fly?" He says, "Yes, it's called a 'sniffer' mission. You're going to have to go up on them twice a day, once early in the morning and once just before sunset." I said, "Oh, sounds interesting." He says, "Well, we've got one setup for you for tomorrow." [Mr. Maksymowicz says, hesitatingly], "Okay, I've never been on one of these things, but you're going to have to fill me in." So, we go over and we check out the sniffer, which is a box about this long and about two, three feet long and about two feet by about two feet. … He says, "You know what this is?" I says, "No." He says, "It's a sniffer," and he shows me. We actually take the whole thing apart, because cleaning is a big, big part of it. So, he says, "Before the mission, we always have to make sure it's clean. So, we clean it, usually before, although it could be done afterwards, but usually before. Just to make sure it's absolutely clean, we clean it." So, we went through all the procedures of cleaning the machine, taking it apart and cleaning it, and we put it back together again and he says, "Okay, now, that's ready for tomorrow's flight." I says, "Well, what do we do with this machine?" He says, "Well, we put it into a helicopter, a Huey, [a Bell UH-1 Iroquois] or a little loach [a light observation helicopter]," he says, "but we're going to be using Hueys." Okay, that's fine with me. He says, "We strap it down, clip it down to the ties in the Huey, and then, we fly along with it and it sniffs the air. There's a tube that comes off, attached to the rail that runs at the bottom of the helicopter, and we fly at treetop level. … It samples the air and it samples condensation nuclei, is what it's looking for, and it will indicate the percentage of condensation nuclei." Now, it turns out, human beings are the greatest producers of condensation nuclei in the world. Well, what are condensation nuclei? If you smoke a cigarette, the smoke coming off are condensation nuclei. They're in the three to five micron range of size, and it's the item around which a water droplet forms. So, after, he says, "And what else? What other things cause condensation? motors, any kind of motor, electric;" not electric, well, even electric motors, but gasoline motors, the exhaust. All the exhaust is condensation nuclei; rain droplets form around it. That's why, often, in the States, especially any place that's smoggy, the first rain that comes down is dirty. You can see it and it looks dirty. Well, that's because it formed around a dirty particle of smog, rather than something else, and, of course, that's why, after a rain, it's often clear, because it washed all the junk out of the air, but, anyway, these [are] condensation nuclei. Now, how accurate was this piece of equipment? Under laboratory conditions, it could detect an individual folding a newspaper. Just the particles given off by the newspaper, it could detect. In field conditions, like we had, it could detect three men on the ground, especially if one of them was smoking, walking along the trail, because, you know, [of the] smoke, and it seemed like all of our guys and all of their guys smoked, and that was the biggest thing, catch them while they're smoking. Why early in the morning and late in the evening for these sniffer missions? because sniffer missions were always done when the enemy was cooking, because cook fires, fires, give off condensation

nuclei. So, if there was a fire going on, it would interfere with you, unless it was one of their fires, and we always would fly against the wind. The wind would be going one direction and we'd cross the wind, but always going up wind, because even our engines, from the helicopter, give off condensation nuclei. So, we have to make sure that we don't cross our own path as we're going up, and so, the first day I was there, the Captain, (Slade?), or something like that; I don't remember his name now. I haven't remembered it for awhile. I've been trying to figure it out, but, anyway, he taught me everything I had to do and, the first day we got there, he said, "Now, inside the helicopter, they have their own flak vests." We had ours, which were, you know, what is that stuff called? Kevlar. … It was hot and, especially in that heat, who wanted to wear it? but you had it, but, in the helicopters, they had another set. They were made of Corningware, about this thick, and it was a plate you wore in the front and it was wrapped in canvas, and then, it's strapped around and another plate in the back. As soon as we got in, I picked it up. … He told me what it was. I was ready to start strapping it on over my other things. He says, "No, no, no, we don't do that with these," and we folded ours in half, so that we had two Kevlar plates like this, "Put it on the seat and sit on it." He says, "If they're shooting up at you, you've got to protect the things that are important," and he says, "We sit on ours." I says, "That sounds like a good idea." … I said, "How strong are these? You know, these are Corningware." That's what they were made of, Corningware. He says, "They'll stop one fifty-caliber round." I said, "That's pretty darn good," since the Kevlar wouldn't stop that at all, and he says, "But, of course, you know, … you'll probably be bouncing all over the place from it, but," he says, "it'll stop one fifty-caliber round." So, from then on, I sat on it and we went off. Well, I didn't know how much I would like or not like being in a helicopter, so, that first trip was a "white-knuckle express" for me, and, of course, that was fine with him. He was showing me how to do things. He was actually doing them. I was "white-knuckle express" watching what he was doing and, basically, it's an hour-long [sensation of] being on a roller coaster, that's basically what it was, … and we were doing it in a very safe area, because he only had less than a week to go before he went home. He wasn't going to go out in a dangerous area. So, after we got back, … he showed me how to read the readings, or not after we got back, actually up in the air, because you have to call them right into the headquarters. So, we got back and he says, "Well, you're going to do tomorrow's trip. You know, the only way to learn is to actually do." So, okay, that night, I cleaned the machine, and he checked me out on cleaning the machine, made sure I did it right, no problems. We hooked it up to the thing and he planned out where we were going and he says, "Here's another area that's a safe area." I said, "Oh, great," and up we flew and we did that area, [Mr. Maksymowicz imitates the helicopter] received no fire, always flew one helicopter … low, one high. The high helicopter would keep us flying straight, because, if you're going up and down over hills, … the man who's piloting loses direction. Now, we always used the best pilots we could find. … I mean, we learned how to fly, because it was the commanding general's requirement that anybody who spent that much time in a helicopter, or in a fixed-wing, had to learn how to fly that thing. So, you know, there I was, learning how to fly the machine, … you know, when there was time that I could take training on it, but we always did, you know, [have] good pilots, guys who really knew how to fly that machine. So, he told me who were the best pilots at that time and they all knew about sniffer missions and they liked them, because, being down close to the ground, you got, you know, the helicopter's sensation, the roller coaster sensation; people like it. I liked it. …

SI: Did you have helicopter pilots assigned to you or did you have to get them out of other units?

JM: First of the Fifth Infantry [the US Army's First Brigade, Fifth Infantry Division], which was the unit I was assigned to, had a helicopter unit assigned to them, for the northern unit. You've got to remember, the First of the Fifth Infantry was right there on the DMZ [Demilitarized Zone]. It was composed of one battalion of armor, … two battalions of mechanized infantry and one of regular foot soldiers, and you'd say, "Well, why do they have all this armor and infantry up here?" Well, we were north of the 101st Airborne and, if … North Vietnam ever decided to invade and came down through the top, you need somebody to stand there; oh, and we also had a battalion of mechanized artillery. Now, these are big, heavy equipment, not designed for the rice paddies of South Vietnam, but we had some pretty stable ground in our area. We had a road that went out to Khe Sanh; I imagine you've heard of Khe Sanh? [Editor's Note: Khe Sanh was the site of a major engagement during the Tet Offensive.] Well, we were due east of Khe Sanh. So, we were, you know, like that. So, we were, more or less, expendable. You know, if the North Vietnamese ever came down, we had to hold them for as long as we could until the rest of the [response force arrived]. I mean, that's a given. We know … which units are expendable, which ones [are] not, and all the officers know, "I'm in an expendable unit, so, you know, we've got to hold for as long as possible," that kind of thing, just like when we were in Germany, the units east of the Rhine knew that they were expandable. The units west of the Rhine were the ones that had to come up and support them, but the units east of the Rhine had to slowly fall back to the Rhine, because that was our position, where, in Vietnam, we would hold it and we would fall back, if necessary, back to Hue, but [the] 101st Airborne was right below us and they'd send all of their helicopters up north. … I knew all of those guys, because they'd come up and, sometimes, they'd relieve the helicopter unit that was up at the First of the Fifth. So, I flew with the 101st a number of times, with their pilots. In fact, I got initiated into their pilot's club, [Mr. Maksymowicz groans], but, anyway, that's another story. Anyway, let's see, … so, after this was all over, … the captain who was in charge left. I was then planning out my own missions. My own missions started going into real areas of [combat] and it was my second mission [that] was the first time I got shot at. I loaded up and I planned it over this area north and west, had a mountain, it was a limestone mountain, full of caves, and to the area west of that. … Of course, I had my low helicopter, high helicopter, and two gunships circling. Well, we flew in. I go over the mountain once, we come back, second time, third time, "Bang," one shot. One bullet was shot at us. All bets are off. Everybody's yelling into the microphones, on to the radio, "Taking fire, taking fire." The helicopter pulls to the side to get away from it. The two gunships, which were circling, are now in a power dive, down. They've got full rocket pods on both sides and they empty it against the side of the mountain, as fast as they could, because they'd try to protect us as we get out, and they've got twenty-millimeter cannons and they're blasting away at the side of the mountain. We pull away and they pull up, and I called over, "Do you have any ammo left?" They said, "No, we emptied," and I says, "Okay," and I went up high. I called in to Headquarters, gave them the coordinates of the enemy, and they said, "Oh, you know, wait a minute." I said, "Okay," and so, I'm circling. The two gunships, you know, they went on back. We don't need them; they're empty. So, they went on back. So, just the two helicopters, the two Hueys, are flying up above, about two thousand feet above the ground, and Headquarters calls back, "Look, artillery hasn't had a chance to check their weapons today, for a couple days, actually. Can you zero in some fire?" "Okay." I've never done it before, only had minimal

training on how to do it, but, so, they gave me to a guy. I says, "Well, I haven't done this before." He says, "Don't worry about it, it's easy," and he says, "We're going to send over a 'Willy Pete.'" [Editor's Note: White phosphorus, an incendiary chemical weapon, is nicknamed "WP" or "Willy Pete."] … He verified the coordinates with me and in comes a white phosphorous round, hits almost dead center in where all the smoke is, and I says, "That's the spot." He says, "Okay, hold on," and, all of a sudden, the whole area erupts. You've got these artillery batteries all firing to hit this one target all at the same time. So, the area just erupts in all these explosions on the side of this mountain. Okay, after they stop, he says, "We're finished." Okay, I call back to headquarters, you know, "Anything else for me to do?" "Yes, we do. We've got a … bomber flight that's got no target and is running out of fuel, so, he's got to drop his load. Can you direct him in?" I says, "Sure," because what they would do over there is, they would send, from our carriers off [the] coast, or from one of our airbases, fighter-bombers. … They'd send them in with loads but no target, and they'd circle over to get targets of opportunity. You know, if a place was having a problem right now, "We need some air support," they'd fly in, drop bombs, whatnot, … but, sometimes, they'd come in and nothing was happening in-country. So, they have this flight sitting around, running out of fuel, and they had to dump their bombs, because they couldn't bring them back on to the ships. If you're landing on a ship, you can't come back with a full load. Uh-uh, that's a good way to blow the ship up. So, … I had the frequency, called it, there he was. … He says, "Where is it?" I give him the approximate location. He comes over, he says, [on the radio], "I see some smoke down there." I says, "That's it." So, he goes over, and it's a flight of two, and, "Boom, boom," and back they fly, and I call back and they say, "No, that's it. That's it for today," and I go flying in. … Here, I'm thinking, "That poor bastard, if he's still awake, if he's still alive, he fired one round and got half the world dropped on his head. He won't do that again," and, in fact, I think they got to know our flights, because, when … they'd see four helicopters, one low, two gunships up high and a helicopter, we hardly ever got shot at, after that time. I got shot at maybe four or five times … on the helicopter missions, but that was the first, and there was [one incident] once way out west. I used to pick the areas to go in. Well, I picked this one valley, way out west, near the western border, near Laos, and I said, "Gee, that looks like it's an area that may be [hot]." … I flew over it and I barely got started and I received machine gun fires from both sides of the valley and I pulled up. … I called it in and I got yelled at, after I got back, by the General, because I flew outside of the artillery fan. It's … the furthest area that the artillery can shoot. Well, this valley was just a little bit past that, and so, basically, they had to call the Air Force in to hit the valley, but they kind of knew about the valley being a little hot. I says, "Well, thanks for telling me." "Well, you didn't have a need to know." That's what they'd always say. … So, anyway, I verified that it had a thing [enemy presence]. Now, while I was up there, other things that we had to do [were], besides these sniffer missions, and I'll get back to sniffer in a minute, because there's one incident I want to tell you about, but, [with] the base camp we were at, part of my duties, my unit's duties, was the final defenses for the base camp. … This consisted of fougasse and flame mines. Now, fougasse and flame mines are field expedient munitions and, basically, a flame mine is a fifty-five-gallon drum filled with napalm that we would bury sideways with a shaped charge underneath, and then, [there were] the wires going back to the bunker that was on the perimeter. … For defensive purposes, if the men would have to run from the bunker, let's say to get on helicopters to escape, because they were going to be overrun, [Mr. Maksymowicz claps], this is the last thing they'd set off. It gives them about two minutes of flame between them and the enemy, so that they could get out of the bunker, run on to the helicopters and … boogie out

