Jay T. Butterfield ‘59
Dartmouth College Oral History Program
Dartmouth Vietnam Project
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Transcribed by Karen Navarro

CALCATERRA: So, I have to do a little bit of an opening message for the record. So, my name is Paulina Calcaterra ['19]. I’m sitting in Rauner Special Collections Library in Hanover, New Hampshire, on May 16th, 2018. I’m joined on the phone by Mr. Jay Butterfield, who will be sharing his experiences with me as part of the Dartmouth Vietnam Project. So, Mr. Butterfield, thank you so much for speaking with me today. As I mentioned over email, some of these interviews go around two hours, some of them around three hours. So, at any point we can stop and reschedule if we need to, but we can also take some breaks if you want to let me know if you need to grab a snack or water or go to the bathroom. Just let me know. We can take breaks whenever we need to. And I also want to encourage you throughout the interview to provide full names of any people you’re mentioning at least once, the first time you mention them. And then, if you’re going to use any acronyms or sort of jargon, to sort of give a definition of that, just because we want to make sure if people are using this as a source for research or things like that, or people are listening to it down the line, they know exactly what we’re referencing.

BUTTERFIELD: Sure. Okay.

CALCATERRA: Awesome. So with that, I’d like to start by asking you a bit about some background info. So, if you could tell me when and where you were born?

BUTTERFIELD: I was born in San Diego, California, January 9th, 1938.

CALCATERRA: Okay. And can you tell me what your parents’ names are, and what kind of jobs they did?

BUTTERFIELD: My father was Elwin T. Butterfield. He was in his residency at San Diego General. My mother, Carolyn McCauley Butterfield, didn’t work at the time, but after my father died, she started teaching, and was a schoolteacher.

CALCATERRA: And did you have any siblings? And if so, what was your relationship like with them?

BUTTERFIELD: I was the oldest of five. My brother was born in ’39, a sister in ’40, another sister in ’41, and the youngest was born in ’47. And we’re all good friends. My brother that was born in ’39 died a few years ago from esophageal cancer.

CALCATERRA: I’m sorry about that.

BUTTERFIELD: But the rest of us are still tight. We talk on a weekly basis.

CALCATERRA: That’s great to hear. So, it sounds like you had a large family. Can you talk a little bit more about what life was like growing up? Did you stay in San Diego? Did you move around at all? And what was sort of the atmosphere of your hometown like?

BUTTERFIELD: Like I say, my father was in his residency. We were only there—or I was only there six months. They were there a year. And then we moved back to Iowa, where my father went into practice with his father. My grandfather was an old country doctor, University of Chicago Medical School Class of 1900. And anyway, we stayed in Iowa for, I think from ’38 to ’41. And then we moved down to New Orleans [LA] where my father went through his specialty as an ophthalmologist.

And then, of course, the war came along. He was drafted, and we became camp followers for the next four or five years. My mother would go with him to the bases, and my siblings and I would be split up. The two boys would go with one set of grandparents for a while, and then the next time we’d go with the other set, and the girls the same way. So, both sets of grandparents were in Iowa. And then, if we were going to be stationed somewhere for a while, the whole family would go. We stayed in Lake Forest, Illinois, at Fort Sheridan, and I think that was the winter of ’44. At that time, Fort Sheridan was a POW camp for the Africa Corps officers who had been captured. And, so that was a pretty neat—we had a lieutenant colonel, a German lieutenant colonel who was our furnace boy, would come over every morning about 5:00, 5:30, stoke our furnace, my mother would feed him breakfast, and then he’d take the four of us, pile us on top of a sled, and pull us around the base.

CALCATERRA: Wow!

BUTTERFIELD: Yeah. [laughter] So, anyway, and then finally, I guess at the end of the war, we moved back to California. We were stationed in California when my father got sick, and at Redlands Army

Hospital, and so we lived six months there, and then from there we went to Missouri. That's where my youngest brother was born in '47. And then my father was discharged, and we moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, in '47. My father worked for Lovelace Clinic, and then set up his own practice, and we moved down to Las Vegas, New Mexico. I think that was '48, late '48, and that's where I finished high school and everything. We stayed there. My father died in 1950. He'd contracted I don't know what. Anyway, he died of a coronary embolism in 1950. And, so I started working, and raised the kids, helped my mother, and all that stuff. I paid all the allowances and everything.

And then, graduated from high school in '55, and came to Dartmouth at that point, the Class of '59. I had a full ride scholarship, which I think was $1,500 back then. That was, tuition I think was $750 a semester, and then I worked for my board and room. So, that's the way I started at Dartmouth. And then, in 1956, the Congress passed the War Orphans Act, which basically gave those of us who were war orphans our fathers' GI Bills. So they called me in in I think May or June of '56, and said that they were taking away the scholarships of those of us who were war orphans, because the GI Bill would give us $110 a month for school. But, so I lost my $1,500 and they said, "Well, you're gonna get $1,320 that'll replace it." Well, the only problem was, nobody seemed to figure out that it was only while you were fully enrolled in school, which for us was eight months. I think there were 23 or 27 of us in the class that were affected by that. All of us lost our scholarships and it was supposed to be replaced with the GI Bill, until we found out that it was only $880 as opposed to the $1,500 that we had. And then when we came back for our sophomore year, they told us that we were only going to get the $880, and would have to work to make up the difference.

So, anyway, I started working. [laughter] And I was working outside of class about 50, 52 hours a week, waiting tables, you name it, showing films. I did a little bit of everything. I was a busboy. Anyway, I got through my sophomore year barely. My grades were suffering mightily. I think I had a C- average [laughter]. Hadn't flunked anything. And then, I didn't have any money to come home between my sophomore and junior year. So, anyway, I worked over in Rutland [VT] at the Long Trail Lodge, which was a—I don't think it's there anymore—it was up where the ski lift is. They had a, I think it was "Suicide 6" or something; I don't remember what they called it. But anyway,

during the summer it was a nice lodge. And I started out as a second cook, and then became a head waiter, and made a little off of tips and everything.

So I got back to school and was working harder and harder, and I was up to around 60 hours a week outside of class. And boy, my grades were really going south. And, so in November it became obvious to me that I was going to flunk my first course if I continued on. So, I decided to drop out. I went down and saw the local Army recruiter. He gave me a meal ticket and a bus ticket to Fort Dix, New Jersey. And this was, like I say, November of '58. So, the next morning I got up, packed my suitcase, went down, caught the bus, and went down to Fort Dix. And that's when I came in the Army. I stayed there, went through basic training at Fort Dix, was assigned to Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, for artillery training, and went there for a few months, and then was selected for OCS, and attended OCS at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Graduated in 1959, I think it was—no, 1958 I graduated from OCS.

And then, was posted over to Germany. And I spent three years there. And then back to the States at Fort Rucker [AL] went to flight school, Fort Sheridan again in Illinois, stayed there for a little over two years. I had gotten married in Germany to the Post Commander's daughter, and we had our first child at Fort Rucker, and then had our second up at Great Lakes Naval Hospital, [North Chicago, IL] and then eventually a third down at Homestead Air Force Base here in Florida. So I have an Army, Navy, and an Air Force brat, if you want to call them that. [laughter] So, anyway, and from Fort Sheridan I was posted over to Vietnam in 1964.

CALCATERRA: Okay. Do you mind if we stop there a little bit and I have a couple of follow-up questions from some of the earlier things?

BUTTERFIELD: Sure.

CALCATERRA: So, also, these interviews can get very—they're very detail oriented and we really want to go through from your pre-Dartmouth experience to your Dartmouth experience to your war experience, and then your post-war experience, as well. And so, I'm going to try and go through those kind of in depth, each one of them.

BUTTERFIELD: Okay. All right.

CALCATERRA: So, basically, so my first question is if you could talk a little bit more about how you felt about your father's military involvement. Also, was he a medic or practicing medicine in the military, or was there another position that he had? And were you sort of aspiring to have a similar path, or what were your impressions of his service in the war when you were growing up?

BUTTERFIELD: Well, they were all favorable. I mean, he was a doctor, and an ophthalmologist, and that was his specialty, and that's what they used him for, as an eye doctor. We went around—I mean, he was stationed at various hospitals in the United States. Never quite got overseas. Supposed to go over from California in I think '45. But the war ended, and in the meantime, of course, he had gotten sick. So, anyway, but yeah, I thought the world of him, and I was going to be a doctor. But, once I started thinking about it and everything, he wasn't around a lot. He had a lot of time at the hospital, and in the last three years of his life from '47—the last two years from '48 to '50, he would go to the office on Monday, and that was his surgical day, and he'd do cataracts and all that other stuff. He did the first successful retina detachment in 1949. So he was listed in *Who's Who*. A lot of his patients were referred to him from Mayo brothers, and of course from the Albuquerque area. On the West Coast, he was supposed to be one of the premier eye surgeons.

I remember when we first moved to Albuquerque, when he was trying to work out a procedure for the retina detachment, after dinner every evening we'd all sit around the table, and he'd come home with a—he'd stop by a rendering plant and come home with a bag of pigs' eyes that he had gotten from the rendering plant. And we'd all sit there and watch him as he spread the eyes out on the table [laughter] and practice sewing and operating on those pigs' eyes. So, that was kind of neat. But, anyway, yeah, when he got sick, like I say, in '48, Monday was his operating day, and he'd operate almost the whole day. And then, Tuesday was follow-up and office; Tuesday and Wednesday was office work, and normal routine stuff. And then, he'd check himself into the hospital on Thursday, and he'd spend Thursday and Friday and Saturday in the hospital as a patient. And then, Sunday he'd be back home. That was his day of rest. And Monday it would start again: surgery on Mondays; and office on Tuesday and Wednesdays; hospital Thursday, Friday, Saturday; and then home on Sunday. So, that went on until he died. He died in January of 1950, a few days after his birthday, and a few days after my 12th birthday.

So, anyway, I decided I was going to be a—I thought I'd give it a whirl. But, the one thing I do remember was he wasn't around that much. He was always on call and everything, particularly during the war; he did a lot of reconstructive surgery on wounded veterans and that. But, anyway, I started out at Dartmouth as a pre-med, and took the normal pre-med classes during my freshman year. And then, in my junior year I decided, *Nah, I think I'll go to business*, and so I kind of changed my major to economics. But I didn't get a lot of classes, and I'd had all the chemistry and math and all that other stuff for the pre-med. So anyway, I decided not to, and it was probably a good decision. Both of my brothers are veterinarians, or were. They both retired, and then the one died. My sister is a Ph.D in counseling. She's married to a dentist. My other sister has a master's in educational counseling. She was a school counselor, as well as was her husband. So, still have a lot of cousins or still have a lot of nieces and nephews that are doctors. So, it runs in the family.

CALCATERRA: Yes. So, after your father passed away, what was that experience like for you? Did you have to sort of immediately, as you said, help chip in as sort of a pseudo parent?

BUTTERFIELD: Oh, yeah.