of there, … but the napalm that was used in this was made from gasoline. Napalm is very simple to make, one of the simplest things in the world to make. It's just gasoline and soap. That's it, and not these deodorant-type soaps that we have today, but, like, Ivory soap, you know. That's what you'd have to use, because Ivory soap is real soap. You have to use a real soap and you mix it up and it gels up; the soap causes the gasoline to gel. The only trouble is, in that kind of heat, it only lasts for three to four months. Now, when you put in one of these munitions, and it only lasts for three to four months, what do you do when you want to replace it? Well, you don't go dig it up. That's the worst thing you can do, because who knows if the shaped charge that you put underneath it, that explosive and that white phosphorous grenade that you put under there to set it all off, is going to [explode], has gotten unstable? So, what we would do is, every night, we would schedule, at random, an area that needed to be replaced. … Whatever we were going to replace the next day, that night, at some random time, it would be set off. Since it was in no-man's land, no one should be there, but, at two-fifteen in the morning, suddenly, this part of the perimeter would be lighted up, and we'd always have all the posts get a call at two-ten, saying, "At two-fifteen, there's going to be a [burst of flame]; don't worry about it," type of message, because we'd be setting it off and, boom, we'd set it off. Now, the fougasse, I don't know if you're familiar with fougasse at all. Artillery shells, 105-[millimeter] artillery shells, they get shipped in a metal tube about this high and it's a long, metal tube and it's got a twist-off metal top and the explosive and the artillery [shell] was right inside. Well, what we would do is, we'd take three of these and fill them up with napalm, close them up and put them at an angle out of the ground, about like this, one, two, and then, a third one on top of it. At the back, you'd put a claymore mine [antipersonnel mine], you know what a claymore is, with a white phosphorous grenade in front of it, right at the back. … This, instead of being a sheet of flame, would fire flame, you know, shoot it out at an angle, and you'd set them up so [that] they'd crisscross and, you know, every so often, a flame mine. So, this is what you'd have as part of the final [defenses]. Now, we would replace these at the same time we would replace the flame mines. So, what we would do is, the artillery would send us back their empty canisters and … my men would be making up napalm and we'd fill this up and, you know, do this kind of thing. Sometimes, they'd even use us if they wanted to burn an area for some reason. … We'd do a bunch of fifty-five-gallon drums and put them in a net, hang them from … a chopper and off we'd go and dump them on an area, to clear an area out. … That, we didn't do too much, but that was just another thing we did with napalm, but … our main thing with napalm was the final protection of the perimeter. Now, what else we did was with, how to explain it? a plastic bomb, about this long, in, let's see, one, two, three, four, either eight-sided or six-sided [container], I don't remember, but it was a semi-clear plastic and it was long. It was like it was cut off here and cut off here and inside were little bomblets, about this big around, and they were packed inside and these were set off by a time delay. … You knew how fast it would fall. I mean, they had a regular chart hooked up to it, but you'd hook a lanyard wire connection over to one of the D-rings inside the helicopter and you could drop this out of a helicopter. It would explode a couple of hundred feet off … the ground and all these little bomblets, because they had little fins on them, would spread out like a blanket over the ground. Now, … we had this one area, … we had, what do you call it? these little posts up on top of mountains, a lot of them, little ones, and they'd always be re-supplied by helicopter, although there'd be a road out to each one of these. … During the dry weather, we'd have troops and artillery set up … on these, but, as soon as the rainy season approached, or got there, because we couldn't keep re-supplying them, they'd have to come back to the base camp. So, they'd come down the road, back to the base camp. … One

of these had a big valley that was right there at the bottom of it and, every year, our troops had a problem. During the rainy season, the Vietcong and the NVA [North Vietnamese Army] would get into that valley, not big, you know, half a dozen, dozen troops, but, you know, taking potshots at our guys and whatnot. So, before, or as we went back up to that thing [firebase], at the end of the rainy season, we'd always send the infantry in to clean the valley out. Once it was cleaned out and our troops were up on the top, they didn't sneak back in again or it was very difficult for them, but we'd always lose one or two guys or they'd lose one or two guys as we did this, and tied up a whole battalion of infantry. So, while I was there, the General said, "Well, do you have any suggestions?" I said, "Yes, I've got these CS bombs [tear gas bombs]. Now, let's use their propaganda against them," because the Vietnamese, or the Vietcong propaganda and the NVA propaganda, was that we use poison gas. I says, "So, let's gas the valley with the CS and see what happens." So, I got a lot of resistance from the battalion commanders, or the battalion commander, rather, who was in charge of the infantry, because his troops didn't like using the CS masks. I mean, it's hot, you know, gunky, and, if you hadn't shaven, it might not make a good seal. So, his men'd have to shave before going out on a mission. "What do you mean, shave before going out on a mission?" "Yes, you're going to have to shave for this one." So, the General pushed it and we did it. I took five helicopters and they put the battalion around the outside of the valley. … Me and my troops, we flew over the valley, and we knew exactly what height to be at, and we had bombs; you know, I don't remember, let's see, three, six, I think we put six in each helicopter, three on this side, three on this side, and we hooked them up. … Once we got over the valley, each helicopter dropped its [first bomb] out, waited the appropriate amount of time, dropped the second one out, waited the appropriate amount of time, dropped the third one out, and they blow up over the valley. Well, they produced a nice blanket over the valley. What happened? The NVA or VC, whatever they were, in that valley, were so scared by the fact that we were using gas … on the valley that they dropped their weapons and ran out of the valley, and our troops just collected them up as they came running out of the valley. … Our troops didn't have to slog through the valley, didn't have to do anything, just captured them as they came out. So, that worked out real nice for us, and the best part was, no one on either side got killed, which I thought was the best part of the whole deal. Now, let's see, I was going to tell you a story about; go back to sniffers again for a minute. There was a valley that ran diagonally from the west to the east, but down across the DMZ from North Vietnam to South Vietnam. Every once in awhile, I'd fly over this area, just to see if there was any activity coming down from the North. Well, this was a fairly early part and I came over the valley, you know, breakfast time, if you will, and I actually got up into the DMZ, where I didn't belong, but that's okay. You know, no one shot me, I was okay, you know. We got back down where we belonged and continued on, … but I got a hot spot reading coming down the valley. So, I called it in to Headquarters. … Headquarters said, "Well, that confirms a report we had. We're going to … send the Sparrow Hawk group." Sparrow Hawk was a company of military, infantry, that were on duty on a moment's notice. The General just says, "Send them there," and up they'd go, and these guys were well-trained, extremely well-trained guys. They were often picked for this Sparrow Hawk unit and they'd rotate them, so that they'd get time off, because this unit was on call twenty-four hours a day, but they went out by helicopter. I picked a LZ [landing zone], but I asked Headquarters if I could go down with them. "Yes, sure," you know, "You're expendable, go ahead." [laughter] So, Sparrow Hawk unit went in first; I'm not that expendable, I won't go in first. They went in first, I went in right behind them. I got off and my helicopter left. I was going back with those guys, the Sparrow Hawk unit. Commander of the Sparrow Hawk unit was

not very happy, because either I'm there to watch him do his work, you know, because we didn't trust him or something, … and, second, I hadn't been trained, so, I might do something stupid. So, he said, "Come with me." He says, "Stay behind this tree. Don't aim your weapon, don't fire your weapon, don't do nothing. Just sit here and watch." "That's all I want to do, no problem," and, from the north, we had a unit coming down. It was a group of four men at the front, a half a dozen, maybe eight, next, and then, three men at the back, and there was a little space between the groups. The four men at the front had weapons; the three men at the back had weapons. The group in the middle were all carrying big sacks on their head, or on their backs, depending upon how it was set up. Basically, the translator who was with us, with a bullhorn, yelled, "Drop your weapons or die." Basically, that's [not], you know, "Give up or we'll shoot," it's, "Drop your weapons or die," you know, and the group in the front, the four in the front, opened fire and they [were] decimated. I mean, they were shot dead so fast, it wasn't even funny, because we had set up a trap for them. The group in the middle had no weapons, they had just [the sacks]. They fell to the ground with their sacks. The group at the back were smarter. They saw or heard what happened. They dropped their weapons and dropped to the ground. We, you know, the group, went up and got them. I was still sitting behind the tree, watching, but, you know, close enough to see at least that part of it. Then, I got up and went forward. The group in the center were teenagers, twelve to about sixteen, seventeen, guys and girls, although, actually, it was only one girl. The guys were all emaciated. … You could see the ribs sticking out of their thing [chest]. The girl was in a little better shape, but we found out, through the interpreter, that they were a slave transportation unit. They had all these kids, these teenagers, were all kidnapped from their villages in the south, but refused to join the VC, and so, because they refused, they were used as slave labor, okay. Now, the young girl was in better shape than the guys. Through the interpreter, we found out that she was their "nightly entertainment," shall we say. When the interpreter convinced the group in the center that they were going to be returned to their villages, the girl got up, went over to one of the dead VC, pulled out his knife and cut off his ears, and kept going, body by body, cutting off ears, and wanted to cut off the ears of the living VC guards. We stopped her, naturally, but, I mean, she cut the others off. Now, this was done because of religious purposes, believe it or not. She was ensuring that they couldn't go to heaven, because, by their religion, if you die and get buried, but not [whole], if you're not buried whole, you can't get into heaven, and cutting off the ears was a way of ensuring that they couldn't get into heaven. Now, you immediately, I think, would probably ask, "Well, what happens with the soldier who has his arm blown off?" Well, the South Vietnamese Army always had this funny thing of finding the arm and they would cremate it, put it in a little box, and the guy would wear it around his neck. As long as you were buried with that, that was the same as being buried whole, so, you didn't have trouble getting into heaven. Now, whether it was actually his arm or not, or how much of it was his, how much of it was somebody else's, who knows? but there were ashes in there that he could, you know, believe that was his and would make him whole. So, for religious [purposes], but, now, you understand why she went around cutting the ears off. She wanted to make sure, she was so mad at them, that she took, you know, took that off. … So, all of them were brought back to the Quang Tri base and, naturally, were questioned. … What do you call it? the prisoners were sent wherever they're sent and the kids, after, what would you call it? a debriefing session, as it's called, were taken back to their home villages. They actually had troops, not troops, but transport, come up, pick them up and take them back to where, whatever vicinity, they came from, … you know, repatriated them back into their village. That's the only other incident I want to tell you about there.

SI: Did you know that was happening beforehand?

JM: No, and … they flew me back with the other troops and I had a story to tell, and the [Sparrow Hawk] Commander says, "Well, who does this get reported to?" I says, "To me, myself and I." I says, "That, you did a fantastic job there." He says, "Oh, thank you," you know, and, suddenly, I was no longer on his shit list, [laughter] but what else happened up there that you should know about? I got involved with quite a bit of training with the Vietnamese, training them in the use of our weapons. Now, what kind of weapons? Well, most of our weapons that we used in Vietnam that were Chemical Corps, that I was involved with, were all "X weapons," that were experimental. What did we have? One weapon that we used, and, actually, I saw it in a movie, [laughter] I think it was the Rock [Dwayne Johnson] or a [Arnold] Schwarzenegger movie, where it's this high … and the same width and it's about this long, looks like a rocket launcher, except it's got four rockets in it. Well, we had those and the rockets were actually [varied]; you could insert another group of four rockets, but they had different kinds of rockets. They had armor-piercing rockets, high-explosive rockets, CS rockets and flame rockets. Now, the thing was, this thing was very bulky. I'm sure it never made it into true production, because [it was] hard to use, but it was extremely accurate. We used it because, with the flame rockets and the CS rockets, we could direct them into caves very easily, especially the CS rockets, and you fire a couple of those into a cave and, you know, the CS, you know, overpowers people and they come running out and you got them. … I found this was very, very good. Also, if you wanted to keep people from running in a certain direction, you could pull out one clip and reload it with, let's say, a flame clip and make fires along an area where you didn't want them to go. So, we trained them in how to use this, clean it, reload it. We didn't use it that much and I don't think they used it that much. The other thing was a backpack. It looked like a backpack. It was about this wide. It looked like a TV set, because of its angular shape, the sides and all the sides and the front, and the front was just a lid that came off and wires that came out and you could set it off. It had a little wire stand, so [that] it'd stick up at an angle. … You'd set it up at forty-five degrees and you'd put it out there and you'd press the button and it'd start firing. … It looked like a Roman candle thing, except there'd be a lot of Roman candles, and it would fire out tear gas and create a blanket of tear gas out in front of you, very interesting, very nice, very different, but it would definitely prevent people from rushing you, if you will, through that area. One man could carry one and, when it was used, you threw it away, because you couldn't reload it. I don't know how good it was, but … I taught them how to use it. We even gave demonstrations. Oh, I've got to tell you about the demonstration. Oh, yes, oh, two things now, another thing; okay, I'll save that for last, demonstration next. New province chief comes in, up there in the Quang Tri area, and the commanding general says, "We will give a demo for the province chief. He's coming over to pay a visit." Okay, so, we've got this nice area, you know, going out over this empty field and whatnot that we're using and … the infantry have people along it. … Our part was, "We're going to give him a demo of final support," you know. So, we got machine guns set up and I put in flame mines and fougasse, and we had a whole bunch of fifty-five-gallon drums that were expiring that I had in my storage [area]. We had made up too much. We were planning on using it on a mission and never did, and I couldn't use it up fast enough. Now, normally, if it's no good, you go to a pit, you burn it, you just get rid of it, but I says, "Well, if he wants a demonstration, we'll give him a demonstration." So, I gave him a "nuclear device demonstration." Now, normally, you use three cans, three fifty-five-gallon drums, of napalm,

with a white phosphorous grenade under each and a shaped charge under the whole blast. … What it does is, it shoots up a nice cloud that mushrooms out and everything looks fine and dandy. Okay, only trouble is, I've got fifteen drums that I've got to get rid of. [laughter] Well, we put it down at the end, "We'll set this up as a final demonstration," and, you know, my munitions expert guy gets in there and he sets them up with all of the shaped charges underneath them and everything. We set it up. So, we used that blanket thing, showed the blanket. We had the fougasse go off for the final, and this is after the infantry started with their single fire, then, machine gun, then, machine guns firing, then, the fougasse and the flame and the CS, and then, at the very end, I fire the "atomic demolition" munition. Now, we coordinated this demo with the Army, the Navy, the airport and the air liaison. Well, we set it off. I've got my jeep there with its radio. All of a sudden, I'm getting a call from Corps Headquarters. "Is there any problem up at Quang Tri?" I said, "Problems? What kind of problems?" I said, "The demo went off beautifully." He said, "Well, see, a bomber, an Air Force bomber, reported a nuclear device being set off at Quang Tri." [laughter] He said, "The whole country's on yellow alert," and I says, "We set off an atomic demolition munitions simulator," and he says, "Oh?" I says, "Yes, and it was coordinated with the Air Force and with [everyone else]." The problem was, and I found this out later, we'd coordinated with the Air Force and they notified locally, in-country, but some of those bombers were not coming locally. They were coming all the way from the States. This was a stateside bomber coming in, flew over Vietnam and dropping his load in Laos and whatnot, and heading on back, and he sees this mushroom-shaped cloud. Hey, he does his duty. He reports what he sees, and so, I says, "All I did was [follow orders]; am I in trouble?" [laughter] The guy says, "No, I don't think so." [laughter] Everything was [fine], you know, that was the end of that one, but that was a little [Mr. Maksymowicz pants, indicating a stressful situation] that occurred. … The other thing was during Khe Sanh, the second Khe Sanh, not when the Marines were there, but when the Army went back out to Khe Sanh. [Editor's Note: The US Army reoccupied Khe Sanh in 1971 and left in 1972.] … The press here in the States got all upset, because it looked like we were going into Laos, [like] we were going to continue on to the Ho Chi Minh Trail and cut it off and, you know, go right into Laos and not stop, which I pretty much think is what was planned, but never got off the ground, because, … with all the hullabaloo, they stopped us right at the Laotian border, which was fine, as far as I was concerned, but we went to … Khe Sanh. We went in and we occupied it for a period of time, several weeks. I had my little bunker there, with my men, right near the headquarters bunker. … The ground was so hardly packed, I tried to blow a bunker and everybody came running, saying, "What happened, what went off?" [I] said, "I'm trying to get a hole here. My men can't dig in this." They said, "Hold it," and called a guy with a tractor and he came over, you know, bulldozer, bulldozed us a hole, and he says, "All right, now, you've got a hole." I says, "Good, thank you." "No more playing with the C-4." I said, "Okay," [laughter] but, so, while we were there, we would still fly our sniffer missions, but, now, it was primarily right up against the DMZ and, for that, I'd still, often times, have to go back to Headquarters. They'd send a helicopter and I'd go back, but I was at Quang Tri. Well, I went back and we set up and we were flying, not even [at the average altitude?], we were flying at about twenty-two, twenty-three hundred feet, and the helicopter I'm in, which was the lead helicopter, the pilot suddenly throws the helicopter into a nose dive. Now, why are you going to a throw a Huey into a nose dive? I don't know, but he's powering down. Now, I'm looking over, because I know how to read the instruments, and I'm looking at the instruments and, right now, going down, not too much of a problem. Now, the other helicopters behind us, they're sort of, you know, "What

happened?" you know, but our guy's going down. Suddenly, when we get near the ground, he starts putting the brakes on and what I'm watching is the torque meter, because, [if] you go up to fifteen, that's red line. … I'm watching it and it's ten; now, it's eleven; now, it's twelve; now, it's thirteen; now, it's fourteen; now, it's fifteen; now, it's sixteen; now, it's seventeen, because he's got to put on enough torque to stop us before we hit the ground, and we did. We stopped about three or four feet off the ground and we stopped there and he hovers for a little while. He says, "You know why I did that?" and we all answered with a, "No." He says, "Did you hear anything over … your headphones?" and almost everybody says, "Yes, we heard some beeps." He says, "That's radar locking in on us." He said, "How many beeps? Everybody count to yourself and tell me how many beeps when I ask for it." So, we all counted up how many beeps we heard and one guy says, "Two," another guy says, "Three," another guy says, "I thought I heard a fourth," you know, but, you know, basically, it was two or three beeps. He says, "If that radar is hooked up to machine guns, between the second and third beep, the machine guns would start firing. If it's hooked up to a SAM [surface-to-air] missile, the SAM missile fires between the third and the fourth beep." … The consensus was, it was three beeps. So, it was a SAM missile it was hooked up to. The other helicopters, they started coming down to us, [to] see what was wrong, and they didn't hear a thing. So, it was locked in on us. Because we had pulled over fifteen pounds of torque, we had to fly back slowly at, you know, a few feet off the ground, because, if something went wrong, we didn't want too far to fall. So, that's basically what we did. We went about twenty miles an hour back to base camp, with the two gunships circling. The other one went on by itself, because there was no reason for it to stay and we just; well, actually, yes, it did stay, I'm sorry, it followed us, because, if we went down, they'd come in to pick us up and take us back. We landed back at the thing [base camp] and the warrant officer, who was the maintenance chief for the helicopters, took the two pilots and myself and my sergeant around and we examined that helicopter, and four to five rivets were popped on the tail. He said the thing [helicopter] would not fly out of country. It was going to be shipped back to the States for a rebuild, because … it wasn't safe to use it anymore. So, that chopper was gone, but he basically saved our lives. Now, we know this for a fact because, sometimes, communications is not the greatest in the world. We reported this to our headquarters. Headquarters knew about the potential for a SAM missile. They reported it to the Air Force. Unfortunately, that same night, a Canadian Caribou [a de Havilland Canada DHC-4 Caribou, a twin-engine aircraft used for cargo and passenger transport] flew that same area; it hadn't gotten the warning yet and it got shot down by a SAM. So, we feel justified in saying there was a SAM missile there. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

JM: I told you what I was going to talk about. What was that?

JS: You had another story from Germany.

JM: Yes. Well, I was thinking about Vietnam. I lose my track too fast. [laughter] Okay, well, in Vietnam, after the situation with the, what do you call it? with the "almost SAM," I was back in Khe Sanh and … our troops pulled out of Khe Sanh and went back to the base camp. Me and my unit was [were] the last unit to leave. In fact, we were about a half-hour behind everybody else. The reason is, we would take, and I'll explain this, it was a three-gallon plastic jerry can. You know what a jerry can looks like, but it came pre-filled with CS powder. Now, what we

would do is take a piece of cardboard and wrap it around, one layer, and just tape it with some masking tape or … some kind of tape, then, around that, we would wrap three layers of det cord. You know what det cord is?

SI: Yes, detonation cord.

JM: Detonation cord. It looks like a white clothesline, about yay big around, you know, that you used on clotheslines and whatnot, looks like that. We wrapped that around it, and then, we'd run the ends up to the handle and, on the handle, we would put a grenade fuse, but not a regular grenade fuse. We would order thirteen-second grenade fuses and we would put it on the handle. Now, what we used these for is, it's powdered CS, we would put it into a bunker and we'd try to set it up, well, sometimes, we'd take an actual piece of cord and suspend it from the ceiling, so [that] it's in the middle. Sometimes, we'd put it up on a piece of board or a piece of something, just to get it up higher, and we'd blow it into the sides of the bunker. What this would do is, it'd penetrate the dirt or the whatever was on the bunker and this powdered CS would last for a minimum of six months, but, if you worked it into the dirt or something, it would last for, like, two years. It means that that bunker could not be used by anybody, because the CS, after being in the area for awhile, even with good ventilation, the powder would actually give you a sunburn. You know, it would actually affect your skin and give you a rash and you couldn't live in it. Well, my unit, after each group left, would go to the bunkers, you know, the main bunkers and whatnot, and we'd blow up these inside each one of the bunkers. In fact, what we did, ahead of time, was, we'd take one of these, … about the day before, put them in the bunker, with tape over the pins, so that people wouldn't accidentally pull them. … So, me and my jeep would do this to each one of the bunkers as we were leaving, and there were a lot of bunkers there, because, you know, this battalion had its headquarters bunker and that battalion had his head[quarters], etc. So, we just went around and blew them up, and then, took the road back toward Khe Sanh, with the helicopter sort of quietly staying up high, just watching, making sure that we were okay, as we drove on back, but we got back to Headquarters, you know, about a half-hour after they left, because we had this work to do.

SI: Was that something that you came up with on your own or was it something that you got out of a manual?

JM: It was passed down from chemical officers to chemical officers. It's something that was a field munition, if you will. There's another field munition that we actually got from a Marine and that was the same kind [of] jerry can, except we used Agent White in it. Agent White was another one of the [herbicides]. Agent Orange, Blue and White, those were the three herbicides we used over there. Agent White, diluted, one part Agent White to three parts water, and put it in there, and it would do the same thing. … See, as we were flying over areas where there were no friendlies, we'd suddenly see this rice paddy and we knew what it was. The NVA would set up a rice paddy, because they needed to eat. Now, sometimes, the Marines used to go in and try to; what can you do to a rice paddy? You can't blow it up, really, [laughter] you can't do anything to it. They even tried putting det cord around it and let the blast wave, through the water, cut off the rice, and that worked a little bit, but you spent so much time setting it up, it was ridiculous. Then, somebody came up with this routine, the three-in-one, and you'd fly over and drop it [the jerry can with Agent White] and it was set to explode [in] thirteen seconds. You

know how far it would drop [in] thirteen seconds. You'd just go up so [that] it'd blow up fifty to a hundred feet over the thing [rice paddy], blow up and spray this spray out over it. Now, it was an herbicide, except, instead of killing, when it was diluted that much, instead of killing the rice, it [would] prevent the rice granule from forming. "Hey, go farm it all you want. We've blown our thing over it; you're not getting any rice out of it." [laughter] So, that was another one of our tricks. I mean, sometimes, we'd find, you know, the holes in the ground and we'd take the powdered CS, … you know, with a helicopter, just drop it into the hole, or we'd find them in the [field]; sometimes, well, once, they sent me out with an APC [armored personnel carrier], because one of the units on the ground found it, and I went out there with [these munitions]. Actually, it was a well, and I went out there first to blow up … what I thought was a tunnel, find out it's a big well. So, all I could do was blow CS into the side. So, I set that up and blew that off, and then, went back to Headquarters. Nice trip on the ground; I got to see how the field troops live, but a lot of my work consisted of training the Vietnamese. I mentioned that before. So, we trained them with the rocket that I told you about, trained them how to make and use the napalm, trained them how to use CS, but I also worked with another group. They were called the Hac Bao Company. Hac Bao Company was a company of mercenaries, non-Vietnamese mercenaries. They were the most efficient soldiers I'd ever seen. They worked for the Vietnamese Government, not for us. They consisted of Chinese, Koreans, possibly some Americans, a lot of Europeans, but this company, the Vietnamese could put out anywhere and they were as good as our SEALS, … I mean, and these guys' training, I watched one of their training sessions and was amazed. They'd use real knives during training. I mean, "Hey," and a guy'd get a cut and he'd say, "Oh, you got me." "Oh, well, sorry about that," you know, had to get it stitched up, "Excuse me." These guys were [intense], but they were extremely efficient. Now, they worked up in the, actually, Da Nang Province. We worked throughout it and, during our push into Quang Tri, it was my understanding that they continued pushing further. They actually reached the Ho Chi Minh Trail and just checked that area out, and so, there was a lot of that. I also got to meet, only a little bit, some of the Montagnard. They were at Khe Sanh. They were very unusual people, very thin, very short. They are the aborigines of Southeast Asia. They're very polite, respectful and don't want to, you know, be a pain or a bother. They have a very strict code of conduct, if you will. I found this out. You have to be very careful when you first meet them. You've got to be sure that you don't offend them, because, if you offend them, they become your enemy, but, if you become their friend, nothing you do can offend them. Let's see, their order of things, their order of, what do you call it? … importance to them, to the Montagnard, were their water buffalo, the rice paddy, then, their wives and female children. Male children, of course, were actually way above this, you know. The reason is that wives were considered property and it was the wives' jurisdiction to take care of the rice paddy. The husbands went hunting and brought in meat. The wives took care of the rice paddies. Let's see, what else?

SI: What would you have to do to make sure you did not offend them at first?

JM: Sometimes, you could offend; our troops offended a number of their [groups]. Some of them were not our friends. Some of them, you know, because the first troops that met with them were just right; I mean, what could you do that wouldn't offend them, or what could you do, you know, that was, you know, what you have to avoid? You had to avoid staring at anybody too long, especially women. You had to be absolutely truthful. They, in their language, had no word

for lying, because they didn't, you know. It's just something they didn't do. You asked a question, they tell you the truth, hey. They used poisoned-tipped crossbows, small ones, small poison-tipped crossbows. That's the way they would hunt. So, if you were their enemy, boy, you stayed away, but, if you were their friend, nothing you did could offend them, to the extent where one of the guys, and this is not personal, but this is what I was told [by] one of the guys who worked with them quite a bit. … I sat down and talked with him, was telling me that he went over, made friends with this group and came back two or three times, brought them things, you know, food, medicine, that kind of stuff, which was, you know, once you're their friend and could help them, "Oh, yes, definitely, you know, this is great, but you don't have to." I mean, you're over there, you're meeting with them, but he said he was over there and he spent a little too much time looking at the guy's daughter, pretty girl, a girl, and I mean girl, and the guy says, "Oh, you like my daughter? I'll send her over to your hut tonight." "What?" "Yes, you like her, I'll send her over." He said, "Oh, yes, I like her, but, no, that's not necessary," and so, he was, you know, looking at her and trying to figure out which one of the guy's wives was the mother and he saw one, he says [he] figured that that was the mother, and the guy [said], "Oh, you like my wife? I'll send her over instead, or I'll send them both over." That's just the way they were, and not that the woman complained about this or anything, that's just the way it's always been and they would do that for one of their own buddies who was, … you know, in the tribe. If he suddenly had a hankering for your wife, "Go ahead, take her, use her for awhile. I have a few others," that kind of thing, but that was their [custom], just the way they were. So, I remember, our command group was very careful with these guys. Now, we had one village of them, not too far away; well, a ways away, but, shall we say, in a safe area, … but they had gotten contaminated, if you will, with all our [influence]. You know, our guys tried to constantly be buying crossbows from them and things like this, because it's a nice thing to send home. … Because of all the work I'd been doing with the Vietnamese up in Quang Tri, when I was being repositioned down to Da Nang, they sent me down to Saigon, to the school in Saigon, and I trained the Vietnamese officers down there, for two weeks. We actually went through all the weapons, all the armament, how to use them, different techniques, sniffers, how to use them, how to use the bombs, and, at the end, we had another demonstration, without the nuclear one, but we had a little demonstration down in Saigon. Then, I came back and went to Da Nang.

SI: You were there for more than a year. Did you opt to stay there longer?