CALCATERRA: Did you have time to process emotionally?

BUTTERFIELD: Well, I was 12 years old, so probably not. Not a lot of time. But, anyway, my mother had not finished her degree when she and Dad were married, so she had to go back to school in order to get money. We were still paying off—or she was still paying off his practice, you know, all the equipment that goes into that. Of course, the used medical stuff didn't sell very well. So, she did get the practice sold. But, our house was paid for at least. We got that done. And then, I started out, paper routes. Not much else a 12-year-old can do. So I had three paper routes: one early morning, one after school, and one in the evening. And then, I did that for about, I think about four months, five months. And then, on a rainy day, my bike got all mucked up with clay, and I quit that job, quit doing the papers, and got a job at a dairy delivering milk on one of the old, you know, you used to have home delivery of milk. And I did that for about six months, I think. And then, pull weeds, 35¢ and hour; I think that was minimum wage at the time. But then, my money that I made

would go to paying the kids' allowances, which wasn't that much, 50¢ or a dollar a week or something.

And then, when I was 14, I started working in a gas station, and I worked there for three years. Started out at again 35¢ an hour. I think by the end I was making 75¢ an hour. And I was working around between 60 and 65 hours a week. I'd come in before school, open it up at 5:30, or get there at 5:30, open it up at 6:00, and take off for school about 8:00, and then I'd come back after school and work till 10:00. And then, on Saturdays and Sundays I'd also work. So, at that point I was making a lot of money. I was making, you know, $50, $60 a week, which was pretty darned good. So, I'd buy the kids clothes, I'd pay their allowance, buy their clothes, and whatever was left would go to Mom or we'd go see a movie or whatever we could do. And then, by that time my mother had graduated from college, and she'd started teaching first grade. So…

CALCATERRA: And so, in some of my research before this interview, I read the Dartmouth Green Book for your class at Dartmouth, and it said that during high school you were the Class President, you were involved with the paper, the yearbook, Key Club, band, football. So it sounds like you were incredibly involved in your high school, as well? I'm wondering if you want to talk more about that, or how you balanced everything?

BUTTERFIELD: Well, it was a balancing act pretty much. I'd always—my father had taught all of us music. So we all played the trumpet, the coronet, the violin and the piano. I never did get the hang of the piano and the violin very much, but my mother taught us piano. But, anyway, I played the trumpet and the coronet, and then I'd blown out my lip, so I played the E-flat baritone, which is a euphonium I guess they call it today, or a tuba. Not the tuba, not the big one. But, anyway, so I did that. And I was active in a lot of the clubs and everything, DeMolay and the Key Club, and all that other good stuff. And I'd work around my work basically to do those things, so…I enjoyed it. And, I don't know, I guess I wasn't a very good football player. I did get a letter, but they used me as a tackling dummy. [laughter] I was too small to play football. My father had played football for University of Iowa [Iowa City, IA] and Grinnell College [Grinnell, IA], so that's why I did that, just to see what it was like. It was not fun. [laughter]

CALCATERRA: And at this point in your life, so it sounds like you were incredibly busy with all of your responsibilities for your family and your high school, extracurricular involvements. Did you

have any understanding of political climate or any larger events that were impacting the country? Were you thinking at all about your future career? You know, you mentioned thinking still at this point of being a doctor, but were you thinking at all about military service?

BUTTERFIELD: No.

CALCATERRA: Or just sort or describe maybe what your worldview was at this point.

BUTTERFIELD: Well, I really didn't—you know, New Mexico in the '40s, '50s, was we were still in the Wild West. There were still gunfights and fights in the saloons and all that other good stuff. I think my brother got stabbed five times while he was I high school. A lot of racial tension between the Anglos and the Hispanics back then. I never had any problem with them, but my brother for some odd reason constantly was at war with them. So, anyway, but, you know, it was the '40s; it was the Wild West literally and everything.

When I turned 14, and I had my job at the gas station, the first thing I did was go down to get my driver's license and I bought my first car, from a junkyard. Paid $80 for it. It was a 1935 Ford. So, I was very fortunate. My mother allowed me to do that. And so I had a car, and that I worked on constantly. But, it was fun growing up. But we were, as far as the world went, I didn't really know a lot. My mother was active in P.E.O. (Philanthropic Educational Organization) [Sisterhood]. And my father I remember hated Truman and Roosevelt. So, the family, I guess, was Republican, or they were. And, you know, we just grew up with normal traditional conservative Christian values. We went to church on Sundays usually. I'd go to work before church, and then I'd work after church sometimes.

And then, when I graduated at 17, a friend of mine, we were the youngest in the class, both of us were 17… I had saved up $168 to go to Dartmouth, and that was going to be my clothing money. I didn't have anything except cowboy boots. I wore cowboy boots to church and everything else, or sneakers. So, I knew I was going to need some type of wardrobe to go to school. And my uncle in New York said that he would take care of me and get me down to a tailor and get me clothes and everything.

But anyway, when we graduated in 1955 from high school, a friend of mine and I decided we'd go into business. So we opened up, it was an old dilapidated drive-in restaurant, if you want to call it that. It was a one-room shack outside of town, had running water in it, no insulation or anything like that. So, he and I decided we'd go ahead and give it a whirl, and I took my $168, much to my mother's dismay, and paid the first month's rent. And because I'd worked at the dairy, I went down and talked to the owner of the dairy, and he gave us freezers and a box. We bought some root beer mugs. There was an old griddle in there that we cleaned up and everything. We were going to sell hotdogs and hamburgers, root beer, and that was it. So, he and I opened the place up with our girlfriends as car hops. We started with two car hops. And by the end of the first week, we had 14 car hops. We'd hired two, hired my brother and another friend as additional cooks. And we were busy from 11:00 in the morning—well, we got there at 10:00—but we opened at 11:00, and we closed at midnight. And we did that for three solid months. And at the end of that time, we paid the girls, or the car hops, $2 a day plus their tips. And most of them made more than we did. [laughter] But, anyway, that place hopped. And at the end of 90 days, I left to go to college. Mike stayed there to—I think another two weeks he was off to Purdue.

And anyway, at the end of 90 days, I left town with $1,500 in my pocket. And then, when I got to New York, my uncle met me. He was Vice-President of GE Capital Corp at the time. And he took me to his tailor and I got some clothes and some shoes and some other stuff. I did bring a pair of cowboy boots with me to Dartmouth that I'd wear on occasion. They were green kangaroo hide.

CALCATERRA: Wow. And so, before I ask a few more Dartmouth questions, do you mind, two things: you mentioned your mother was involved in P.T.O, is that correct?

BUTTERFIELD: P.E.O.

CALCATERRA: P.E.O. What does that mean or what does that acronym—

BUTTERFIELD: That's a female or women's group. You'll have to look them up. My understanding is that it's kind of a Republican women's organization. I know she was active in politics, but that was… I think you can look them up online and Google them or something, whatever you guys do today.

CALCATERRA: Sure. Thank you. And then, do you mind describing a little bit more some of the racial tensions in your hometown? What were some of the most contested issues fought over? Was it regarding educational opportunities or discrimination, or if you could describe a little bit more what you understood to be the tension?

BUTTERFIELD: Well, the town was about—there were two towns. Las Vegas [NM] was at that time east Las Vegas and west Las Vegas, and the town's history, basically at one point they were the capital of the New Mexico Territory. Of course, they were founded by the Spanish, and the Spanish monks that came up with [Francisco Vásquez de] Coronado and a bunch of the other explorers. And they formed missions everywhere, so that was one of the missions. The town originally started out as Spanish land grants, and kind of grew. It was a sheep town initially. There was more sheep in the county than there were residents in the state in the 1800s and into the early 1900s. When the territory became a state, 1912, they moved the capital to Santa Fe, and that's where it still is today. But, back in those days a lot of the ranchers hired Hispanics as laborers on the ranch, and a lot of the money belonged to the old Spanish families who had had land grants from the King of Spain.

So, the ratio in east Las Vegas, which was where I grew up, on the eastern side of the river, so to speak, the ratio was about 60% Anglo, 40% Hispanic. In west Las Vegas it was about 80% Hispanic and 20% Anglo. And there was just, you know, two cultures clashing, but not violently usually. But the kids always, you know, kind of had to sort it out. So they did. And there was mutual respect between us, I think. There wasn't any big issue. There wasn't any—no discrimination that I ever noticed anyway in educational opportunities or job opportunities or whatever. There was one black family in town, and they had a daughter, I think she was in my class. I'm not real sure. But anyway, that was the only other minority that we had in the whole town besides the Hispanics. We had a large Jewish population also that had moved, that had come west for their health, a lot of merchants, and most of them were there—or initially they were all bankers and merchants and a little bit of everything. They're still around as far as I know. And the Santa Fe Railroad, of course, ran through the town. That was the big industry. It was the Santa Fe Railroad. They did more shipping and all that other stuff, from there took the sheep, and I don't think there was any other industry in town. At one point there was a parachute factory, but I think it closed after a couple of years. So, but there

wasn't any racial—there weren't any racial tensions or anything. Just some people were prejudiced, and my brother happened to be one of them. I don't know what started it, but anyway, I always got along great with them.

CALCATERRA: Well, it definitely sounds like there was an interesting mix of, like you said, cultures and different populations.

BUTTERFIELD: Yeah, most everybody spoke Spanish as well as English. You know, all of us, we could carry on a conversation in Spanish. We didn't take it in school or anything, but you just grew up with it.

CALCATERRA: Wow, that's really interesting. So, thank you for giving me more background on that aspect of your early life. Now I'm interested in, so you mentioned saving up money as you prepared to go to Dartmouth. I'm wondering when you first learned about Dartmouth and what made you want to go there specifically, as opposed to staying at a college maybe close to home, or going to any other university? And then also, what were your expectations of what it would be like to be a student there?

BUTTERFIELD: I'd never been east of the Mississippi. New Orleans was as close as we got. But, anyway, when I started applying for schools, my teachers said, "Well, you ought to apply to some of the Ivy League schools." So I applied to Princeton, Harvard, Dartmouth, Yale, Stanford and whatever. I guess I was relatively intelligent. So, anyway, they encouraged that, so I did. And, then I started getting my offers; they came back. I was accepted everywhere except Yale. [laughter] Don't ask me why. And with scholarships everywhere. And Dartmouth's scholarship was $1,500. I think Princeton was around $1,200 and Stanford was around $800, and whatever. So, being money smart, I figured, "Well, you take the most money." So I went to Dartmouth because they gave me the largest scholarship. At the time, you know, $1,500, that was the tuition for the $750 per semester. And, like I say, I figured I could work for the food, board and room. So that's why I went there. I went to an interview, I think a couple of Dartmouth graduates in Albuquerque. I drove over to Albuquerque to have my interview. And one of them happened to be a doctor who knew my father. So, I guess that's what got me in, I don't know. But, whatever. So, like I say, the reason I came to Dartmouth was that was the largest scholarship. I knew nothing about the college or anything before.

CALCATERRA: And once you got there, was your experience—you talked about having trouble academically, keeping up alongside of all of your work responsibilities. What were your social experiences? What were your friends like? Where you involved in Greek life or ROTC or any sort of extracurriculars while you were a student?

BUTTERFIELD: I worked for *The D* (*The Dartmouth*) as a photographer for I think two years. I'd go around to the ballgames and take the pictures of that. We used to have the Great Issues course. I don't know if they still have that over at Webster [Hall], but every time there'd be a celebrity come in to speak, I'd usually go along with the reporter to take the photographs of the individuals. Socially, I think my first year, I don't think I had a date my first year. I didn't have a car. I didn't have a way to get off campus or anything, and I enjoyed working, so I mostly did that. I think that was the year I think Janet Pilgrim came up for winter carnival, from Playboy. She was the Playboy centerfold that year.

CALCATERRA: Wow.

BUTTERFIELD: And she came up and she had a date, and I got to go along with them and take pictures as part of my *Dartmouth*, you know, doing that thing. But that was about as close as I got to a date. [laughter] So, but my second year, I came back and I had a car with me, because I went back to the restaurant during the summer, and ran it again the second year, and made about the same amount of money. But also I'd put some money into a car, so I had a car. Let's see, was that my second year or third year? Not real sure at this point. It's 60 years ago, 60 plus. But anyway, I think I had a date for my second year, for my sophomore year. Somebody got me a blind date with a girl from, she was from East Orange, New Jersey. I forgot what school she went to or whatever, but that was, I think I had one or two dates that year. And that was my social life.

The second year, my dorm mates or my roommates in the dorm, I guess we all joined a fraternity, which was Phi Tau. I guess it's still Phi Tau. It used to be Phi Kappa Tau. But, they had a little falling out with the president. When he came down and was ranting against the Jews, little did he know that our president and several of our members were of that faith. And we went local the next week after they left. But, anyway, I got a full ride there, and also free housing as part of my thing. So I moved into the fraternity house, I don't remember if it was my junior year or sophomore year. It seems to me that it was my junior year. I wasn't there very long. But, it might have been at the end

of the first semester or the second semester of my sophomore year. So, yeah, I was part of that Greek scene, I guess, and enjoyed it, but I wasn't… You know, I was still working a lot.

CALCATERRA: And what were some of the social and political issues that students and faculty were talking about at the time you were there? Were people aware of the civil rights movement at all, or again, like some geopolitical issues? Or were people focused mostly on the day to day at Dartmouth?

BUTTERFIELD: Mostly day to day, at least among the students as far as I knew. I don't remember—well, of course, the only thing that was going on at time was the Cold War. So, there wasn't a lot that, as I recall anyway, there wasn't a lot of discussion about those type of issues that I remember. I don't recall getting into any heated arguments or any deep discussions about a lot of that stuff.

CALCATERRA: Okay. And can you describe a little bit more your decision to drop out and talk to a military recruiter? Was that sort of an easy decision to you? Did it feel like a very big life change at that moment? I also wonder if you felt you were leaving a community at Dartmouth, or if you felt sort of disconnected at Dartmouth and it maybe made the decision easier to leave? Or, I'm also wondering maybe if a lot of people dropped out and in similar ways, to your knowledge? Or if you can just talk a little bit more about that.

BUTTERFIELD: There was, as I recall, there was, like I say, 23, 27, I forgot what the exact number was in our class that fell under the War Orphans Act, and all of us had our scholarships jerked and then replaced with that. Of that group, I think 16 of us came back to start our sophomore year. I think by the end of the sophomore year, there was only 12 of us left. To start the junior year, I think there was only eight of us that came back. Again, the money that they had appropriated for our scholarships had already been given away, basically, to new incoming classes. So, I took out, I think I had a student loan in my junior year. I had to take it out to pay the first semester's tuition.

But, when it became obvious to me that I was not going to pass this course which was, I think it was art appreciation or art history or something to do with art, and I just didn't get it. I don't get—if it's not hard science: math or chemistry or calculus or whatever, I have a difficult time with those type of courses, always have and I still do, with what I call the soft sciences: psychology, etc. etc. Psychology, sociology, logic, all that other

stuff; that doesn't—it never has turned me on. I'm not interested in it anyway.

But, when it became obvious that I was going to drop that, I just said, *I've gotta get out of here, and I want to leave under—in case I might want to come back*, I went over and talked to my faculty advisor, Fred Berthold [Jr.], I think it was, and I told him what my situation was, that I just couldn't afford and I didn't want to—I was missing too much of the campus life, you know, the other stuff, because I was working all the damn time. So, anyway, I don't know if he recommended it or whatever, but it seemed to me that that he said, "Well, you might consider joining the Army for a couple of years or the Air Force or Marines" or whatever. So, anyway, I went down that same day and talked to them, and like I say, they gave me a bus ticket and a meal ticket and sent me on my way the next morning. So, it was spur of the moment and I had no future plans. I just thought, *Well, we'll see what happens*. But, I enjoyed my career. I spent 20 years, a little over 20 years doing it, and no regrets.

CALCATERRA: And, at this moment when you were embarking on the start of your career, what were your family's reactions to this, or was this more of an independent choice? Did you feel a certain distance from them now that you had to go to different training camps and things like that?

BUTTERFIELD: No, huh-uh. No, they were very supportive. My mother, I told her that I was doing that. I'm sure she was a little dismayed, but, you know, she never voiced it. She always was supportive of anything that I did. Her initial reaction, of course, was always going to be, "Well, [laughter] do you really want to do that?" But, that's what I did, so… Anyway, it all worked out. My brothers and sisters were supportive of me. They were all in school at that time, except for the youngest one. The rest of them were in college, doing the same thing or starting college, or about to, and going on under the War Orphans Act under the GI Bill. That's how all of us got educated.

CALCATERRA: And can you talk more about how you ended up on a path to become an Army aviator specifically, and what led you to be interested in that work?

BUTTERFIELD: Sure. When I was in Germany, I had good friends that a couple of whom were aviators, and they seemed to enjoy what they were doing. And I think they paid us, at that point if you were an aviator you got an extra $110 a month. And as a lieutenant, I

was making—well, I came in as a private, so I was making $65 a month, but once I got to be an officer, then I was making $200 a month, which was pretty good, compared to what I had. But then, I figured, *Well, if I go to flight school, I can make another $110*. And I got married in 1961, so I figured, *Well, maybe I ought to—I could be a better provider if I got a little more pay*. So, that was it, and I put my application in in Germany before I came back, and then the Berlin Wall went up and we were all extended for six months.

I think my wife and I, or my bride and I, I think we were camped on a lake in Sweden, and I'm trying to remember whether it was June or July that the wall went up. But, anyway, we were camped up there on a lake, and there was a German couple camped next to us in their tent, and they came over—we'd had dinner or something together—and they came over the next morning and said, "Have you heard about the wall?" And I said "no." Well, they said—I didn't have a radio, a little transistor radio or anything back then—and they said, "Well, the Russians are building a wall, and all the Americans have been ordered back to their bases." And we had just got there I think the day before or two days before. And I said, "I didn't hear that." [laughter] So, I had another five days of vacation, and by God I was going to take it. [laughter] So, we stayed up there and then got back to the unit. Everybody had cleared out, of course, and gone to our what they called GAO positions, which were I think General Alert [sic] Orders, or GAO [General Administrative Order] I think that was what that stood for. It's been so long.

So anyway, I got my Jeep. They'd left me my Jeep down in the motor pool, and I got that and drove up to the border, and spent the next six weeks up on the border waiting for the Russians to do something. I was in 8-inch artillery, which was atomic capable, and so we sat up there and practiced putting together the big rounds to keep them from coming through the Fulda Gap. So, that was just before I came back. Then, January of '62 I got back, came back to the States, and went to Fort Rucker. I was accepted at flight school and came back to Fort Rucker to begin my training.

CALCATERRA: Can you describe the training experience? What was it like, what were you being educated about regarding the conflicts that you might be involved in, were you given any context about Vietnam?

BUTTERFIELD: No, they don't talk about that.

CALCATERRA: Okay.

BUTTERFIELD: They don't talk about that. Basically, it was principles of flight, weather, what makes airplanes fly, all that other good stuff, navigation, and then actual flying. So, that was what we did. And that lasted I think nine months. And then when I graduated, I had to take a week off. A friend of mine from New Mexico, same town, his wife and he were there, and we had run into them or I had run into him—he was the class ahead of me—and, so we had had, the two families had had, my wife and I and he and his wife had had dinner on Sunday night together. We went over to his place. He had two kids, and I had one. And then, the next day he was killed. He had a mid-air collision and was killed. And his wife, Diana—and she was a year ahead of me in high school, and I think he was two years ahead of me—so, anyway, I told her that I would escort the body back, because he was going back to New Mexico for burial. So I took a week off and accompanied the body, and then met her at the cemetery. Did all the military stuff. And so, when I got back, I'd missed a week of class, so they sent me back another term, which was I think about every month they were running a different class. So, I went from a red hat to a gold hat, which was each class wore a different colored cap. So anyway, I took a setback and did that. And then went ahead and completed the school.

CALCATERRA: I'm wondering if that loss that you experienced, it sounds like it was very close to home, I'm wondering how that impacted the way you were feeling about your roles and responsibilities, or how were you feeling about your service after that experience?

BUTTERFIELD: Well, I was always very careful; you know, keep your eyes out of the cockpit if you're in VFR conditions, Visual Flight Rule conditions. You look around and you make sure that nobody's in the way if you're going to be doing just regular flying. And, but other than that, there wasn't a lot. I've lost a lot of good friends in accidents and otherwise. But, it just makes you extra careful when something like that happens. And you feel sorry for the families and everything, but there's not a lot you can do. So, anyway, that was flight school.

CALCATERRA: And how soon after that were you notified that you would be going to Vietnam? And how were you feeling about—what kind of expectations did you have when you found out that you were going to serve there?

BUTTERFIELD: I thought…you know, I graduated from flight school in ’61, and went up to Fort Sheridan, and then I’d been there about two years and got notified that I’d been selected to go over to Vietnam. I knew one other kid, or one other lieutenant that had also gone over from Germany in 19—gee, I think he went over in 1961. He was a communications lieutenant. And I’d kept in touch with him a little bit. He’d said it was a good tour, and not bad, you know? So everything was fine. I think when he was over there, there were about maybe 3,000 Americans all total advising the Vietnamese. And when I went over, it was up to 12,000 in ’64. I arrived there October of ’64. You know, it was just another duty assignment.

CALCATERRA: And October of ’64, so that’s a few months after the Gulf of Tonkin incident and the Gulf of Tonkin resolution. I’m wondering if you were aware of those incidents and had any impression that the war was escalating at that point? And if those events impacted you at all in your service?