JM: I liked the Army and, if I opted for a second tour over there, they sent me home for thirty days of free leave, just for opting for another tour. I don't mind … a free thirty-day leave, and it didn't start until I landed in New York. So, the flight home didn't count and the flight back didn't count, just the time here in [New] Jersey. So, I was off for a month, back here, you know, a chance to decompress, if you will. About the only thing I noticed were some of the agitators [anti-war protestors] in California. I was surprised there were none in New York, or none that I noticed, and then, when I got back here, because I actually traveled back in full uniform, … I expected to see it, but I didn't. When I got back here to Northern Jersey, people were very nice to me. So, I, you know, even suspect that, at least at that particular time, it wasn't a prime thing, although, before I went over to Vietnam, … while I was training, down in Fort Benning, Georgia, yes, … you know, on a nice weekend day, I went to one of the parks and they were having a [political] group that was agitating against the war. I was in uniform and I just stayed way back on the fringes and watched it. They didn't have much of a group or much of an

attendance, but I did remember they had held a mock trial, and [it] was the worst thing I'd ever seen. I mean, I don't even think the Soviet Union had a trial that was that set up, that one-sided. They wouldn't tell you what the charges were and you had to defend yourself first, or defend it first before they put on their prosecution, and, at the end, they tell you what the charges were, and then, they'd make their announcement. I said, "This is ridiculous. … You know, this is not a trial." … I mean, the main speaker was a guy who admitted to atrocities over in Vietnam. I [thought], "Well, that's his problem. I mean, if he, you know, killed people, I mean, that's his conscience that has to bear that." Now, one thing I saw, when I was in Vietnam, things that I didn't think were the best, the antagonism between the Vietnamese [and] the Montagnard [a French term for "mountain people" which describes the many tribes in the Central Highlands of Vietnam], I noticed this. … The Vietnamese that could speak Montagnard would almost refuse to say they could, and we had an interpreter with us that could speak Montagnard. He was a Vietnamese and we'd get to a Montagnard and he didn't want to talk to them. [The interpreter would say], "They're beneath us." I mean, you say, you know, black and white relations aren't the best in certain areas? Well, there, it was so blatant, [it was] unbelievable, and, at the same time, what else? The prosecution of the war was not the best in the world. I feel that our commanders got a little chicken-livered. [laughter] Actually, that was being pushed on them, but, while I was in Da Nang, I visited the post that belonged to the Koreans, went out there and … I discussed with the commander some of the problems that we had, you know, with people getting through the wire and stuff like that. He says, "We don't have that problem." I said, "Well, why not?" He said, "Come." We got into his jeep and we went around. Now, I wasn't alone. I had a "full-bird" colonel with me who was the XXIV Corps chemical officer, and he and I were on this, you know, visitation tour, if you will. … Since they were only down the road a ways, we, you know, [went there] and he took us, but this Korean, I guess he was a colonel also, took us around and they had very little wire on the outside, on the perimeter. … I was saying, "You find this wire enough?" He [the Korean colonel] says, "Oh, yes." I said, "You know, does it stop them from coming in?" "Not really," he says, "but wait." We get down, go around about a third, and what do you see out in the wire but a body, hanging on the wires, and the Colonel says, "We shot him a little over a week ago," and the Colonel behind me said, "Well, don't you remove him?" He [the Korean colonel] says, "No. Remove him and he doesn't act as a deterrent. While he's there, no one's coming in the wire, because they know what's going to happen to them." … He says, "And, anytime one gets shot, we just leave him where he lays." He says, "We don't have problems with people coming through the wire," but our bases always did, our camps always did, and, while I was in Da Nang, one of the things I heard about, because, as soon as it happened, everybody heard about it, one of our small encampments around Da Nang, somebody was starting to come through the wire. So, the guard, on the guard tower [says], "Halt, halt," fires a round into the ground. … The bullet hits the ground, a rock or something, and bounces up and kills the person coming through the wire. Hey, he did his job, as far as I'm concerned. He was brought up on charges of murder and I said, "Well, what is the [rationale]?" "Well, he didn't fire three warning shots into the air." I says, "He was coming through the wire. I don't need three warning shots to know when somebody's coming through the wire." Well, it turned out to be a kid, that didn't help, but the reason [he was coming through the wire is] because they knew that, "Hey, you're not going to shoot at us, so, therefore, I can come through the wire." No, no, that was the wrong attitude. Our guys should have been, you know, [saying], "Great job for shooting him," and continue on, but … we didn't want to raise the ire of the local community type of thing. So, we couldn't act like soldiers anymore, which is

something that can happen. I mean, … you realize, war is something that isn't a pretty thing. You realize that after you're in it for awhile, and some of the things you have to do, sometimes, you say, "Well, should I have done it or not? but, if I'd asked that question at the time I did it, I might be dead now," type of thing. So, you've got to say, "Well, I used my best judgment at the time," and just accept the fact that you did what you did, whatever it may be. … [However], with all the reporters, with their cameras, all over the place, saying, "Well, was this really necessary?" [you would say], "Well, I don't know. Is it really necessary that you're standing there over my shoulder with a camera?" I mean, some of the stuff that occurred over there was probably not necessary, but some of it, you know, somebody shoots at you, you shoot back at them. I don't care whether it's a kid, a woman or what-have-you. If he or she shoots at me, I shoot back. After he's dead, then, I can say, "Well, I wish it hadn't been a kid, but, if they're doing it…" That was our position, most of us, and we tried to stay with that. Now, some of the things that happened in Da Nang, because we'll hit Da Nang next, that was XXIV Corps Headquarters. I had been moved to; I had another … chemical detachment in XXIV Corps and I was, what did you call it? second to the corps chemical officer. No, actually, while I was up [with the] First of the Fifth Infantry, I had a … lieutenant colonel that was the … First of the Fifth Infantry Brigade chemical officer and I was his assistant, if you will, but, when he left and deployed back to the States, I got orders that made me chemical officer to the brigade. So, I held two posts there for awhile, that one and that one. … Down at Corps Headquarters, we had a "full-bird" colonel and I had the detachment and I was his assistant. I worked for the G-3 Section, which was, you know, operations, and … [I had responsibility for] less of everything when I was there, more advisory. I had to do more training with the Vietnamese, do more training with our guys. Inspections, I hated those. I hated those with a passion; we had a lot more of those. Inspections included going out and verifying reports from the Vietnamese. A Vietnamese unit'd go out into the field and they'd get into a firefight or something. They'd report, "Oh, we killed twenty-five VC [Vietcong fighters]." Our commanders didn't believe them, because, a lot of times, we found out, they exaggerated. So, often times, what they'd do is say, "Here is a certificate. Go out and present it to the field commander, and I want a true body count while you're there." So, in other words, I had to, or whoever they sent out would, go around, "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven," find out how many were actually there, and a lot of times, they'd be exaggerated. You reported twenty-five, but it was actually eighteen. They reported wiping out a, what do you call it? a base camp; well, it was a bunker, this kind of stuff, you know, inflating. So, we'd come back and we'd tell the G-3, "Well, it was actually this, it was actually that," and they'd mark it down in their book of actually what they were accomplishing. One time, they sent me out and … it was the Hac Bao Company that reported, and I says, "[Do] you really want to bother sending me out to the Hac Bao?" I says, "If they claim they killed twenty-five people, they have twenty-five bodies there." They said, "Just go out and check." So, out to [the] chopper, drop down, got in, and I don't remember exactly how many people they reported, but they were all there, but one thing I did notice, one or two of the VC that they had killed were chained to their weapons, chained to the machine guns and things like that, so [that] they couldn't run away, so [that] they had to be killed type of thing. … It's the only time I ever saw anything like that or heard of anybody directly seeing that, and that was disturbing, that really was [disturbing], that somebody would do that to somebody else, chain them to a weapon, because, basically, that meant he couldn't give up, but that was most of my stuff at that time. Anything else? Oh, yes, when I was at XXIV Corps, I got a chance to observe different operations. Among the operations, they were sending a chopper unit in, with troops, and they

needed a place to land and it was, what would you call it? a very wooded area. It was a wooded hilltop and they said, "Well, we're staying back here." I said, "Well, why are we so far away?" He says, "Well, wait," he says, "we're using a 'daisy cutter.'" [To interviewer] You ever hear of a "daisy cutter?" two-thousand-pound bomb with a thirty-nine-inch fuse on it. Now, because it's got a thirty-nine-inch fuse means that, thirty-nine inches above the ground, it will hit and start going off. It actually goes off almost level with the ground and it treats the trees as if they were daisies and it cuts them off right at the [bottom]. … It created this big [open area], you know, all this, you know, lumber, now, is sitting all around, usually blown away from the center. It doesn't put a big crater in [the ground]. That's the design, not to put a crater in [the ground], but to send a blast wave sideways and, from the air, or from the ground, you can see the blast wave as it cuts through, cuts down these [trees], and then, the helicopters can land in the open area. Also, you can be sure of one other thing. If you come right after it blew up, there are no enemy troops in that area, because they've either been knocked unconscious or killed from the blast wave, because it's that strong a blast wave, and, you know, C-130s'd [C-130 Hercules transport aircraft] fly over and [Mr. Maksymowicz imitates the bombing]. … I saw two of those occur and they're very destructive, to say the least, but that's how we were able to create LZs. Now, I also was, while I was at Da Nang, told to go out with some reporters from the States who came in, and I was to show them areas that had been deforested using Agent Orange, [a herbicide used to remove leaves from trees in an attempt to remove all cover the forest gave enemy soldiers]. So, I did take them out and showed [them]. For a whole day, we spent nothing but going from one [place] to the other. We didn't actually land, we could only see it from the air, because these were out [in rough terrain], but some were re-overgrown, others were, you know, still deforested. There were some trees that were permanently destroyed; I mean, there's no ifs, ands or buts. There were some trees that were totally destroyed, but I got to see what they saw, and it was supposed to go into a magazine in the States. They promised me a copy, but I never got it, … but that was another interesting [event]. You know, I got to see the war from many different angles, and then, there was something else I wanted to mention, but let's get on. Then, what happened? Oh, … I kept getting extended. You know, I kept asking … to be in the Army longer, and so, … during that last year, I said, "Well, you know, it's getting close to me ending and I like the Army, I want to make it a career type of thing. Keep me in," and they said, "Okay, but you can't stay Chemical Corps," and I said, "What?" [They said], "Yes, we're doing away with the Chemical Corps." Well, they did away with the Chemical Corps for all of two months and it came back again, but I didn't want to go into the Ordnance Corps. That would have been munitions. Actually, I would have been good in that, but I didn't want to. … I said, "Well, this is what I want [to be in Chemical Corps]," and they said, "This is what we've got," and I says, "Well, here's an alternative. Most of my time in the Army that wasn't Chemical was spent Signal [Corps], working on Signal stuff and whatnot. Why not Signal?" and they said, "It's Ordnance Corps or it's Ordnance Corps," and I went, "Time's up, coming up soon," and they said, "Yup." So, … it was the draw down, it was getting down [towards the end of America's direct involvement], you know. First of the Fifth Infantry was closing down up in Quang Tri. So, I said, "Well, I might as well leave," and so, that's what I did, you know. I came back to Fort Lewis, Washington, and, from there, home. Now, while I was over there, I got presented with two Bronze Stars, eight Air Medals, one Army Commendation Medal. The other Army Commendation Medal was in Europe. That's enough. So, the Air Medal[s] were all for sniffer missions, you know.

SI: What would determine if you received a medal for one mission as opposed to another mission? Was a medal earned when you were fired upon?

JM: No, well, there were different criteria. There were criteria that said, "If you've spent so much time in the air against the enemy, you get, you qualify for, an Air Medal." That's one qualification. The other is if you did something special, like, I got my first one, I think, for my trip down … where I went on the ground and came back. … You know, they said that deserved that one [medal]. I didn't think it did, but that's okay, you know, if they say I did. The other one was that valley where I took fire from both sides. That was another one there. The rest of them were mostly done for number of hours against the enemy, which was sort of, what would you call those? standard type things, and the Bronze Stars were for actions, again, the one with the valley, that one, and what was the other one, exactly? got to get it straight, so [that] I don't make a mistake. The other one was for; … that's a story I want to tell you about. Okay, here we go; while in Quang Tri, [this is a] story of something I witnessed. This is not about the Bronze Star, no, it's something I witnessed. I was telling you, during the rainy season, we'd come off the mountains, during the dry season, we'd go back to the hilltops, to set up the … firebase camps. Well, it was after the rainy season and they were going back out with artillery pieces, back to this base camp, … and this was a pretty flat area, with mountains behind it, and they were heading off to … a mountain peak over here. This is west, out that way, this is south, down this way, and they were going to this mountain peak, and they came down the road, and then, they turned down this dirt road going along … these mountains, if you will, toward that [base camp], and it was going to take them most of the day to get there. They get halfway down the road and they start receiving fire from a big cave up on the side of the hill. So, naturally, they had tanks with them, tanks turned their turrets toward it and start peppering the side of the hill toward the cave, but they had reinforced this cave so much, the tanks were having absolutely no effect, and they were getting [nowhere]. You know, they [the Vietcong] were shooting RPGs, [rocket-propelled grenades], rockets down on them, you know. They were hurting people, and they [the Americans] were stymied. A couple of gunships came in, tried to hit the cave, hit the area, but still no damage. Well, we had, in our artillery groups, 105-[millimeter] pieces, 155-inch pieces, millimeter pieces, I'm sorry, that's 105-millimeter, 155-millimeter, and eight-inch guns, big eight-inch guns. Those were the longest distance guns we had on the ground. Well, they had one of these eight-inch guns going to this firebase. Well, they took the eight-inch gun, suddenly lifts up its thing and turns toward the mountain, which is about sideways, and [Mr. Maksymowicz imitates a gun firing] and the whole side of the hill just blows up into smoke. Well, believe it or not, the commander, who was an officer of that crew, got into trouble, because you're not allowed to fire an eight-inch gun below forty-five degrees, because it damages the gun, and that gun had to go back and get, you know, maintenance done on it. … The only time you're allowed to fire below forty-five degrees is if your position's going to be overrun. … His reasoning was, "We were taking fire that no one else could control and that meant that we were going to be overrun before too long. Therefore, I took appropriate action," and the military, the senior military, decided that they would accept that reason and he didn't get in [more trouble]. You know, they stopped any court-martial proceedings or anything at that point, but he really should not have fired it. By firing it, he stopped everything, he stopped them. I mean, it destroyed the side of the mountain and he prevented anybody else from being hurt, but, technically, you're not supposed to do that with that kind of equipment. So, there was a little tension over that with the higher-ups, but that got resolved, but I wanted to mention that little

story, you know. That's called "field initiative." Now, we had a number of people in the American Army who were not Americans. We had one German officer, from the German Army, who joined … the American Army and, by the laws of Germany, he's allowed to go into any army, you know, into another army, as long as he serves his time in the German Army, too. Now, all his time in the American Army, because he was a German officer anyway, was counted toward his German time, and he was getting paid a lot more in the American Army than he was in the [German Army], but he was a mechanized infantry [officer] and he was up at Charlie Two, which was the base camp north of Quang Tri. … I used to fly around Charlie Two quite a bit, because they were just south of the DMZ, and I would fly different missions along there. Now, he was the only mechanized infantry commander who liked the mechanized flamethrowers and asked that they be assigned to his unit all the time. These were, you know, what a mechanized unit might look like, with this nozzle coming off the top that would shoot flame, and shoot it for quite a distance, too, but he always went with it and it was very grasslands-[like] in the area he was in. So, he could be burning this and burning that and [he would say], "Oh, I have to make a little camp here for the night. Burn it, make it clear, burn it all off," which was fine, but, one day, I went and did a "sniffer" mission up near Charlie Two. Up and back, up and back; I didn't expect to get anything there, because it's not a good area. It's too close to us and others. … After I finished the mission, I was trying to interpret one of my readings. I'm saying, "I'm getting an awfully flat reading in this area." You know, usually, when you get a reading on the sniffer, it goes [Mr. Maksymowicz imitates the sniffer] and you say, "There it is. Right there, at that top point, that's where I got the reading," but this was like a flat reading, very flat. "It seems to be this area," and I'd mark an area on the map, and so, I reported it in and they reported it up to Charlie Two and they sent out this German guy. He got to the area. He says, "I can't see anything. There's too much brush. Burn it, burn it, burn it." They burned off the whole area. What do we find? tunnels, entrances to tunnels. What I was picking up was an exhaust tunnel from their commissary, underground, and all the cooking was coming up. As it should, the "sniffer" mission picked it up, but it was so diffused, I couldn't tell what it was. Well, he found it and, boy, he ripped that place apart. He went in, sent his guys into the tunnels and they [the Vietcong] got, you know, destroyed. It was an enemy major tunnel base camp, right there next to our base camp, but he loved those mechanized infantry. I don't know if there's any more that I can tell you about the [service]; I mean, if you have specific questions. …

SI: Yes, we have a bunch of questions.

JM: Sure, please.

SI: You mentioned that you had seen a protest with a mock trial before you went over to Vietnam, and then, you were aware that there were some activities in California, but, when you were over in Vietnam, did you know anything about what was happening with the protest movement in the United States?

JM: We got newspapers. In fact, my local newspaper here, while I was in the service, sent me a free subscription while I was over there and I kept reading. So, whatever they had here, I knew about. Also, yes, … it would even be on the military radio, but not as pronounced as it was back here in the States, because the military radio didn't want to discourage the troops. I mean, you've got to remember, there's a certain psychological factor involved in anything that's presented to

the troops and, if you're saying, "Hey, people at home are fighting over the fact that we're over here," and all that, that's not going to do [any] good. The troops are not going to [feel good]. No, I would say it was downplayed, censored even, but not to the extent that you didn't find out about it. I mean, you knew about it, because magazines came over, newspapers came over and whatever there was in them, that didn't get redacted in any way. It was the full newspaper and we'd pass them around from one person to the next. You know, if somebody's got a newspaper, I don't care if it was for Podunk, Iowa, I want to read something that's, you know, a newspaper.

SI: Did that news about the protest movement have a morale effect on the men around you or yourself?

JM: To me; see, I've got to explain something here, this is more [personal]. My brother is a conscientious objector and didn't even go in the service. In fact, when he … received his draft notice, he asked me about it and, because I was so familiar with him, I didn't have any objection to [his beliefs] and I wrote … a letter for him, based upon his beliefs. … My brother and I are the type that fight like cats and dogs until somebody comes up and starts questioning us, and then, we both turn and chew them up, because, "What are you doing? We can fight all we want." To give you an example, … I'd come back from Germany. I had my little [car]; in Germany, I'd bought myself a little Fiat Spider, nice sports car, two-seater, with the flip hood, whatnot, and I'm going to Vietnam. What am I going to do with it, park it in the garage here? My brother's in Albany Medical School. So, I drive up to Albany Medical School. He knows I'm coming. I get there. I said, "Greg, I can't use this car while I'm over in Vietnam. Can you use it while you're up here?" because I knew he didn't have a car. "Oh, yes," I mean, a cute, little car like that, everything. The only thing I asked him to do was, I had plates on it from overseas and they were issued by the US Army. So, they were green plates with gray lettering on them, gray number, and it said, "U.S.A.," on the bottom, for, "US Army," but it said, "U.S.A." I gave him my registration. I said, "Please, get this registered for me," because the registration over there, by the US Army, said, "This is registered forever, … and, you know, you don't have to reregister this ever again and you've got, I think, 180 days or ninety days after you get back to the States with this [before], you know, you should get it reregistered," but there were no dates on it, other than the date it was issued. So, that meant it was good forever. Well, my brother was a little negligent in getting it reregistered and, when I got home, it still had those plates on it, but, by then, it was a junker. So, I said, "Okay, you know, at least you got good use out of it," but he said, "Those plates were the best thing in the world." Cops'd actually stop him just because he had those plates on, saying, "I don't recognize those plates. What are they?" and he'd pull out [the registration] and he'd say, "Well, my brother's in Vietnam." The cops said, "Go ahead, okay. We just wanted to know what they were," or, if he got stopped for speeding, … the guy'd say, "What kind of plates are these?" and he'd say, "Well, my brother's in Vietnam, this is his car," and the cop'd say, "Go ahead, you know. This is a warning. Slow down, go ahead." So, he liked [them]. You know, he didn't want to change the plates, but, anyway, while I was up visiting with him, he and I were in a room about this big. He was there and I was in a beanbag chair about there and his current girlfriend was in his lap and we were arguing. This was right after [the] Kent State situation occurred and we were arguing about the Vietnam War, about what happened at Kent State, and, I mean, … it got to the point where she got scared, because we were screaming and shouting at each other. [Editor's Note: On May 4, 1970, Ohio National Guardsmen opened fire on a crowd of students protesting the Vietnam War at Kent State

University, killing four and wounding nine.] … We'd been carrying on like this for forty-five minutes or so, and, finally, Greg says, you know, I had shouted, he started shouting, then, he stopped and he looked at me, he says, "You know, we're not going to answer this now. Let's talk about something else," and I looked at him, I says, "Yes, that's a good idea," and his girlfriend's mouth went, [dropped open in surprise]. We could just turn it off, just like that. We disagreed and we'll fight like hell about our positions, but [then say], "Hey, let's not talk about that. Let's talk about something we agree on now," … because we're brothers and that's the way we've always been. If we disagree on something, "So? We can disagree on it, but, you know, there are too many things we agree on," and that's the way we've always handled that. So, when he got called up, I wrote him a very nice letter to the draft board, explaining everything about him and how long he's had his beliefs, and, … you know, that I'm coming from the fact that I'm an Army captain, served so much time in the Army already, and they accepted it, you know, but that's [typical]. I mean, I'll help him with his, you know, because he helped me with mine. Anything I needed, you know, he'd always help me, in a moment's notice, drop of a hat-type thing, but, let's see, is there anything else about my military time that's worth noting? Oh, well, you've got questions, so, why don't you ask some questions?

JS: After the war, what kind of jobs did you hold? Did you go back to school? Did you take advantage of the GI Bill?

JM: No, on the GI Bill; yes, I went back to school, couldn't take advantage of the GI Bill, because I was living at home. That was a no-no. You couldn't live at home [and] take advantage of the GI Bill. Even though I was paying rent here, like I would at any apartment, because it was my home address, I couldn't do it, [which] I thought was crazy, but be that as it may. I'd saved up enough while I was in the service that I was able to finish up college. When I came back, the first thing I did was, what? relax. I went on unemployment and, when I went in there, they said, "Well, let's see what your training is valuable for." Now, while I was in Europe, in the Army in Europe, my first year there, they sent me to a school, the SHAPE [Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe] School, down in Oberammergau [in Germany], run by NATO. … There, I became a nuclear weapons employment expert, which means that if we're sitting here and the enemy's coming from there, I could've, at that time, told you what were the appropriate missiles or weapons, nuclear weapons, to use against them and why, why the one was better than another. That was my training while I was there. That's part of the Chemical Corps; nuclear weapons fall under the Chemical Corps. You know, nuclear weapons, bugs, gas, napalm, all the bad stuff, that's my branch of the service. … So, I'm sorry, I lost my train of thought; what was I talking about?

JS: Jobs after the war.

JM: Oh, jobs after. So, they asked me at the unemployment office, "Well, what experience do you have?" "Well, let's see, prior to going into the service, I was a student, I was a bartender. Prior to being a student, I worked in New York City at my father's place, or … while I was a student, at my father's place, and I ran a printing press." I used to make great money there, because my father was, you know, co-owner in the place and I could go over there and he'd have jobs set up for me to run over Christmas or Thanksgiving holidays. … I'd work for ten, twelve hours straight, you know, printing these jobs up for him and I'd make some nice pocket money

for school. "In the service, well, there was nuclear weapons. … I was the in-country expert on the use of tear gas, when I was over there. What else? That's it. These are my training [schools] that I've had," and so, nothing that I learned in the Army was good for anything in civilian life. So, they sent me around to all these printing places, to see, you know, about getting a job. Basically, at that point in time, I wasn't interested in a job. I was just out of the service, I was relaxing, getting ready to go back to school, because I went down to St. Peter's, which is where I'd been going, I said, "I'd like to go back to school." St. Peter's, the only thing they said is, "Before we let you back in school, you have to take one summer semester, anything you want, but one summer semester, just to prove to yourself and to us that you really want to go back to school." I did. It was the only thing I did during this period of time, and it was a class on Greek tragedies. … I don't even remember which one we studied, but we studied only one. We studied it in depth and I enjoyed it. I really did. Hey, I was back at school, something nice. I don't mind studying and this guy had a good teaching manner. I did very well. I got an "A" in the course. So, they were, [St. Peter's], school was ready for me to go back to school. … They asked me, "What did I want to study?" and I said, "Whatever I could graduate fastest in." Well, he looked at my record, he says, "Well, chemistry has changed so much, you'd have to start from the beginning. Physics, you'd have to start from the beginning. Math, you've got so much math here, we could do that in two years." I said, "I'm a math major." It was as simple as that. I wanted the paper to get a job, a good job. So, they set me up with a schedule and, the first year, I had one particular course that I remember, a computer course, FORTRAN, and I hadn't been in the course a week and I said, "I love this course." After I'd been there two weeks, I said, "I know what I want to do." I talked to the instructor of the course, who also happened to be the head of the department, and I said, "You know, what can we do?" and he said, "Well, we don't have a major that's computer [programming], but you can get it as a minor." At that time, they didn't have a major. Now, they have a major like that, and he says, "But, you can get that as a minor to a math," and I says, "Well, I'm a math major." So, I went back into … my counselor and … I said, "This is what I want to do," and he says, "You can't do that in two years." I says, "That's what I want to do," and he says, "Well, we'll set it up so that you can … get as close as you can in two years." Basically, the last year, I had to take a tutorial in one of my courses, because one of the courses was offered every two years and the year it was offered, I didn't have the prerequisites for it and I'd have to spend another year in school just to get that one course. So, they offered it to me as a tutorial and the guy who was my mentor on that was one of my math teachers and he said, "I want you to set up a compiler, computer compiler, that will handle differential equations." I said, "Okay." He says, "Read these two articles, come back in a week." I read them. He says, "Did you understand them?" We talked a little bit about them; I said, "Yes." He says, "Well, unless you're having problems or want to talk about something, I'll see you at the end of the semester. Go." So, I wrote a compiler for it that took differential equations and solved them. What I didn't realize was that he meant ordinary differential equations. So, when I came in at the end and showed him what I had created, he said, "That's more than what I asked for. I just meant ordinary differential equations." I had partial differential equations and I had, what's the other one? the sine and cosine type, all of them, handled by this compiler. He says, "You know why … you were given this project?" I said, "No." He says, "Because when I taught you differential equations, you didn't understand it and I knew you didn't understand it, but, to make a compiler, you would have had to teach yourself differential equations." I says, "I know differential equations forwards and backwards now." He says, "You sure do," and gave me an "A" for it. … In fact, I had one guy, when I was going out looking for a job, I came in and

I told him what I'd been doing, where I was. He says, "Are you really looking for a job or do you just need the signature?" and I says, "Actually, I just need the signature." He signed it, and he says, "If you want to, I'll show you around the place, just so you can see it." I said, "Yes, sure." He took me around, showed me around the place, but he knew I wasn't looking for a job, that I was just getting the paper signed, so [that] I could get the money, so that I could continue getting ready to go back to school. I went back to school and I started working. Do you remember; … either of you from this area?

SI: No.

JS: I am from South Jersey.