BUTTERFIELD: No, I don’t think so. The Marines came over, Operation Starlight I think was 1965. I got pulled out of Vietnam in January of ’65, and sent over to Laos. Air America had run out of STOL aircraft (short takeoff and landing), and the Air Force was starting to bomb North Vietnam at that time, and they were losing a lot of Thuds; that’s the F-105. And the reason they called them Thuds was that was the noise they’d make when they hit the ground. [laughter] So anyway, they were losing some to the SAMS (surface-to-air missiles), and the pilots were having to bail out, and if they got picked up, Air America would fly them into Laos. Air America was—we’d been… The military assistance groups had been shipped out of Laos when the Pathet Lao had come in. And so, we would then meet the Air America helicopters up in some of the little strips up in northern Laos up around the North Vietnamese/Chinese border, and we’d pick them up from the Air America guys and take them back to Udorn in Thailand, and then we’d come back up to Vien Chan [Laos].

And we flew a lot of missions for the embassy. We flew in an unmarked aircraft, had little tiny letters on the side of it that said “U.S. Army” that were barely an inch high. And we flew in; we had embassy ID cards, everything. It was a very interesting flight. There was no navigation aids up there. It was all map of the earth or all VFR. If you got into the monsoons or into the big clouds, you just kind of did time and distance, and then put your aircraft down; hopefully you’re in the right valley, and in a valley,

not on a mountaintop. So, anyway, very interesting flying. I did that for three months.

And then, we were evacuating a strip just north of the Plain of Jars [in Laos] that was being overrun, and the little airplane that we had was designed to carry four passengers, pilot and co-pilot. And I was flying, and it was on the side of a hill up about 4,300 feet, and the bad guys were coming down the strip shooting, and I think I had 12 people in that airplane. And I'd tossed out the radios and everything else we could to make sure that we could get off the ground, and we did, but went into some bamboo down at the end of the strip, dragged off or tore off the tail wheel of the airplane. Then we took those guys into the Plain of Jars, dropped them off with the fellow, [Edgar M.] "Pop" Buell, who ran the CIA organization up there on the plain, the Plain of Jars. And then we went on down to Bangkok and landed without a tail wheel on the main runway of Bangkok and spent a month there while they rebuilt our airplane, and then we went back to Saigon. So, that was kind of interesting.

But when I got back, shortly after I got back, the Marines came in to land. I flew VIPs my first tour. I flew [General] Maxwell [D.] Taylor, the ambassador. I flew [General William C.] Westmoreland. I forgot who the other general was before "Westie." But, anyway, I flew them, and the deputy. So, you know, I was essentially a VIP pilot. And I got to fly [Richard M.] Nixon when he came over. He had been Vice-President. But, you don't get to talk to him, you know. You just sit up there, go where they tell you to take him. So, anyway…

In '65 when I got back, that was when the Marines landed. And I got called out, I think the second night or the third night they were in country, and they were on Operation Starlight. I got called out, I think around 2:00 in the morning, and they had run out of body bags. So I flew a load of body bags up to Da Nang for the Marines. And, you know, that was when things started ramping up. I didn't know anything about [Gulf of] Tonkin or anything like that at that time.

CALCATERRA: And can you talk about how you ended up getting this position to fly VIPs? It sounds like quite the responsibility, and something that a very select person would be given that responsibility. So, do you want to talk more about how you felt about getting that responsibility, what sort of led up to you getting that role?

BUTTERFIELD: When I got to Fort Sheridan, I'd been trained in single-engine aircraft, and at Fort Sheridan I was with the Air Defense Command. We has a two-star general there at the regional headquarters. And we had light Twins, Twin [engine] Beechcraft aircraft, U-8 Delta models, and we had one "F" model, I think, which was the King Air. So anyway, I got checked out in those, and after I got a couple of hundred hours, I started checking other people out in them, so I became an IP [instructor pilot]. But I'd always—you know, I flew the general a lot. So, that was basically what, if you've done that, then that's what you do.

So, when I got over to Vietnam, they told me I was going to go down in the Delta and run a—be commander. I was a captain. So I was an old guy my first tour in Vietnam. I was 26, I guess, when I got there. So I was already an old guy. And most of Army aviation at that time, there was only about 3,000 Army aviators when I first got my wings. So we knew each other. I mean, it was a small community, relatively small community. So we all knew each other and everything, and knew about most of us, those that had been around a long time anyway.

But anyway, they got to looking at my records when I got to Vietnam, and they said, "Oh, you're UA [unmanned aircraft] qualified?" And I said, "Yeah, I'm an IP" (instructor pilot). So, they said, "Well, rather than send you down to Delta, we're going to keep you here in Saigon, and put you with MACV flight. MACV, of course, was Military Assistance [Command], Vietnam. So, that was what I did. And I spent the rest of my tour flying them. It wasn't unusual to have three or four generals on board an aircraft at one time. When I get to my second tour, I'll tell you another story.

CALCATERRA: Great. So, it sounds like this environment that you were in was not necessarily—there wasn't maybe constant danger, or it wasn't a very high stress combat environment, is that accurate? Or were you still…

BUTTERFIELD: Not really. Most of my missions were what we called combat support. I did not fly in as a fixed wing aviator, other than my tour in Laos. I got shot at a lot over there, and occasionally I'd get shot at in Vietnam flying, particularly at night; you can see the tracers coming up; or in the evening dusk. But, you know, it's hard to hit an aircraft from the ground, it really is, with a rifle or even a machine gun. I didn't get any holes or anything like that. One time I almost bailed out. I had a fire in the cockpit

when I was flying a single engine. We flew both single and dual engine when I was there, depending on where we had to go.

If we had a short strip landing, like up at Cam Rahn Bay—in 1964 or ’65, Cam Rahn Bay was a little 600-foot PSP, pierced steel planking strip; that was all that was there. There was nothing. They hadn’t built anything there. And I’d fly the engineer up there, a brigadier general. I’d take him into that place. But you needed—the twin engine airplane required about 1,200 feet to get off the ground, and the little single engine, the Beavers, used 6’s; L-20’s they used to be called. Those only took three to five hundred feet to get off. So, and that’s what I flew in Laos. So, anyway, I’d fly both the twins, twin engine, and the single engine.

But I was in a single engine coming back from dropping somebody off somewhere up there, and I was over the Rung Sat [Special Zone], which is a huge mangrove swamp just off to the north and east of Saigon. I mean, it’s just miles and miles of mangroves. And anyway, the smoke started pouring into the cockpit, so I reached up, I got my—cinched up my parachute tight, and went ahead and pulled the latch to undo the door, and the door flew off, and I figured, *Well, the engine’s sounding okay, so I don’t think I’ve got an engine fire. I’ve just got some smoke, and it probably is electrical. So,* I said, *I think I’ll just go ahead and fly this bird until it quits, and when it quits, then I’ll jump*. But it didn’t quit, and so I flew it back to—and when I opened—when I jettisoned the door, it cleared out the smoke. It was still smoking, but anyway, I came up and landed back at Saigon. It turned out it was just an electrical short in some of the wires. But, other than that, it wasn’t bad.

Had one scary time I think up at—I was flying the deputy back, the MACV commander who was General [John L.] Throckmorton, three stars, and I used to fly—I flew him quite a bit. But, anyway, I flew him up—I forgot the name of the little base, up there right on the coast—and it was low clouds and everything. I came out of the cloud and I was about 40 feet right of the runway, and I kind of banked it up and I probably missed the ground by about two inches with the wing tip, but I got him in there.

And I used to fly Mrs. [Katherine S.] Westmoreland and Mrs. [Regina T.] Throckmorton. They’d do the “cookie run” up to the hospitals where the wounded were taken, the American wounded. And they would—at that time, if you were MACV, you

could bring in, if you had an accompanied tour, you could bring your wife over. And several of the generals had wives, and a couple of the colonels, that they had brought over. And they would meet and bake cookies, and then they would take them up and pass them out at the hospital. And I usually—I liked to fly that run. I always volunteered for it. It was kind of neat to do. Yeah, the ladies were very nice. And besides that, I got a cookie. [laughter] So, anyway, that was just an aside.

Like I say, the first tour was really a gentleman's war. You would fly, and I lived in a BOQ [Bachelor Officers' Quarters] with a bunch of other pilots, and there was another big, the 145th aviation company which had a big BOQ down the street. Those were helicopter pilots and they were crazy. They'd have wild parties at night, and women and everything running around. Not my cup of tea. But, you'd go out and you'd fly and fight during the day, and then at 8:00 you'd be back on the ground and have a steak dinner or whatever, and go to the bar or go to the club, and that's where you ate anyway, and have a drink or whatever. So, you know, but at night everything used to shut down. That was '64, early '65. Late '65 it started changing. And we went from, like I say, when I got there, there was about 12,000 total Americans, of which about probably 2,000 plus were aviators. Most of my friends that I'd gone to flight school with and knew were there about that time for their first tours. So, like I say, we knew each other, a lot of us, so, all of us having similar experiences.

CALCATERRA: And how did your understanding of the conflict change throughout the course of your first tour? So you said that it started changing in '65. Did your expectations, were they met? Or was there anything surprising about being in Vietnam that you didn't expect to encounter? Or yeah, how was your understanding of the whole conflict changed after this tour?

BUTTERFIELD: I really didn't—you know, I didn't have any expectations. The country itself was absolutely gorgeous when I was there in '64, '65. Teddy Roosevelt had built a huge hunting lodge up at Ban Me Thuot, and that was still standing. Gorgeous teak logs, I mean, and beaches, and you could see the whale sharks if you flew along the coast. The whale sharks were in close to shore; you could see them from the air. I always flew fairly low, around 3,500 feet, because I liked the views. The jungles were beautiful. There were still tigers and elephants in the jungles, and occasionally you would see an elephant, not very often. And then they started using them for hauling stuff down, the bad

guys did, so people started killing them. But, anyway, the country, like I said, it was just absolutely beautiful.

The food, if you ate out on the economy, which I tried to do, downtown Saigon, you know, the French had basically taught them how to cook, and you could not beat the food anywhere. It's the best food I've ever had in my life, even today. And thinking back, you know, it was really good. So, I thought my first tour, it was nice. On Sundays the Rex Hotel, downtown Saigon, we'd go down there, a couple of us, and they had a barbecue up on the roof. The Rex was the BOQ basically for the colonels and all of the high level staff at MACV. But we would go down and go up on the roof, and in the evening you could watch artillery fire and all that other stuff, the flashes and all that stuff. It was, like I say, it was a gentleman's war. I did not think it was—you know, it wasn't a war to me. I had a couple of friends killed, but they were advisors. And I had a good friend had his legs blown off with a mine. But, I just, you know, I wouldn't—it was just a normal—I thought it was an exceptional because of the beauty of the place and the people. It was just really nice.

CALCATERRA: And did you interact with a lot of South Vietnamese, either local civilians or troops?