JM: South Jersey. Well, there used to be a store at the corner of Route 4 and Route 17 called Alexander's Department Store. Now, there was a big hubbub when they first opened, because they had this big mural on the side of the building, gigantic mural, beautiful. Well, it was modern, this big furor about the fact [that], "This mural, it's ugly," it's all of this kind of stuff. Well, when Alexander's got torn down, don't you know, there was a big furor, "We've got to save that mural. We've got to save that [mural]." [laughter] I worked at Alexander's, as a night floor manager, and I even keep in contact with a lot of the people I met from there, but, no, that's basically it, as far as school goes. I mean, … school went well for me, again, … maybe because I was older. See, when I first went to St. Peter's, you had to wear a jacket and tie to class and it was all-male, okay, and almost everybody was in ROTC. So, even me, I was in the ROTC Band. … I couldn't play an instrument worth beans, but, … because my father was a printer, they wanted me in the band, because I could print out, you know, tickets for them and all this other [stuff]; … my father could, okay. … Some guys'd come to class, a jacket, a tie, no shirt, no T-shirt, cut-offs. That was all legit. As long as you had the jacket and tie, that's all that was required. So, the first day back, when I went back, I came in and I was wearing a sports jacket and tie and a white shirt, you know. I went down to the cafeteria, I sat down and I look around; I'm the only one with a jacket and tie. Everybody else is in jeans and polo shirts and whatnot, and I'm looking, I'm saying, "Boy, that guy's hair is awfully long," and he got up and I says, "From the back, those hips look like a girl's." … She turned around and it was [a girl] and I didn't realize what the school had become, coed, while I was gone, [laughter] but my style of learning, my style of commitment to scholastics, was entirely different the second time. I mean, [in] one of my classes, the teacher, to help the other kids, would give, "Oh, very good, here's a prize," and would actually give prizes away. I got straight "As" in that class and he separated me out from the other kids, because I was older, and my prize, at the end of the year, was a book, … a math book. He says, "Here's something I think you might appreciate." Actually, it was very good, but the other kids were getting, you know, Snickers and, you know, these kinds of things, keep the little kiddies happy, or another class, economics class; here's a good one. [I] went to economics class and the teacher says, "Everybody in this classroom … [who] are not economics majors, I normally do not give anything better than a 'C' to a non-economics major." That got me a little riled. There's no way I'm getting a "C" or lower in this class. After about three or four days, I noticed his teaching style. He'd tell us to read page one through twelve and he'd teach pages one through fifteen. The next time, he'd say, "Read pages thirteen through thirty," and you read that and he'd teach it to thirty-three. He'd always go a few pages beyond. Well, this is simple. He says, "Read this," so, I'd read that, and then, I'd read, you know, five pages, six pages

beyond it. Well, he wrote the book, so, he knows what's in it, and he's teaching right along with the book. … He comes to this point and he says, "Well, what's next? What do you think happens in this case?" Well, I know, I already read the next few pages, and so, one time, I'd say, "Oh, well, what about this? Would this happen?" and he [said], "Oh, yes, very good, very good, Jerry." The next time, we'd get this far, he'd get this far in the discussion, … I raise my hand. He'd say, "Yes?" [I would say], "What about this situation?" Well, that situation was the next one on the next page, or something like this. [He would say], "Oh, that's a very good question." Well, my midterm, I got every answer wrong, every answer wrong on my midterm; I got an A-minus. Now, it turns out that the first question I got wrong mathematically. I made a mathematics error, but I got all the rest of them correct, but … each one was based on the previous answer. So, basically, I got every answer wrong, but I got an A-minus because he said, "It was obvious what happened. You know, you [made a] minor mistake here, but everything else was perfect." He says, "You got an A-minus." So, I got an "A" in the class, just a matter of, shall we say, brownnosing to the proper extent, [laughter] and that's what it was. I knew what he wanted, so, I just gave it to him.

SI: Were there a lot of Vietnam veterans returning to the school then?

JM: Not to St. Peter's, not to St. Peter's. I didn't notice that many. I noticed everybody there was basically younger than I was, and, I mean, I spent quite a number of years in the service, so, there may have been younger ones, but I didn't know them. There was no more ROTC Program there. I went looking for it and they said, "What?" I says, "Well, where's the ROTC Band?" [They said], "Oh, we don't have an ROTC band. We have a band, but no longer an ROTC band." … I was once asked by the band if I wanted to join the band and I said, "Well, I was part of the ROTC Band, when you had an ROTC band here. I wonder if that qualifies me for being part of this band." Oh, when you were part of the ROTC Band, it was treated more like a fraternity. You actually had hazing and, one night, we were taken out and, you know, we had to be dressed in women's clothes and all of this kind of stuff. We're taken down to the Shore and we were fed eyeballs, which turned out to be peeled grapes, and things like that, you know, all the stupid stuff you're made to do in college, but, hey, I did all of that when I was real young, before I got in the service, but, … when I went back, all of those programs were gone. They used to have a fantastic drill team, unbelievable drill team at St. Peter's. The only thing they've still got is [the] basketball team and it's not very good. They win a game here and there. …

JS: How did you meet your wife? Did you go to college with her?

JM: That's interesting. Okay, my wife, as I said earlier, first six years of her life were in the Belgian Congo. Then, she came over here; they went back to Michigan, there. Then, they came to New Jersey and she lived in the next town over, Midland Park. … Her father was working in New York. Then, they moved to Ridgewood, right near the high school. She went there one year, I think, or two years, whatever it was, went to high school, junior high school, whatever it was, and then, the father, as I mentioned earlier, got stationed in Hawaii, got a church in Hawaii. … They went off there and my wife went to school and finished up high school there, but we had a mutual friend. … One day, while she was going to school here, I saw her on the stair railing, two flights up, as I was introduced to her, and I said, "Hi," she said, "Hi," to me and that was it. When I got back from the service, she is now living in Leonia and she was babysitting for her

friend in Allendale … and I was back from the service, unattached. … Our mutual friend was recently unattached at that point. So, you know, … I said, "Well, you want to go out, just to go out?" you know, and, yes, there was a play going on right up in that area, so, we went. I went up, picked her up and we went out, dinner and the play, and (Carol Jean?) was babysitting and I met her. … We got reintroduced, if you will, there, and this mutual friend, I had no interest in getting … any further with her, but I noticed Carol Jean and I sort of said, "Well, you know…" and Beth was telling me, "Hey, Carol Jean hasn't gone out in awhile. She's not got anybody." I said, "Well…" So, I gave her a call and we started going out. She was living in Leonia. She was working for the Leonia Board of Ed. She was a substitute caller. She made all the arrangements for all the substitutes to come in. When a teacher was out, she'd call in the substitutes and have them come in. So, we met and started dating that way, while I was still going to school, actually, … yes, while I was still going to school, and that's how we hooked up.

JS: You mentioned you had a daughter as well.

JM: Yes. (Diana Lynn?), she was born about, let's see, thirteen months after we got married and, in fact, May of '76. … I always remember '76, that was the anniversary of the [founding of the United States], 1776, and, also, it helps … remind me of when my anniversary is, but she was born on the 16th of May and we were still living in Leonia. We actually took over [my mother's home]. I moved in with her at her apartment and we … stayed there for the first couple of years, but Leonia's school system isn't as good as I would have liked for her. It's not bad, but it isn't as good as I would have liked, and I knew this one here [in Ridgewood]. My mother was living here and I knew my mother couldn't keep up this house as well as she wanted to, so, what I did is, I bought it from her. I mean, she made me a good deal and, you know, she was living here. In fact, I started this [finished attic], … this area, after I bought it, but, unfortunately, my mother passed away before I finished it and I just stopped, and I finished it, you know, just before I retired. I finished this upstairs and a little bit of down[stairs], started downstairs, and so, this got to be my daughter's area. This is supposed to be a master bedroom, actually, and there's two other bedrooms over there, with the two-piece bathroom over there, but she went through the Ridgewood School System, learned, very early, how to study and did a beautiful job of it. I mean, she knows how to teach how to study, which is more important than even teaching a subject, it's teaching how to study, and she has got that in spades. She got that early on, maybe because I sat down with her, in the early parts, and would work on her homework with her, to show her how to do it, and taught her different techniques, tricks, on how to [study], but she did quite well on that. … So, as a senior, we bought her some skis, because she liked to ski, and I says, "Well, you know, just [be careful];" … no, as junior, we bought her the skis. … We're starting to make out the places, the applications for colleges. … You know, I said, "Where do you want to go? Up to Vermont or something, where you can do a lot of skiing?" and she says, "I want to go somewhere where it's warm," and I go, "We just bought you new skis." [She said], "I want to go somewhere where it's warm." So, she's picking out Florida, Florida State, … well, UNC, you know, she [applied to], and we're going all over, you know, University of Missouri, you know, all over the [country]. These are the schools. I'm saying, "That's a lot of schools you're asking about." Well, we filled out about thirteen applications, but one school, when we go visit my brother, he lives in Austin, Texas, and his wife went to Southwest Texas State University [now Texas State University-San Marcos], and so, during one of our visits, with our daughter along, we went down there. During the summertime, they have this lake that's a spring-

fed lake … and off of the lake comes this river, and it's a very slow-moving, gentle river and, during the summertime, the VFW or the American Legion has a place at the head of the river where they rent out these big inner tubes and you rent the inner tube for the day. You hop in the water and you lay on the inner tube, and a lot of the students that are there in the summertime, or even in early spring or late fall, no, early fall, late spring, are there with their books, floating down the river. When you reach the end, the convenient end, you get out, you take your thing with you and climb up and there's a bus there. … Up on top, you know, they have the thing, a rack for the things. You climb on and it's free, comes back to the beginning and you go down the lake, river, again. My daughter saw this, saw the school, very nice school, and my sister-in-law says, "Not only that, but there's no application fee. It's zero." I said, "Well, then, [that] makes it easy to apply. I mean, you don't have to put any money with it." So, we applied there and she decided, finally, to go there, which wasn't [a problem]. We didn't mind, because my brother lives only forty-five minutes away, so, if she had a problem, she had somebody to go to, and my wife always used to kid her, "Well, if you have a problem, you can go to Greg," and she'd say, "How do you mean that?" "Eh, well, if you've got a mental problem, just go up to him. He's a psychiatrist. He'll take care of you." "Oh, Mom," [laughter] you know, all of these kinds of things, but, no, he and his wife, you know, she'd [his daughter] go up for a weekend, sometimes, or what-have-you. Now, what my daughter didn't realize was, Southwest Texas State University, excellent teaching school, but, like some schools, the people, even though they may live there during the week, on the weekends, disappear. They all go back home, because most of them are from Texas, and they can go home for the weekend. So, my daughter, the first year, says, "Oh, this is horrible," but, you know, we got her hooked up with my brother and, you know, my brother'd come down, or his wife'd come down, or she'd go up to them. So, it worked out pretty well in that regard and she graduated from there and was thinking about going for her master's because she couldn't find a job, and then, she found a job teaching in a little town called Prairie Lea. Prairie Lea is an agricultural community and I would say it's at least fifty percent below the poverty level, or over fifty percent, actually, below the poverty level. The town itself is four blocks long and two-and-a-half blocks wide. They've got a bakery that's opened on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, they've got a one-engine fire department and a school system. Why is the school system there? Because all the surrounding towns are about the same and this was a central location that they could put up a school. So, … all the surrounding towns use this one school system. They're all pretty much below the poverty level. So, my daughter was hired to be a Head Start teacher. I don't know if you're familiar with [the] Head Start Program at all, but that's a program for three and four-year-olds who are in poverty areas. … It's funded by the Federal Government, but they have very strict rules. [Editor's Note: Head Start, a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, now run through the Department of Health and Human Services, provides multifaceted support for low-income families with young children.] If it's part of a school system, like this one was, then, they have to, the school system has to, provide a teacher that's qualified for that level. Now, my daughter's major was early childhood development and elementary education. Early childhood development was required for the Head Start Program. So, here she is, perfect for what they need. Now, most of these Head Starts that are done in inner cities are difficult at best, because the kids coming in are usually dirty, foul-mouthed, little creatures, because that's the environment they come from, but, in Prairie Lea, Texas, these are people coming off the farm. Their clothes may be tattered, but they're always clean and they're always polite, or, for the most part, polite, little kids, three and four years old. So, my daughter said, "This is fantastic. I'm the licensed teacher," and she had two permanent

aides. [The] school system loved her. She did a fantastic job with them. I mean, I helped her, too. I made up some certificates to use with the kids, graduation certificates. I had their picture on it and everything and, oh, this was a big hit, you know. They've got their own graduation certificate and all of this, but … the amount of money they were paying down there was twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three thousand. Now, cost of living is a lot cheaper down there, but, still, my daughter says, you know, "This is not going to do it." So, up here, the amount they get paid is almost double; not starting salary. Starting salary is around thirty-eight, thirty-nine thousand for a teacher. She says, "Oh, that's much better." So, she came up here and started off with what she needed to do up here and got the job in Clifton, Clifton, New Jersey, where she's a resource teacher in Public School Number Eleven. Yes, that takes care of that, but she was married for a short time. They broke up; then, she moved back in here.

SI: Do you have any other questions about Vietnam?

JS: Did you notice any detrimental effects to anybody that was exposed to Agent Orange or any long-term effects from the war that you or your friends suffered?