BUTTERFIELD: No. I flew a lot of the generals. Of course, this was during the time of the coups, and every time you'd turn around, there was a Big Minh [General Duong Van Minh] or Little Minh [General Tran Van Minh] or whatever. You never knew who was the President until finally [Nguyen Van] Thieu took over. He was the chief of staff. But I used to fly them and their wives up to Da Lat. That was the military academy place which is up in the mountains north of Saigon, again a gorgeous place. Any time I'd fly up there, I'd always go downtown while the generals were doing their thing. I would go downtown and buy vegetables, fresh vegetables. They raised a lot of vegetables up there, and I'd bring them back to the BOQ and have them cook them up just for me.

So, but I never had any close Vietnamese friends or anything. I knew several of them. I'm trying to remember which—I think it was Big Minh, I had to fly him out of Saigon. One of the other generals brought their division in, and they were having a coup in the middle of the—and in the middle of the coup, he decided he'd skip town. And I got a call to go out and fly this guy. I got down to the runway, or got down to the airfield, and got him and his wife into the airplane, and tried to take off, and the tower

was hollering at me. They had airplanes trying to block the runway and everything, but I flew around it and flew him up to—I forgot where I flew him to, he and his wife. But anyway, he didn't get killed during the coup. Probably sitting over here in America somewhere, or was. Probably dead by now. But anyway, you know, that kind of stuff. And you don't give it a second thought.

CALCATERRA: And, so in some of my research for the interview and looking into Army aviation, it seems like in 1966 the Johnson-McConnell agreement sort of limited the fixed wing aviation of the Army, their capacity, to lighter unarmed aircrafts and mission support. Did that impact your role?

BUTTERFIELD: No. That was all about the Caribou. The Army had bought a, what we called a Buffalo, which was—the Air Force renamed the CV-7, which was a twin engine, I won't say large capacity, but a larger aircraft. And the Air Force thought that we were impinging on the role of the Air Force by using it to ferry troops and cargo. Well, I guess we were. I had a good friend who flew Caribous, and the Air Force—when they passed that bill, we had to turn over the Caribous to the Air Force. We flew a lot different than what the Air Force did back in those days. The capacity of the Caribou, I believe, seems to me like it was, I don't know, 40 troops maybe, either as paratroopers and/or passengers, that you could haul. But it was not unusual for a Caribou to come out of a hot zone or go into a zone with a load of 80 troops. The Vietnamese weigh maybe a hundred pounds soaking wet, and an American with all his gear and everything weighs probably closer to 200. So we just doubled everything and, you know, you flew. It was safe.

When the Air Force took it over, they would limit everything to exactly what the book says. They were kind of "by the book" pilots. And back in the early days, for example, we didn't use—in the '60s, in the early '60s, we didn't use a lot of checklists on our aircraft. I mean, we'd jump in; we'd "kick the tire and light the fire," so to speak, and go do things. We flew totally different from the Air Force. We're not hidebound by rules and all that other stuff. You used a lot of common sense. We didn't have—you know, our nav aids were pretty primitive in our aircraft compared to what the Air Force had. They had TACAN [Tactical Air Navigation System] and a lot of this other stuff. We didn't. That was the early direction, you know, "highway in the sky" stuff that they could do. We flew low and slow, and just did our job. So, that was the only impact that I saw.

And like I say, I had several friends that were flying Caribou, and they just had to give them up and go into different aircraft. The guy that I knew best that he and I were in flight school together, he wound up flying a Navy PV-2 off the coast of North Vietnam, listening for—as a radio intercept aircraft. A PV-2 is four engines. It was old Super G Connie at the time, an old Convair triple tail thing. It was the biggest airplane that the Army ever had. Kind of like the Army and jets. We never got a jet aircraft.

CALCATERRA: Well, thank you for explaining that a little bit more for me. I'm wondering how, so according to my understanding, in your second tour you were a helicopter pilot and commanding officer.

BUTTERFIELD: Yes.

CALCATERRA: So, I'm wondering how you got to assume those new roles? And also, there seemed to be a couple of years in between your first and second tour, so maybe if you also want to talk about what you were doing in between those tours?

BUTTERFIELD: Sure. I came back from Vietnam in October of '65, and was assigned to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, which is the home of the artillery. I was Army aviation. At that time you had to maintain what they called branch proficiency. In other words, if you were an infantryman, you could also fly, but your primary function was as an infantryman. And if you were artillery like I was, your primary function was artillery, but you also flew. In the early days of Army aviation, the artillery used the aircraft in World War II as spotter aircraft. In other words, they'd fire—they'd direct their artillery. So, most of the early aviation was artillery.

Anyway, when I got back, I was a captain, still a captain, so I went to the advanced course at Fort Sill, which is basically the company grade lieutenants and captains, of course, there. And graduated, and stayed there at Fort Sill as the adjutant for the artillery aviation company that supported operations there at Fort Sill. I got to fly a couple more different aircraft, twins—the BC-3 and the Aero Commander. We had those, so I got checked out in those also. And as the adjutant of the command, I had dealings with all the personnel issues of the command. So I would reassign aviators that came to us, and that type of stuff. It'd been extraneous stuff, but I also flew.

In I think it was sixty—I forgot whether it was my first or second year—anyway, while I was at that job, they came down and

asked me from Washington if I would be a test pilot on a computerized version of the twin Beech, which I flew and had a lot of hours in by that time, about a thousand hours, I guess. But they wanted to try out some new navigation and computerized devices. So I said fine. Well, I didn't say fine. I went off to New Jersey for I think three months, me and another fellow, and we flew that aircraft all around the northeast that had a big I think 400-pound computer in the back of it, all vacuum tubes, and then a CRT for a display for the pilot. Regular instruments on the other side for the co-pilot so he could recover. Had a radar altimeter on it. Had a crude navigation system automated that you could punch in the coordinates and it supposedly would take you there. But anyway, I did that for three months, and then wrote my report.

And then I came back, continued to fly from Fort Sill there, and then I got orders to helicopter school, and my second tour. So I went to Fort Rucker again and transitioned into helicopters. That was in '67, early '67. I had a lot of what we call instrument time; that is, you fly blind: if you got clouds or rain or whatever, you can't see anything. And I had a lot of instrument time in twin engine aircraft and in single engine. After I got rated as a helicopter pilot, they kept me there and trained me to be an instrument rated helicopter pilot, which is very difficult. If you've ever tried to stand on top of…[pause]

So, anyway, I got my helicopter rating. At the time there were maybe only six or seven helicopter pilots that were instrument rated. So anyway, I got that, and then was assigned to Fort Knox [KY] to form up an air cavalry unit, 3rd of the 17th Cavalry. There was two units formed there at that same time. 7th of the 17th and the 3rd of the 17th, each of which had five companies: a headquarters company; three aviation, three helicopter companies; and a ground company, a scout.

So, anyway, I got there and I have been promoted to major during this time. So I got there, and the commander said, "Well, welcome. I've got all these disparate arms officers. They're not armored. They don't understand the armor tactics and all that stuff." And I said "okay." And he said, "What would you like to do?" He said, "I can put you as a regular pilot in one of these units or whatever. And I said, "No, I'm a major." And I said, "You've got—your authorization is for majors to command your companies, and you've got two captains, or three captains out of your five commands. You've got two captains commanding." I said, "I'm a major. I want a major's job." He said, "But you're

artillery," and I said, "Yeah, I know. But don't hold that against me." And he said, "Well, if you'll go and read the armor manual, come back and I'll quiz you, and if you pass, I agree to give you the headquarters company," which is, that's the support role. And I said "fine." So, I did, and that's how I wound up with the headquarters company. I kept it six months at Fort Knox, formed it up. I had about—I think I had around 240 people in that unit. I had seven helicopters, mostly command and control, and utility. Most of my work was done at my desk, however.

All kinds of stuff came up while I was there. I had a group of conscientious objectors. That was a thrill a minute. [laughter] And then also, because I was the only helicopter rated instrument pilot, I was getting called out by the commanding general to, you know, "come fly me to Washington." Well, it's raining like hell out there or whatever. We got bad weather. We can't go. But it was a short hop, maybe an hour-and-a-half flight, but I was the only one that was rated to go. So, I did a lot of that, a VIP again. And, after I got the unit formed up and we were ready to go, they sent us over by boat. Went out to Oakland. I had all the medics for the whole unit. The whole unit was probably around 800 people, and I had all the medics and the cooks and all that, and then I'd assign them out to various units.

I had two people killed in accidents while I had command. One of my medics was involved in a mid-air collision that killed 14, and so I lost him. And then I had another guy, another kid that was one of my POL (Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants) drivers, drove a tanker, 2,500 gallon tanker. We were training in Georgia, and he missed a curve on a road, the truck went over the side, and he decided to jump and the truck rolled over him. And I got a call, and so I came back in. I'd been flying somewhere. Came back in and got to put him on my desk in my orderly room there. They had him laid out on the desk, and I got the coroner to come in and take him away. But, anyway, those were all parts of command.

I had another medic that decided to steal a Jeep and go into town one night, got drunk, wrecked the Jeep coming back. And anyway, the colonel wanted to court-martial him, so I quickly gave him an Article 15, which is a non-judicial punishment, because he was a good kid. And anyway, I gave him an Article 15 and told him, "I can't do it, sir, because I've already given him an Article 15." And the colonel really got mad at me. But I knew he was a good kid, and he was. He wound up with a

silver star and a purple heart in Vietnam. Just a real fine young man.

So, anyway, then we went over. I took them over by boat. Oh, I had another conscientious objector. I had a friend, a black officer, a major also who ran the stockade at Fort Knox. And I had this kid, black, that was just—his momma had told him she did not want him to go to Vietnam, and he was not going to go, and so he tried every which way that he could to do it, and I finally wound up having to send him to the stockade. But I told him, I mean he was just—he wouldn't do anything. The first sergeant and I would talk about him, and I'd have to throw him in the stockade again. And I had this friend that ran the stockade, and I told Wes, I said, "When this guy gets"—I said, "When we go, I'm gonna come over and we're gonna take him out. We'll keep him in handcuffs, put him on the plane, and we'll get him to Oakland, I'll put him on the boat, and when he gets to Vietnam, I'll turn him loose. And he can fight his way back." But, that didn't happen. I got him as far as Oakland and got him on the boat, and the next thing I know, his mother had called some Congressman, and the next thing I know, [laughter] they came in and swooped in and grabbed him. Because I told him when I got to Vietnam, I told him exactly what I was going to do. I said, "We're gonna get out there, I'm gonna give you a bayonet, and you're free to go. Do your thing." But, I guess somehow he got word to his momma, and that kind of stopped that.

But, anyway, we got to Vietnam, and we were stationed in Di An. I picked up an ordnance group that was part of my command, 68 people, and I think about the third night, no, about the fifth night we were there, first week, we got the bejesus mortared out of us. But they had hit the maintenance area, and I had 49 wounded that night. Didn't have anybody killed, but I had 49 wounded. And that was the way we started my second tour. Then, a couple of weeks later we moved out to the boondocks up at the base of Nui Ba Den, which is the Black Virgin Mountain up by the Cambodian border, the border between Cambodia and Laos. And we're out there in a field, had all the aircraft parked around. We were the only unit there. We got mortared, oh, every other night or so, not bad, just a few shells came in. But, I had some interesting times there. We were part of Operation (oh, I can't think of the name of it) something Stone. I don't think it was Yellowstone.

CALCATERRA: Can you describe it?

BUTTERFIELD: Yeah. The North Vietnamese were coming in down the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and right there at the border between Cambodia and Laos, they had come into the Michelin Plantation. The Michelin, the French gal that ran the Michelin, we knew she was friendly with the North Vietnamese, and she had provided them with lodging basically. They could dig their tunnels and all that stuff in there. So they had a division there. And our job was to patrol that border between the Parrot's Beak and the Fishhook. The Parrot's Beak was the piece of Cambodia that kind of stuck out a little bit into Vietnam, and then the Fishhook was down along the Cambodian border where the Plain of Reeds was, which is the Mekong in flood stage. The Mekong River kind of flowed along there.

So the units, not my particular—I wasn't directly involved in that, other than supporting it, supporting our operations. But anyway, we were out there I think for two months maybe. We got mortared and we got shot at. You know, they'd got snipers along the way there. I dismounted one of my mini-guns off one of my helicopters and mounted it in a Jeep, took it out to the perimeter, and we had a guy out there, every now and then he'd come in about 2:00 in the morning and fire a couple of shots towards our area or into our area. And he only did that once—well, he didn't do it anymore after the first time we cut down on him with the mini-gun. There wasn't anything hardly left. We found a couple of pieces of clothing and all bloodied up, but he never came back.

So anyway, and I had one of my pilots… It was Operation Yellowstone was what that was. Anyway, had one of my pilots land on top of another helicopter while it was operating and he lost his legs. That's Mr. Robbins. And, other than that, just until Tet it was kind of fairly normal. We had picked up Cobras in late January of '68 to replace our Charlie model gunships, the Huey Charlie model. We replaced those with Cobras. And the night before Tet, the VC in our area got confused or whatever; they launched their attack the night before, and mortared and rocketed our base, and we lost all of our brand new Cobras that one night, but we still had our Charlies. So, when we started flying the next night, which was Tet, the beginning of Tet, we started at about 11:00 that night, and by I think it was around 10:00 or 11:00 the next morning, we had all of our 88 helicopters were down. They'd been shot up, but none of them had been shot down. We hadn't had anybody killed, but we'd just been flying them so much. That night the targets were everywhere. It was really a turkey shoot.

So anyway, at the tail end of Tet, we had an area outside of Saigon, a little village called Hoc Mon, which was along the Mekong and west of Saigon. And the North Vietnamese had come in, gone through Tan Son Nhat, which was the airport, come back down around and made a U turn and gone through Cho Lon, which was a suburb or part of Saigon, ethnic Chinese mostly in that area. And then, they had come out to the west to go over towards Hoc Mon to regroup and be evacuated back to Cambodia or to Laos. So, we had located that rallying point, and we started flying in there. We had two troops, two aircraft troops that we kept in there 24 hours a day for two days. And this was the time that they started the body count mentality was going on. So, after everything was over, we had to go in and count the bodies, and they were 1,300—I think there was 1,368 bodies, the bad guys that we had piled up there. We had one guy killed, had a warrant officer killed, and a few wounded. But nobody other than the warrant officer was serious.

And then, after that I was exhausted, and my six months as commander was almost up. And then a couple of days later, I was in the shower—well, for showers we had moved back into Tan Binh, which is the Catholic center of Vietnam. Most of the residents in that city—I don't know if there was a bishop there or something, but anyway, that's the Christian center of Vietnam. Most of the rest of it is Buddhist. We were stationed out there on the outskirts of that city, and I was in the shower one night about midnight, a little after—and that's the best time to take a shower because all of my business is done, and I can get away—and we had big old 500 gallon fuel bladders, black rubber, and we had put one up on a trestle-like thing, and then put some shower heads underneath it, and I was in there. I was all soaped up, getting ready to rinse off, and then all of a sudden the world exploded all over us. And I ran out of there with not even a towel and got into the bunker.

And then, after the initial barrage was over, we were between an engineer unit—our unit was stationed between an engineer unit and an artillery unit, and sappers had come through the wire and got into both units, and the ammunition dump in the artillery, which was right next to us, was going off. And I mean there were explosions, fireworks like you cannot believe! And then on the other side of us they'd also gotten into the big road building, those big graders that they scoop up the big scoops. They'd gotten into those, too, and put satchel charges on top of their 240-gallon fuel tanks. And they were going up on that side

of us. So it was a pretty intense probably half hour with everything going off around us. I got my towel and got dressed after everything started quieting down, and went to check my position ordinate. Each of us had a bunker that we occupied on the perimeter, and I got a call telling me that my bunker had been overrun, and the three guys in it had been killed. And this one kid in particular, Sergeant Danny Clover, had started out as a pacifist, as a young conscientious objector, but then changed his mind. And anyway, he was a radio man. But, he was a good kid. And so I lost—those were the only three I lost in country.

And then, two days later I turned over my command. I was totally exhausted. Then I went down, I went to Kuala Lampur [Indonesia] for a R&R, got six days. I slept the first three days. And I stayed at the E&O Hotel, which is where [William] Somerset Maugham used to spend his time when he was in Indonesia. So anyway, that was kind of interesting. I met another major, and he and I loved good food, so we went out and we looked for it and we found it. That was some great food down there.

Then, when I came back, they essentially told me, they said, "Okay, we've got a request from MACV. They want you up flying VIPs again. So, I left that unit. My command was up. I'd had it for a whole year. And I went back to flying VIPs, and this time we had King Airs, the U-21, which were turboprops. You can haul a lot more people. One time I had, I think I had eight generals with a total of I think it was 38 or 39 stars total, in one load, both American and Vietnamese.

CALCATERRA: That's a lot of pressure.

BUTTERFIELD: Nah. Not pressure. I mean, you're a pilot. You just fly. You don't pay any attention to who or whatever is in the back. You just do your job. But, anyway, I did that for my last five months in country. And then, you know, back to VIP flying. So, that was my second tour. Second tour was a lot different. When we moved out to the base in Nui Ba Den out there in the weeds, you know, I had my own tent, I dug my own foxhole. I dug it down about two feet, and when the rockets come in, I could roll off my cot, roll into a piece of—what do they call it? It was like drainage pipe, big galvanized maybe three feet across, like they use for drains, just half of it. And I had sandbags over there. I'd bagged all the sand myself and everything else. I had the rats. I woke up one night with a rat on my chest licking the salt off my chest hair. [laughter] It was a little different than my first tour.

But also, at the end of my second tour, I was out in the field for a while up at Long Binh [Post], I guess it was, and then they moved me back down into Saigon. And there I had a field grade BOQ. There was five of us: a lieutenant colonel and four majors that lived in the BOQ. We had a Vietnamese cook who had been trained by the French, and her husband guarded the gate for us. As we flew around and flew our VIPs, we'd always stop in. If I took somebody up to Da Nang, a two or three star general up there, I'd go in and cajole a Navy cook or whoever they had, "Yeah, I got a lieutenant general on board," I said. "He has expressed some interest in some steaks that he understands you guys serve up here. Any chance of us getting some?" And the guy said, "Oh, sure, for General so-and-so, yeah." It was a flight mess, and they'd give us a case of tenderloin or sirloin steaks. I'd take them back, give them to our cook at the BOQ. Man, I mean to tell you, we ate. We ate well. And when we flew people up to Da Lat, we'd always get our fresh vegetables and eggs and all that. And we'd fly people out to Vung Tao, we'd come back with lobster and shrimp. And I put on—I think I went over there… My first tour I went over weighing about 150 pounds and came back about 148. And on the second tour I went over at 115 and I came back at 165. [laughter] So, but it was just the last few months.

I also had a good cook. I had a Chinese Hawaiian who spoke Mandarin when I was the commander of the headquarters unit, Sergeant Ho. And I would give him, I'd say, "Why don't you take—we'll get one of the warrant officers. I'll put you in—I'll give you the helicopter. You go up to Da Lat, pick up vegetables, go down to Vung Tao and pick up seafood," and all that. And he would come back, and I ate like a king. Unfortunately, I made the mistake of inviting the group commander, full colonel, to eat with us one day, and the next day Sergeant Ho was gone, [laughter] transferred up to the group commander's table.

But, anyway, I think mostly reflecting back, you know, on reflection, there were good times, there were bad times. I remember more of the good times, and the funny. War gets really funny sometimes, and humor is a good escape.

CALCATERRA: And do you think that's sort of how you dealt with more of this violence that you had to witness?

BUTTERFIELD: Yes.

CALCATERRA: And more of the stress of the leadership role?

BUTTERFIELD: Yeah, that's the way you do it. You find a coping mechanism, and, you know, this was during all the demonstrations back here in America, and particularly after Tet. I was just appalled to look at the headlines in the American papers, and seeing that we had lost Tet. And I'm sitting there. They lost 50-some-odd thousand of their troops. We lost maybe 1,200. But it was a big defeat, and then of course the press played that up. And I've never forgiven them. They just distorted everything.

And then the demonstrations back there, and at Dartmouth, and that separated me from Dartmouth for a number of years, when they kicked ROTC off campus and they had the occupation of Parkhurst [Hall], totally soured me against them. People didn't realize that, you know, we're pawns. We do what we're told, what our government tells us to do. And we are loyal to our government, right or wrong. I mean, history will judge us. But, it just, when Dartmouth kicked off the ROTC and all that other stuff, I stopped giving. I'd always given to the alumni campaign. I just quit. And I don't know how many years I was out, probably eight to ten. It just showed me what academia was doing.

When I came back in the end of '68, October of '68, I got back, and I'd left my wife and kids, my two children, in Louisiana with her parents, or in the same town. She had her own house. I came back and I'd been told before I left Vietnam that we were going to go to Panama, and I was going to fly VIPs down there for Southern Command. But, I got back, and we're sitting around enjoying our 30 day leave, and I got a call from Branch telling me that that position had been filled, and that instead they were going to send me to Europe. And I said, "Archie"—I knew the guy that was at the DA Headquarters Artillery Personnel—and I said, "Archie, I've already got everything packed for Panama. We've got rid of our summer—all our winter clothes are packed. All we've got are light shirts. We don't even have jackets." And I said, "I just put—everything's in storage ready to go to Panama. And now you want to send me to Europe," and I said, "it's October or November in Europe by the time we get there, and I don't have any damned clothes. My family doesn't have any clothes." I said, "That's unacceptable." And he said, "Well, let me look around." So he called me back I guess about a week later, and he said, "How'd you like to go to Miami?" and I said "fine." He said, "Great. You'll be the Army

aviation—you'll be the aviation officer for the 47th Artillery Brigade or Air Defense Brigade." I said "fine."