JM: Yes, one of the men that was in the 86th Chemical Detachment; actually was in it before I was. Now, I walk, when I'm outside the house, … with a cane, I have diabetes, both of which are associated with Agent Orange. This other guy, he's a lot worse off than I am and he's younger than I am, but he worked a lot more with Agent Orange than I did. I did work with it. As part of the 86th Chemical Detachment, Agent Orange was in our arsenal. Shortly after I got there, we had to send it all back, but, while it was there, I worked with it and, oh, I've got another good story to tell you. [laughter] Oh, this one, this is humorous in all effect. It happened in Da Nang. I'm chemical officer, or chemical detachment commander. Chemical officer isn't there, or is there, but we get a call in from the munitions [depot], saying, "We've got some munitions smoking down here. Can someone help us? It's a fifty-five-gallon drum and it's smoking. We've got the fire department ready to pour … water on it, but we're not sure what we should do." I said, "Wait, I'll be there as soon as I can," and off I shoot down to the munitions, and they're right. They've got these two fifty-five-gallon drums. It's liquid smoke. It's used in smoke machines, but it had been there; I wouldn't be surprised if it hadn't been there since the French were there. … These were old ones. It was primarily a World War II munition. What it would be used for is, we had machines and we'd pour this stuff into the machines and it [would] create a fog, you know, that you couldn't see through and, basically, it's water-activated. [laughter] So, we told the fire engines, "Go, get out of here, we don't want to see that water. [laughter] That'd put up a cloud." So, we … then had to decide what we're going to do. They were leaking, they were rusted through. So, we said, "Okay, we've got to get a truck," and we got a truck, and we had it loaded up onto the truck, got a forklift to load it up, two fifty-five-gallon drums. We've got to drive all the way through the city and, when you drive a truck or a jeep, the kids and everybody are jumping on and everything else. We've got to do something to stop this, especially with this stuff, because, … in concentrated form, it could burn you, it could foul up your lungs, it could do anything. Now, there wasn't much … smoke coming out, but we had to get it through the city, and how to do that? because you're creeping along, you know, I mean, real slow, and kids'd be jumping on. So, we got some big signboard and we said, in Vietnamese and in English, "North Vietnamese Poison Gas. Stay away," and then, in Vietnamese, we had the Vietnamese write that out, and we put one big sign on one side and one

big sign on the other, and then, we stationed a guy up on top of the truck with his gas mask on, and then, we [moved out], jeep in front, jeep in the back, and we drove through the city. … You know what? No one jumped on the truck and everybody stayed back. It was phenomenal and we had to drive all the way through, because there was a disposal area way down at the south end of Da Nang and, basically, what it was was a big sandpit, if you will. So, we got there, we dumped [it]. We got there, we says, "Well, before we dump this and get ready to do anything, we have to check. This is going to put out a lot of smoke." So, we called up to the airport and said, "We need a weather update," … and we explained what we were going to do, "and, if it's going northward, if the wind's going northward, it's going to go right into the airport and you're going to close down the airport." So, they said, "Okay, well, hold on," and they checked with all their things. "All right, now, [go ahead]," and I says, "Well, this is what we're going to do. We're going to destroy these drums and the liquid's going to pour out and it's going to create this fog of smoke. It's nothing to worry about. Put it out to everybody that it's nothing to worry about," and he says, "The winds are from the north and they're scheduled to continue from the north into the evening." I says, "Great. That means it's going to blow away from you." "Yes." Okay, so, we got the … drums off the truck, put them into the sandpit. My sergeant and I have our M-16s and we're standing on the side, saying, "Well, you ready? All right." Before we do it, I call to the airport one more time, to the control tower, "We're going to do this now, just to let you know." "Okay," and we, you know, empty our clips into the drums, to punch holes. So, they drain out and it drains out. In the bottom of the sandpit was water. So, when it hit the water, it turned into this smoke. Now, we were far enough away so that it wasn't concentrated when it hit us, but it blacked out the area and it's blowing to the south. Well, we say, "We've got to stay around at least long enough to make sure that these drums are really empty, because we've got to, you know, twist them a couple of times and whatnot." After about twenty minutes, all of a sudden, "Hey, the smoke's no longer drifting in this direction. What direction is it going in?" and the Sergeant says, "Straight for the airport." I says, "That's what I figured." Well, don't you know that, for the rest of that day, the Da Nang Airport was closed, [laughter] and Da Nang Airport was one of the airports where commercial flights used to come in and out of, flying our troops from the States. So, they had to be diverted to the other airports, like Saigon and whatnot. Hey, I can't do anything about it. That's the way it went, you know. … Later on, we had to, you know, empty the drums, turn them, so that they'd really be empty, and then, we put them in the waste metal stack, to be disposed of as waste metal, because, then, they were truly no good, but that was another little story that happened over there. There were always these little incidents. Everybody [would] have these little incidents, and Da Nang was actually a very pretty city. I mean, they had a beach there that was out of sight, phenomenal beach. Oh, that was our R&R beach. Oh, we used to go down there to the beach, you know, put on our swim trunks and go swimming, beautiful sand, and, even today, it's a resort area in Vietnam. … I even have a plaque that was made over there, in Da Nang. It's made from the only marble that exists in South Vietnam, this Marble Mountain and it's marble, but … I had a name plaque for my desk in Vietnam made, my name and my captain's [rank] and my Chemical Corps [designation] and all of this, and they made it up very nice for me over there. I managed to come home with a few souvenirs, like I got a 105 shell … engraved with my name on it. … It's been cut so that the shell top comes off, but where the firing pin was in the center is a hole and it's a giant ashtray. You know, you can keep filling it, filling it, open it and pour it out, get rid of it. I've got it downstairs. It's more or less a memento now, but it was given to me by the Vietnamese, and I've got a plaque on the wall downstairs that I got from the Vietnamese. I used to go out with them

sometimes. We used to go out to restaurants. If they were along, I knew I was safe, and we'd go out to these French Vietnamese restaurants and they'd laugh at me as I was trying to eat with chopsticks, oh, yes. "What is that?" "It's eel soup." [Mr. Maksymowicz replies, feigning enjoyment], "Oh, tastes good, tastes good." Actually, the eel soup was delicious, unbelievable.

SI: It sounds like you had a high opinion of the Vietnamese you worked with.

JM: Some of them, some of them. I mean, they had divided loyalties. That's the problem, a lot of them [did]. I mean, you could see it. I mean, to the regime that was in power, well, they were in power, so, they had a loyalty to that, but, for the most part, they didn't care that much for the regime. Also, their officers, not their officers, but … the different officials at levels of government, were, for the most part, corrupt, I mean really corrupt. I mean, you want to get papers for a marriage? You could spend six months fighting it through or you go up to the official and pull out a couple of hundred bucks and leave it on the table and, suddenly, it went through like a greased pig.

JS: Wow.

JM: … Everything was done with [bribes]. You know, that was the [way], and that, frankly, was one of the things that the North Vietnamese put an end to. That stuff doesn't go on anymore over there. … I think it was the best thing they did, the North Vietnamese did, was get rid of all that corruption, because it was there. … Now, of course, things have opened up now between them and us and they have tours going over there. … I know some ex-GIs have gone over there to see where they served and things like that, and, of course, you go on to the Internet, you can see all the maps, right down in different areas, see what was there, what's there now, if you can find where that place was or that place was. Although, like, for me, I belong to the First of the Fifth, or Fifth Infantry Division, organization, and I also belong, as I said, to the American Legion, and, you know, they both keep me up-to-date on things also. My OCS company, … one of the guys in it has been keeping alive our contact with each other and [we] have reunions every few years, and that's nice. I mean, we were a particularly, shall we say, unusual group of guys. Our motto at OCS, and the higher-ups did not like this, was, "We're no damn good." We had too many sergeants at the beginning telling us we were no damn good, so, we said, "All right, let's make that our motto," because every company had its own motto and that was our motto. … They tried to get us to change it a couple of times, because they felt it was inappropriate, but we were the first OCS company where all of our … candidates made it through the proficiency tests. I know that because I've got the article and I was the last guy on the mile run to make it across the finish line, seven minutes and fifty-six seconds; … the maximum time allotted for that, eight minutes. So, I just made it. The last lap, my tac [tactical] officer ran next to me, behind me, in front of me, cursing me, yelling, screaming, telling me, "Keep up, don't slow down, keep going." He ran with me backwards part of the time, just so [that] I'd make it across the finish line, but it made it to the local camp newspaper that our group of candidates, what was left of us, at that time, because, now, it's almost at the end, we were the first group to all make it through that. Usually, they have to give a retest for the few people that don't and, if they don't make it through the retest, they're out. Well, we all made it. I'm surprised I made it, I really am, because … running is not my forte. The rest of it was fine. I could throw a [grenade]. In fact, they were remarking [on how] I could hit the grenade right on target. I got high scores on that, but forget

the running. You know, if someone was chasing me, forget it, I'm out of it, boy. I can't run. … Is there anything else?

SI: You were there from 1969 to 1972. How did your view of the war change during that time, or did it change at all?

JM: No, it honestly didn't change. I think we could have won the war. We could have won it earlier if we approached it differently. The thing was that the approach taken at the beginning seemed to work, and so, they continued it, to the point where it stopped working and they didn't adjust for it, and that I blame on the leadership … not adjusting to the war as it was being fought. I was up on McNamara's Line; oh, I didn't mention that. Quang Tri [a province in Northern South Vietnam] also held the bunker that was McNamara's Line's bunker, and, at night, when there was nothing to do, we would, often times, go into McNamara's bunker and just listen, because all they were were listening devices placed along the DMZ and routes from North Vietnam in. … Often times, they looked like little trees, about this high, but were really microphones and would last for two weeks, and then, they'd have to drop more. I mean, they spent how much money out there on these? but I remember, one night, being in there, another story, and here we are and we hear voices. … "Where? Where is that coming from?" you know. "That one, the code number's over here." "Oh, that's where they are," and they stopped right near this artificial tree, not too far away, anyway, and they're sitting, taking a break, smoke break, what-have-you. One guy comes walking over, to take a piss, pees right on the tree. We can hear … it hitting the tree. [laughter] We're laughing, … and then, he goes back and you can hear them saying, "All right, let's get going, guys," and all this kind of stuff, only in Vietnamese. … They start moving and he says, "Oh, they're just taking off from here." He calls up to artillery. He says, "They'll be at this point in this time," and the artillery, "Boom." That's what the line was for, to catch them without using people, just with knowing where they were, hit them and blow them up. I only lost one man while I was there, and he had actually got lost just before I got there. … He was up in the DMZ, along with some Rangers, to do some demolition of some bunkers that had been found up in the DMZ and he was there to put CS [military tear gas] into them, and one of the Rangers had gotten hit with fire and it hit his blasting caps. … He had, what do you call it? C-4 on him and he blew apart, naturally, but a piece of shrapnel went right through the Sergeant's heart. So, that was the only one that died and, actually, he died before I got there, but I had to write the letter and things like that, only because I was still there and the Captain had just left. So, that was mine to take care of. Now, that was hard to do, that really was hard to do. I mean, first, to talk about somebody that you really didn't know was hard to do. I will say the Captain did leave me a bunch of notes for it, so, I was able to use those and incorporate those into the letter, but it took me about two or three days to put the letter together and write it up and send it off. That, I didn't relish at all. That's all I got.

SI: You mentioned that, when you were at Quang Tri, you would do the "sniffer" flights in the morning and at night, but, then, in the middle, you would just stay in the building. What would you do each day?

JM: Oh, well, usually, well, go out and make sure that the fougasse and flame mines were being put in, also, mix up, or help mix up, new batches of napalm, constantly having to go to briefings during the day, what's happening, plans, you know. I'd have to put my two cents in, especially if

I was representing the chemical officer, because he was away, or something like that, sometimes, or just because I was representing the detachment, things like that. There was always something to do; I mean, it really was never being just at the office. You know, there was always something to do. You could keep yourself as busy as you wanted to. I mean, there was also, when I was first there, a lot of time had to be spent on learning the controls on the; what do you call it?

SI: Helicopter?

JM: Helicopter. I had to learn how to fly that thing, because they give you two pilots, but the seats had these little switches on the bottom corners, red switches, two of them, and, if one guy got killed, you could actually pull the switches and the back of his seat fell backwards, and then, you can hop into his lap and take over the controls.

JS: Wow

JM: And you were taught, "That's what you've got to do. If he's dead, … he's not going to mind if you sit on his lap. Get in there and start grabbing the controls and doing something, because if that thing crashes, [you are dead]." What had happened [was], sometime before I got there, a fixed-wing aircraft had received fire. The pilot had gotten killed and the observer onboard didn't know how to fly, crashed and got killed. They lost a couple of choppers with, you know, pilots getting killed and the crew members are not in a position [to take over], but the guy sitting in the back seat there is often in a position. If he's a regular flier, they wanted him to know how to handle it, so that he could at least crash, safely, the helicopter and, in fact, we were taught how to fly it, but we really weren't taught how to land it, because they wouldn't let us land it. That's the most sensitive part, coming down and actually landing that thing, because, if you hit too hard, they bend [the landing tracks]. They're designed to be, like, a spring, except they would bend outward. So, that was a problem, … and, to be honest, I flew from Quang Tri all the way to Da Nang once. We were on, what do you call it? a mail run, if you will, and I was the only passenger onboard. So, the one pilot got in back and I got up in front. He says, "You're going to fly us down there." "Okay," and I'll tell you, half the time, the chopper was flying sideways. He says, "Hey, you want to fly sideways, go fly sideways." He says, "It flies better if you go straight," and, you know, refining how to make sure it flew straight and things like that. Now, I'd never fly a "sniffer" mission, because I didn't have the controls, I didn't have the reflexes for it and I hadn't been trained for it. You know, you're [operating] two different pedals and two hands, one doing this and the other one doing this, and with a little knob on each, well, no, this one didn't have a knob, this one had a knob, that you had to twist. [Mr. Maksymowicz makes a distressed noise.] Chew gum and pat your head at the same time, you know; that's not the easiest thing to do. So, that's [it]. No, there was a lot of training in that, even flying in loaches, which were the smaller [helicopters]. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

JM: Put it on and I'll [answer].

SI: Okay.

JM: Drugs in the military, I first encountered it in Germany, actually.

SI: Okay.

JM: And, there, some of the men that were in the unit I commanded were caught with drugs and, in fact, my safe, since I had a fairly decent-sized safe, became a storage repository in Kaiserslautern, [Germany], for the drugs.