So, I got ready to go, and darned if he didn't call me again and said, "I just had to assign a lieutenant colonel and I gave him that position." And I said, "Archie, [laughter] curse word, curse word, you've got to find me some place that's warm. I don't care where the hell it is, it's gotta be warm, because I'm not going anywhere where we don't have clothing already." And he said, "Well, why don't you go on down to Miami and see what happens when you get there." So I said "fine." So I packed up my family and we left, and drove down to Miami, and walked in, and I was artillery and the branch had split between air defense and field artillery, and so I told them I would change branches. And they needed majors, they had an XO position, Executive Officer position, for one of the Hawk battalions there. And I said, "You can change my branch, and I'll go to school out at Fort Bliss for six weeks, become Hawk qualified," and that's what I did.

I took that job, and I did that for a couple of months, and then the brigade changed its designation and got a brigadier general in charge, and he pulled me up to be the brigade adjutant and the personnel guy. So, I spent my time down there mostly as an adjutant. In the meantime, I had never gone back to college. I had taken college courses wherever I'd gone: University of Maryland in Germany, and University of Chicago when I was at Fort Sheridan. So, I decided I'd go ahead and get my degree. So, in 1971 I finally completed all of my course work for a bachelor of business administration there at the University of Miami. Had to go at night. A lot of campus unrest and everything. Couldn't wear a uniform. Had bad experiences coming back from Vietnam the second time. Got heckled and spit on at the Los Angeles Airport. I had gone into Oakland, and they sent me over to San Francisco, and from there I got down to L.A., and from L.A. I flew out to, I think Albuquerque, and then on into New Orleans. But, anyway, it was not fun coming back. They told us not to wear our uniforms or anything, and they were right. So, it was not a fun time.

But anyway, I got my degree, and then we spent four years in Miami, which my family and I thoroughly enjoyed. And then, was sent to Fort Bliss, Texas, and stayed there a year, and then to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to the Army Command and General Staff College, I had been selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel, and made lieutenant colonel almost the day I got there,

or a couple of days before. And then, I wound up teaching there at the Command and General Staff College. I was the Army expert on air space control, on aviation, and I forgot what else. I taught joint and combined operations. So I spent a lot of time in Brussels writing doctrine for NATO, or helping them write doctrine. And it was a good tour. But like I say, I enjoyed it a lot. I'd go to Brussels, I'd go to London for a couple of weeks talking with the Brits or wherever, you know, hammering out allied positions on certain doctrinal matters that we wanted to present at NATO, try and standardize the procedures for aviation, for airborne, for amphibious assault. I taught all of those. So anyway, that was where I wound up my career.

CALCATERRA: Do you mind if I ask a couple questions about some earlier things you mentioned before we keep going?

BUTTERFIELD: Certainly. Go right ahead.

CALCATERRA: Also, I want to acknowledge that we've been talking for a while and check in to see if you need a break or how much time you're available?

BUTTERFIELD: I've got my water right here and I've been sipping on it as we go.

CALCATERRA: Okay, great. So, I'm interested, you said that during the war, especially around Tet Offensive, you were disappointed in the public opinion around the war, and especially around the portrayal of the war. I'm wondering if at any point throughout second tour especially, you had any questions about the purpose of the war or the integrity of the mission there, or if at any point you were questioning yourself, or if you were mostly upset about the questioning of the integrity of the efforts in Vietnam?

BUTTERFIELD: Well, I wouldn't say I was upset. But, I'll give you an example of how deep the politics got into the war. In December of 1967, we were up on Operation Yellowstone along the Cambodian and Laotian border. And on December 23rd, all the commanders got called in, and the battalion commander said that he had just received orders from higher headquarters that, effective immediately, we would not have any casualties between now and December 27th. And we said, "Well, that's four days. I mean, we're out here, you know, doing our thing 24 hours a day. It will be impossible not to have any casualties. What are we supposed to do, stand down?" And he said "no." He said,

"We're not to report any casualties—or no deaths—during this period." You know, that's the level of how far the politicians had stuck their grimy little fingers into this war.

And the same way on body count. I mean, we'd go into an area, we were able to call in B-52s on our own, one of the few units in Vietnam that could do that. And we usually got a pretty rapid response, and we tried to keep it out of Vietnamese channels. If it went into Vietnamese channels, you were just dropping bombs on unoccupied rice paddies mostly. But, we had other sources, and we could do an Arc Light, which is a B-52 strike, basically on our own without going through the MACV headquarters. The 3rd Corps, which we were in, I don't know how they did it, but they managed to skirt the Vietnamese counterparts, and either that or they had good ones that didn't tell everything that we were doing. So, we'd have an Arc Light, and we'd land our helicopters when the last bombs were going off at the end of the strip, which was usually a mile, maybe a mile-and-a-half long, you know, 300 and 750 pound bombs were dropped in that little area. Then we would go through and drag these people out of their bunkers, count the dead and all that other stuff, try and find somebody alive. And they would come out, bleeding from their noses and their ears and everything else. But anyway, we were, like I say, about the only unit that could do that, in the 3rd Corps area at least, and it was very effective. But, the Vietnamese started complaining, "Well, you know, you just bombed the Michelin plantation and she's a friend of ours." And yeah, she's also a friend of the Viet Cong. It was a woman ran the Michelin plantation up there, a big rubber plantation, and the bad guys were thick as thieves in there in their bunkers and everything, and we bombed the bejesus out of it, and then went in and dragged out everybody and said, "See." And the Vietnamese didn't like that for some odd reason.

But, anyway, the war had become very political at the end when I was there, and it just didn't—it wasn't that it left me with a bad taste. I mean, that's the way it is. And I'd seen enough of that in Laos with them. One of my missions in Laos in 1965, I got a call one morning from the embassy that we needed to fly, take a package up to General Kong Le, who was the leader of the Neutralist forces in Laos. So, we went up to the airport, and the embassy's car is there and this 17-year-old French gal steps out of it, and we looked at each other, the two of us, the pilots, that "this is the package?" and the driver told us "yes." They were coming up on an election in Laos, and in Laos there was three factions: there was the Royalists; there were the Neutralists;

and then there was the Pathet Lao, which was the Communists. And they were coming up on an election. And the Neutralists was a breakaway segment of the army. Basically, a young captain by the name of Kong Lee took over the whole, about 6,000 men, and went off into the hills, and his capital was in Vang Vieng.

But anyway, they were going to have an election and Kong Le was going to lose. They were not going to get any representation. And the Americans wanted to get him out of country, so they had invited him during this time to be a guest at Fort Benning, to witness a bunch of the latest tactics and all, and weapons displays and all of this other stuff, and he agreed to go. And the French did not want him to leave the country. The French were just keeping their little fingers in, stirring things up. So, they got to him, said they'd send him a house guest for as long as he wanted her. So, that was what we delivered. And before, Kong Le, I used to fly him a lot, and when we'd go up, pick him up or something, he'd usually invite us in for breakfast. He had a nice wife and everything. We'd go over there and she'd cook us eggs, and I don't think we had any bacon, but we had eggs and rice and whatever. And he was just really nice. Well, we brought his girlfriend up there, and he didn't even invite us to the house. We took her over to the house, and he grabbed her and pulled her in and told his wife to get out, and he didn't leave for a couple of weeks. We couldn't get him out of country. But, it turned out that he didn't use his army to wreck anything, so… But that was kind of the politics.

Another time we were flying, we got called by the embassy to go up by the Chinese border and land at this old World War II strip. They gave us the coordinates. So we went up. They'd given us maps, but there wasn't any—all the terrain data wasn't included on the map; it just said "relief data incomplete" and there'd be a big grey area. So anyway, we went up and there was this old World War II strip that you could see through that had been cut in the jungle years ago. We landed in this thing and there was this eight foot high elephant grass that we dropped down in, and chopped our way all the way to the end, and they had told us that somebody would meet us. Here comes this little dude out of the jungle. There is not a village, no nothing, there is nothing around this place. No smoke coming up, no villages, no river, nothing. And this little dude comes out of the jungle carrying a briefcase, dressed in a suit and a tie, and he's Asian, and he just comes in and walks over to the aircraft and says, "Take me

Vien Chen." "Yes, sir." Weird. I have no idea to this day what he was, who he was or anything else.

CALCATERRA: Wow.

BUTTERFIELD: And of course, the Chinese at that time started building a road into Laos, and bringing some anti-aircraft in, which we had a couple of encounters with, but no damage, just some shrapnel bouncing off the fuselage. But anyway, so like I say, it was a war of contradictions. You know, a beautiful restaurant in Saigon or a foxhole out in the middle of nowhere and some traipsing through some rice paddy. It's really difficult to explain to somebody the contradictions of it. I probably saw more, got to see more things because of who I flew and my varied experiences there, than probably 90% of the guys. So I think I got a pretty good picture of what the war was like. Second tour, when I came back, I didn't even recognize the countryside. It had been bombed. There were craters everywhere in the jungles and everything, along the beaches. It was just ridiculous.

CALCATERRA: Wow. And so, were you ever hoping for de-escalation of the war? Were you frustrated when the war continued on? And what was it like after your second tour, watching events continue to unfold?

BUTTERFIELD: You know, I don't really remember having a lot of position on that. I kind of buried myself in the work, particularly in my NATO stuff. We'd sit around and talk. The one thing, I think, you know, PTSD was starting to surface, starting to be recognized for what it was, and the people that I knew, the friends that I had at that time, I kind of counted myself lucky being able to tell my stories, and they theirs, listening to theirs, too, you know, so we had an outlet. The people that I really felt sorry for were those that came back, and you knew that nobody that hadn't worn a uniform or hadn't been there would understand what the hell you were talking about, or just not understand, period. So, those guys buried themselves into drugs and went out in the mountains and all that other stuff. And I always credit sticking around and having an outlet where you could talk about that stuff and what you'd seen and what had happened to you and what you had done. I always looked at that as a catharsis that prevented you becoming fixated on what was going on on war and what it had been, and your experiences at it. Occasionally, I have a nightmare or a dream or something like that where I live a little part of it, but not very often, particularly in the last 10

years, or 12 years. Every now and then I'd wake up, you know, over the years, into the '80s and '90s in particular, and then by the end of the '90s, most of that stuff was gone.

CALCATERRA: So it sounds like this community of people who you could speak to and share your experiences was really important for you. How did you feel about veterans who chose to join the anti-war movement, such as Vietnam Veterans Against the War or groups like that?

BUTTERFIELD: I didn't pay them any attention. I had no feelings. I knew that everybody's experience is different, all right? And some people are going to get jaded. I mean, not everybody's going to feel the same. Everybody's entitled to their own opinion and their own thoughts and feelings, and I have never been in their shoes, so I don't know what they went through or what experience, you know, what happened to them to make them do that, or whatever. I just kind of live and let live.