Diana Maksymowicz: Very nice, Dad. …

JM: [laughter] Yes, and I would also have to appear in court, military court, on these court cases. We had a couple of people, I know, in the service, I remember two of them in particular, who were pro-marijuana, anyway, and were adamant about it being safer than cigarettes, you know, and all of this other kind of stuff. … You know, they'd always say, "Well, you smoke cigarettes, why can't I smoke my marijuana?" I'd say, "Well, smoking cigarettes may be bad for you, but it's legal," [laughter] and that was always [my line], you know, "If it isn't legal…" … They ended up passing me a lot of the stuff for storage in my safe, which meant a whole lot of signatures and a lot of chain of custody documents. … Then, when I went to Vietnam, [there were] a couple of attempted murder cases, where I was involved as a witness, where I actually [was asked], you know, "Could he have killed so-and-so using this CS grenade that he threw into the sergeant's thing?" and I'd go and I'd look at the thing that he's living in. … I'd come back and I'd tell the prosecutor, "No way can that be considered attempted murder. CS grenade's going to make him cry, but its lethal potential is less than salt. [laughter] You can die faster off of salt than you can off of the CS, so, hmm? and the amount of air in that place," because they [the prosecution] were saying, "Well, what about the air and using up all the air in it?" I'd say, "Yes, it's going to use up the air, but you realize that it's got open windows, with no way of closing them, and an open doorway, with a door there, but, you know, so much air is getting in and around it," I says, "no." So, I used to appear mainly for the prosecution, although the defense liked most of my testimony, because I'd be honest and truthful about it. While I was in Germany, I served as Article 32 [similar to a grand jury proceeding] officer, sometimes, and as a summary court [officer], on a couple of cases, … and I served on court-martials, and so, you know, I've seen the full [range]. I've also served, back when I was in Germany, as trial and defense counsel. Now, sometime while we were in Vietnam, they changed the rules so that defense counsel had to be a lawyer, JAG officer, and then, sometime after that, they changed [it to that] the trial counsel had to be a JAG officer. So, you know, I got off of that duty, but [it] used to be, in the early days, hey, that was an expected item of [officer's duty], you know, trial counsel, defense counsel. Oh, that's always fun, because these guys'd [say], "Well, is he guilty?" "Well, he's a…" and defense counsel'd always say; oh, I'm thinking of one particular. … I can't mention who it is, because of everything, but this guy kicked a German guy and sent him to the hospital. Well, here I am, … not me, but the defense counsel, I was trial counsel at that time, defense counselors say, to the witness, "Well, you saw him kick the guy?" "Yes." "Well, what did you see exactly?" "I saw him lift his foot, I saw him drop it down." "Did you see his foot hit him?" "No, I didn't see his foot hit him, because that was in the shade or in the dark." "So, you really didn't see him kick him?" So, you know, I had to come back with, "Was he injured before this all started? Was he injured after the guy was there?" "Yes." "And you saw this guy's foot

coming up and down and not stopping before it hit him?" "No, no, I didn't see it stop." "Okay," you know, just to, you know, play this little game of what it was doing and all of this kind of stuff, but the rest of it was all [worrisome]. I wish a lawyer took care of it, because I didn't want to be burdened with that. It was something that I'd rather not think about, somebody being guilty of a crime. I mean, … I'm sure there was a lot of crime going on, everything from stealing to, you know, pot or whatever, but, for the most part, in Germany, I saw some of it. Vietnam, there was more of it, believe it or not, but it was less obvious. A good example, speed; if you want speed, you can go down to your local, what do you call it? your local dealer and get it off of him. In Vietnam, you could walk into a drugstore and say, "Gim'me the (Weightoff?)," you know, a little glass jar, about this big, this thick, this wide, and liquid speed. Hey, you want it? Hey, you don't need a prescription. What's a prescription? The only time you need a prescription is when somebody's, you know, asking for a particular compounding of several different meds, and then, a doctor'll give a prescription and you give it to the pharmacist and he'll put it up, but, if you know what you want, just walk in and ask for it. They'll give it to you. Well, our troops could walk into a pharmacy and ask for it, and they'd get it, too, doesn't matter what it is. So, you know, our troops [were vulnerable]. I mean, the place I did see it, the one place I did see it, [was], before you could leave Vietnam, everybody, officer, enlisted, they didn't care what, you went down to, what would you call it? a final out processing facility and, basically, it was a jail, … a nice jail, but it was a jail. You couldn't leave, couldn't get out in any way, shape or form, and, basically, everything that you had was taken away from you and it was put in storage for you, to take back home or what-have-you, but you didn't have it. … For three days and three nights, you were there, you ate there, everything, because, in three days, three nights, if you were hooked on anything, it would show up. … They had drug testing there, too, although, you know, for us and the officers, for the most part, they didn't test us unless we showed signs. The enlisted, a lot of them got tested and the ones that were hooked, they'd, you know, clean them up. They'd take them out and clean them up before they sent him home, which is one thing I think was a good idea, don't just get rid of them, don't just give them a bad conduct discharge or something like that. You put him in a position where he had all this stuff. Clean him up and, you know, maybe make a note on his records or whatnot, but send him home [clean]. So, that's, for the most part, what they did there. They cleaned them up, and then, sent them home. Some of them required, you know, real hospitalization, and they'd do that, too, but, basically, those guys'd come home.

SI: Do you think the drug problem got worse over the three years you were in Vietnam?

JM: Got more available, but only because we started drawing down, and so, the guys that were selling were losing their market, and so, they were being more aggressive [in] selling. You've got to remember economics and what [role] it played over there. I was an officer in Quang Tri. I lived in what was called a hooch, four officers in this small, little building, plywood building, no insulation. … That was divided in half, and then, divided, that those halves were divided, but not totally divided, and you had two guys on one side, two guys on the other side, with a divider between you, the two guys. So, it gives you a little bit of privacy. You had to put a light bulb on in your locker, leave it, you know, screwed into the fixture in the bottom of your locker and leave it on, because, otherwise, the mildew would start forming on your uniforms. So, you left that on, just to keep your uniforms from getting mildewed, and closed. … I had a woman who took care of my stuff. She was hired through the Army from the local population. When I went

down to get her, I was politely asked if I wanted a good worker or one that was good to be with. In my case, I only wanted a good worker and I told them that. What I got was a smallish, relatively, you know, nicely proportioned woman who was ugly as sin, [laughter] very polite, and she got paid … ten dollars a month.

JS: Wow.

JM: And she was a schoolteacher who couldn't make it. Her pay, as my servant, if you will, was higher than her salary as a schoolteacher. That's why she was doing what she was doing. Now, we were told we should not give them any tips or any additional money. It was ten dollars a month and it was handled through the military. You know, I'd give the military the ten dollars, they'd … go on and end up giving her Vietnamese money for it, but she would, once a week, cook me a meal, crabs, shrimp, all these meals, you know, because she asked, "Is there anything extra I can do?" I said, "Well, you know, a nice meal is nice, once in awhile." She says, "Well, once a week, I will bring in [food] and cook you a meal." So, I paid her an extra ten dollars, directly to her. Oh, they loved that, even though we didn't use real money. We used scrip, but they could trade that scrip, and that was good as far as they were concerned, and so, you know, she took care of washing and ironing all my uniforms, sweeping the place out and, you know, this cooking once a week. Now, after she got on [the base], after she got a pass, because she was working for me, she then looked around to see if there were any other people that she could make an extra ten dollars [from], you know, also working for them. So, my girl ended up working for, I think, four people, but four rooms to keep clean and wash and iron the uniforms doesn't take a whole day. So, she went up to what she could do, but I felt bad that a schoolteacher found it better living acting as a maid. That, I thought, was a little ridiculous, you know, especially [if] that meant that there were some kids that weren't learning.

SI: Do you have anything else?

JS: No, you know more about Vietnam than I do.

SI: Like I said before, we have kept you a very long time.

JM: I don't mind, … if you've got some more questions.

SI: Was your base ever attacked?

JM: Yes. It was attacked several times, mostly by mortar or rocket fire, and what got to be a little hairy there was, … if the mortar … or the rockets are being fired from our area, we could respond immediately, but the Vietnamese had a part that they were responsible for, which was just south of us, and, if it was in their area, we'd have to call our [base], you know, our base'd have to call theirs to get permission for us to respond, and, if you didn't, you know, sometimes, they'd hem and haw about it for, you know, "Oh, I don't know," and you'd wonder, "Well, … is the guy there an NVA sympathizer who's trying to cover for his guys?" or what-have-you, and there was this river that demarked the area between our area and the Vietnamese and they would pick an area just on the Vietnamese side of the river to fire. In fact, about two, three weeks after I got there, they made an attack, a rocket attack, on the base and we waited for awhile for the

Vietnamese to give permission. … Then, all of a sudden, we opened up fire and our commander's position was, "We were firing on our side of the river, not on their side of the river. We're firing on a place on our side of the river. Just because the round ended up on your side of the river…" … You know, the commanding general sort of [laughter], that kind of thing. That place got [hit]; you know, that rocket attack didn't work. It killed a couple of guys and it knocked out a few hooches and whatnot, but the engineers came over and they fixed the hooches and we had a MASH unit right there on the base camp, so, anybody that got injured [was treated immediately]. In fact, while I was there, just after the show for the new province chief, I ended up in the hospital with pneumonia, something you can catch very simply over there, pneumonia, and it kills a lot of people, but the reason they knew I had something wrong with me is, I went to the thing [MASH unit]. They put me into a bed and here I was, with three blankets on top of me, and I was shivering and it was ninety-eight outside and, inside the tent, it's probably higher than that. … Here I was, under these blankets, shivering, and the guy, a sergeant, next to me, he called the doctor and he says, "You've got to do something for that guy. He can't be shivering like that with this temperature," and the doctor looked at me and he says, he called the nurse, said, "Give him some penicillin." [laughter] Next day, "Boy, these blankets are hot," [laughter] and I was on my way, you know, to recovery, but I was in there for about three days.

SI: It sounds like you had pretty much everything you needed within this one base.

JM: Yes, and it was a major base, because it even had an airport. … We even had C-130s [a large military cargo plane] landing there. So, "push come to shove" and things started getting bad, they would have had C-130s to evacuate most of the non-essentials, and then, helicopters to evacuate the rest and, to be honest, the worst time I had over there, as far as getting shot at, was the one time they took away our Cobra [AH-1] gunships and replaced them with "Charlie Model" gunships [UH-1C Hueys]. That's a regular helicopter, but it's got rocket pods on the outside and two twenty-millimeter cannons mounted in front of the thing in the front, but they looked like regular helicopters. So, instead of me doing my missions with … what would be normally two regular helicopters and two gunships, [it] looked like that was just four regular helicopters. So, they figured I was not who I was and they'd start shooting. So, there, within a three-week period, I must have got shot at four times, just because, "Hey, you know, … that's not the guy we expect. Let's shoot at this one. They're just fooling around." "Yes, that's what you think," [laughter] so, you know, just different.

SI: When they would shoot at you, would they actually hit the helicopter?

JM: No. Actually, … being at treetop level is relatively safe, because, … by the time they recognize you're there, you're already past them. Two hundred feet up in the air is the worst, because you're still in range of their rifles and they can get a good bead on you. So, when you're pulling away, after being shot at, you're climbing. That's why you want the gunships coming down, keep everybody under cover, so that you can climb through two hundred feet, because the gunships can climb faster than you can, because they're designed for it and they're also designed to avoid fire, because they're thin, you know, the Cobra gunships, anyway. The new gunships are big and fat, but they have so much firepower on them that they can level the whole base camp we were in. I mean, the stuff they use in Iraq and Afghanistan is amazing at times.

SI: Is there anything else you want to add to the record?

JM: … No, I think that just about does it. I hope that satisfies your needs. If you do have any questions afterwards, I have an email address. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

JM: When I was in OCS, I was the platoon barber. I cut everybody's hair in the thing, because going to the barbershop, you would spend money, because you had to get your hair cut every other day to keep it that short and exactly right. So, somebody had a kit, but didn't know how to use it, you know, one of the barber's things. I said, "Here," and I started, you know, doing [haircuts]. I mean, all it is [is] a short haircut. I mean, what is it? cut it up real short on the sides and a little longer on the top with the little attachment and that was it, and so, I became the platoon barber. While I was cutting everybody's hair in the bathroom, everybody else'd be polishing the floor in the platoon bay and we had to, on hands and knees, polish the floor. I mean, this a spit-shine floor. First day we got there, they let us walk all over the thing and they were smiling, because it had been spit-shined when we walked in, from the previous group. When we walked in, we scratched it all up and everything, and then, they explained that we had to spit-shine it, and so, we'd spend hours spit-shinning it and we'd walk around without our shoes on, wouldn't put our shoes on until we walked either outside or on the steps going down, because you didn't want to destroy the floor. … The worst thing in the world was when one of the officers, one of the tac officers'd come in for inspection. They'd come walking down the thing and do an about-face, right there. You could see the swirl marks in the linoleum as they did it, because they ruined your spit-shine, and they'd go through and, you know, do one of these or a turn like that, and, every time they turned, you'd look at the floor and say, "Oh, shit," because that was a lot of work to be done, … but I got out of that work by being the barber for the platoon. Each platoon had its own, and got to know people, got to be able to [cut hair], and, of course, the worst thing that happened to me at OCS was, they were trying to break me at the time. So, he was telling me he didn't like the way I was eating my chicken. … You know, they make you learn good posture and the proper way to eat. I mean, that was one of the things, "Make you a gentleman," as they said. So, you learned how to eat. Now, while we were there, the rules … for eating chicken changed. It used to be, you had to cut it, cut the meat with the knife and with a fork and bring it up [to your mouth], but it changed. The Army, apparently, loosened things up. You [could] now pick up legs with your fingers and eat it, and, oh, the tac officers were, [Mr. Maksymowicz grumbles], "No, you can't really do that. You've got to cut it," and all this kind of stuff. So, I had picked up a piece of chicken and started eating it and the tac officer saw me, he came over and he says, "Jerald Maksymowicz," … or, "Candidate Maksymowicz, you don't know the proper procedure for eating chicken, so, I think you've finished eating chicken. Get outside and start running around the barracks," and it was a three-story building, you know, and I just started lightly, you know, running around it. We had a night deployment that night. So, I'm running and I'm running and he, the tac officer, finally calls me over and he says, "I've got something. You didn't eat. I've got something for you to eat; octopus tentacles in olive oil." They were delicious. You know, I can eat anything, you know, one of those types of people. … You know, so, he says, "You're going to eat one of these, aren't you?" and I grabbed one, "Yes, that's not bad. Can I have another one?" He said, he had to think for a second, he says, "Yes, go ahead, have another one." I took another one, "Thank you," and then,

you know, … I started running, continued, because, … until he tells me to stop, I've got to keep running. So, my platoon mates'd bring down all my equipment for the night and run alongside me and I could change my shirt and put on my web gear and, you know, … all of this kind of stuff for the night patrol. Finally, when the trucks arrived for us to get on, he, the tac officer, says, "You can stop. Come on over here, get on the truck," but they'd try all kinds of things to break you, all kinds of things. The object was to get you used to … what might occur if you ever get captured, and, also, make sure you got a nice, thick skin. Okay, well, that's about it.

SI: All right. Thank you very much.

JM: That's about all I got.

SI: Thank you, we really appreciate it.

JM: Well, I'm glad I was able to do it. I just wish I could have gone down and done it for you down there [at Rutgers' New Brunswick Campus].

SI: No, we like getting out of the office. Thank you very much.

JM: Well, that's good.

JS: Thank you.

JM: You're welcome.

JS: That was very enjoyable.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Krzysztof Swiatek 3/3/10
Reviewed by Kassandra Kelly 3/3/10
Reviewed by Steven Wacker 3/3/10
Reviewed by Devin Verhoest 3/3/10
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 4/7/10
Reviewed by Jerald Maksymowicz 6/11/2012