CALCATERRA: And you mentioned also being sort of put off by Dartmouth and some of the anti-war activism, and the way it actually was successful at changing some aspects of Dartmouth, like getting rid of ROTC. When did you decide—you said that for a while that put you off. Did you ever get back to feeling like you identified with Dartmouth or you wanted to be more of an active alum? Or have you sort of still never reconnected with Dartmouth?

BUTTERFIELD: I've never reconnected. I used to—in the '70s, I think the last time I saw any of my old roommates or classmates was in the '70s. I had an experience. When I got back from Vietnam the second time, I went to see my sister with my family. Hadn't seen her in, I don't know, four or five years. She'd gotten married. She was married to a Cornell professor. And I arrived up at their house in Ithaca, and they were going to have a little party that night. And damn, I got in there and as soon as I was introduced, these damn people started screaming "baby killer" at me and all this other crap. I packed up my family and we were there less than three hours, and I packed up my family and left. And didn't see her or her husband until they were finally divorced.

But, that's kind of the reception I got, and I saw that a lot on the campuses that I visited after the war. I went to work for Control Data when I retired, and I was selling—doing educational computer assisted instruction stuff with the old PLATO [Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operation] system.

I don't know if you know about that, but anyway, we were selling it. And I was trying to get a contract for the military to develop basic skills training on the computers, using the computer as the teacher. And I went to Berry College in Georgia, which according to the President, she wanted to make into the Dartmouth of the south. A very nice college, very nice school. They're the ones that have the Chick-fil-A, that's where they educate their—employees of Chick-fil-A can go to Berry on a full scholarship. It's a really nice setup. But anyway, I was down here, and I talked to the Education Department and everything was fine, and met the president and everybody.

And then they said that they wanted me to make a presentation to the Psych Department. And I started off on this presentation, and the next thing I know I got this one guy jumping on top of tables screaming at me that they wanted nothing to do with the military, and I mean he just went off. I've never seen anything like it before or since, and the whole damned department was like that. I didn't even finish my talk. I just picked up my stuff and walked out, and went over to the president and said, "Eh," I said, "that's not gonna happen. These people won't let it happen and I think it's impossible to talk with them. You can't carry on a singing conversation with them." But, I mean this guy was up on a table, standing on it, screaming. And I don't know if he was the head. I don't think it was the head of the department, but they were damned if they were going to do anything for the military.

CALCATERRA: So, yeah, it sounds like there were some really hurtful experiences of mistreatment. And I can understand how that would make you not want to try to reconnect with a place like Dartmouth where that felt like some of that was coming from your alma mater.

BUTTERFIELD: That's right.

CALCATERRA: I'm wondering if you can talk more about your work with the NATO policy, yeah, doctrine writing, and how you got into that role.

BUTTERFIELD: Sure.

CALCATERRA: Yeah, if you want to talk more about that?

BUTTERFIELD: Okay, I was at Fort Leavenworth on the faculty. I was teaching in the joint and combined operations committee, which that

committee teaches how the services work together with each other, Air Force and Army, Marines and Army, Navy and Air Force and Army, how all those are supposed to play out doctrinally in various operations that the Army participates in. I was an Army aviator, I was an Army air defenseman, and I was an Army artilleryman. That was my background. So, all of those services or all of those branches use the air space, for example. And one of the issues is how do you control the air space over a combat zone? Is there a single commander? And what are the doctrines of the various services that allow the services to interact?

And basically, as I got more into it and trying to teach it, it became painfully obvious that the Army could not talk to the Navy because we used a different coordinate system, a grid coordinate. And the Air Force uses a different coordinate system than the Navy, and of the Army. There were major issues that I was seeing in what prevented the services from being able to communicate with each other and understand each other. The map coordinates was one. The automation of the air traffic control systems was another. The Navy was using what they called Tattle A and Tattle B for the naval tactical air control system, NTACS. The Air Force control system, AFSC [Air Force Specialty Code], was using a different computer language that wouldn't allow that the two services to talk to each other. You know, when you get an amphibious operation, you've got ships out to sea putting people on shore, sometimes they're Army, sometimes they're Marines. And you've got the Air Force maybe trying to support them. And how to you get fire down on the enemy along the beach when you've got services that can't talk to each other, literally? You have to do it all with human interface, so you have liaison officers who generally aren't knowledgeable of what these problems are.

So anyway, I started beating the drum and saying, "We gotta do something about this and we need to sort out who's responsible for what, where the responsibility lies, what we can do to standardize some of the communications things." Well, then that also got into air to ground operations. We found similar difficulties with the close air support that was not being provided by the Air Force, because it was too close to the Army, and again, the coordinate system and the communications issues were humongous. And, looking at—you know, studying some of the World War II experiences and the Vietnam experiences, looking at how—at the errors that were made, not deliberately, but just through ignorance. You got a bomber wing coming over

and killing 800 Americans in World War II, because they'd bombed the wrong thing. They bombed what they were told, but they were not told that there was Americans in there. So, you know, you have to go back and study a lot of military history. And I enjoyed that. I enjoyed the historical aspects of the military.

So, I was selected, then, to go ahead and represent the Army at NATO in some of these doctrinal discussions, because it expanded—if we couldn't talk to ourselves, how could we talk to an ally? I mean, that was bad enough. So we put together working groups basically that consisted of an Army, a Navy an Air Force, a Marine, a New Zealander, an Australian, a Brit, you name it, both of the Anzac organizations, the Australian, U.S., our commitments down there.

Pardon me, I've gotta go out on my balcony and close my windows, close my hurricane shutters. Starting to get a little rain and I don't want my rug to get wet out here.

CALCATERRA: Sounds like a lot of rain!

BUTTERFIELD: My condo is on the beach here on the barrier island, so I look out over the ocean, and there's rain out to sea and it's moving in.

So anyway, that's the way I got into it. And then the next thing I knew I was on the standardization of aircraft markings, or aircraft ordnance, so we could interchangeably use the Air Force—we could tie an Air Force bomb onto an Army helicopter or use an Air Force rocket to fire from an Army helicopter, or vice versa, and Navy. And so I got on that board. And then, the big one was the air space control, and so I wound up writing, by myself almost, air space control doctrine. I wrote the manual that NATO used to use. I don't know if they still do or not. And I studied the data systems, the tactical data systems that the Air Force uses, the Army uses for its aircraft, and missile defense, all of that other stuff, as well as the Navy systems. The Navy systems were very difficult for me to understand, but I finally worked through it. I'd sit down with a couple of Navy guys and we'd go over it. I'd try to understand what the heck they were telling me. So, anyway, yeah, that's the way I got into it, and I spent about two-and-a-half, three years. I would go over to NATO twice a year, sometimes three times, and we'd hash out doctrine for amphibious operations, for air operations, for air ground operations, for air defense. And, being air defense,

that's the only really automated system that we had in the Army. And then I came to find out that only the Marines could talk to us, to the Army. None of the other services could talk to the Army air defenders.

So, anyway, that was very interesting, and like I say, I really enjoyed it, and I did that for my last two-and-a-half years in addition to teaching. I taught classes at the Command and General Staff College. And I also wound up as director of curriculum, designing the curriculum for the new tactics that came along after the Vietnam War, the insurgency stuff. That was interesting also.

And then from there, when I went to Fort Bliss, before I'd come up to Fort Leavenworth, I was head of the Army's safeguard missile system data processing division. I seemed to be the only one that knew anything about a computer. So, that's how I wound up with that thing. And they had the old safeguard system, which was the first system. That was finally stopped by—I forgot which President stopped that, but they tanked that system, which was fine. It was really overblown. But, anyway, I prepared all the instruction for the course that was never given. [laughter] So, that's kind of my story.

CALCATERRA: So, how did you decide to end your military career at that point? And did you hope to continue a different career after—

BUTTERFIELD: Oh, yeah.

CALCATERRA: –or go into retirement, or do you want to talk more about that?

BUTTERFIELD: I retired in January of '77, 20 years, one month and a few days, 20 days I think, after I had come in. I had come in as a reserve officer, rather than a regular Army officer. Reserve officers, if you're on active duty, you kind of get second choice of assignments and all that other stuff. You're kind of looked upon as compared to the West Pointers or the regular Army officers… you don't get command, you know, unless under an unusual condition, which I tried to take advantage of. I kind of made my own way. So, I was very happy with where I had wound up. I came in as a private, and rose to sergeant, and then second lieutenant till lieutenant colonel: E-1 to E-5, O-1 to O-5. So, I'd had a good career.

But, in those days, this was before the DOPMA Act, Defense Officer Personnel Management Act. In 1978 or '79, they

changed that system, and so that if you were on active duty, you were automatically in the regular Army. As a reserve officer, you were always subject to basically being fired until you got 18 years in. And once I got 18 years in, I could, you know, speak my piece. That's why I loved that last couple of years in particular, because I was able to do that, and nobody—I mean, people hollered at me all the time, but I didn't care; they couldn't do anything about it, so… [laughter] So anyway, I decided I'd go ahead and retire. The general that I worked for at the time, General [James W.] Harrison, [Jr.], had wanted me to extend, and continue doing there at Fort Leavenworth another two or three years, or four years. He said, "Maybe I can get you promoted to full colonel." And I said, "I doubt that you can, sir. I don't have any command at the lieutenant colonel level, and they're not gonna give me a command as a reserve officer. But I appreciate it and everything. So," I said, "I think it's best I'll just step away. I've got to retire. I've earned my retirement and I can go ahead and get another career." So, I did.

And I got a call, I think November, I got a call from the Pentagon from a friend of a friend, who said, "I understand you're retiring, and that you are involved with Army training." And I said "yes." I'd done all of that: instructor and division commander and all that other stuff. I said, "Why?" He said, "Control Data Corporation in Minneapolis [MI] is looking for an Army trainer. They just lost a big contract because they didn't understand how the Army trains, and they need somebody that will help them write a response to a request for proposal to cover this area." And I said, "Well, you know, I guess. I don't know much about Control Data." So, I looked into Control Data and they're the big computer company and all this other stuff, and I said, *Well, I know a little bit about computers, so okay*. So I went up and interviewed, and they hired me on the spot, asked me when I could start. And I said, "January." I said, "I'm still in the Army, but I can start in January." So, I think on the 11th of January or so, I stepped off the plane in Minnesota, and in Minneapolis it was 11˚ below.

CALCATERRA: Oh, no.

BUTTERFIELD: And I didn't see it get up to freezing, to 32˚, until May. So, anyway, I started at the headquarters. I got into the aerospace division, which was their military division. And the longer I stayed there and the more I studied the corporation and asked what the direction was for this, it became apparent to me that they were focusing on the Navy contracts specifically, and as an

aside, they would entertain bidding on computers for the Army and the Air Force. But their biggest thing was the Navy, and it was what they called the AYK-14, which was the Navy flight control computer used on the majority of the Navy aircraft. And then they also got into the Abrams tank fire control computer and got that contract. And their equipment is really, really good, but they didn't have an understanding of what the support system for this equipment should be.

So, anyway, I muddled around there for six months, learned the organization and the company. And one part of the organization was called the Education Company, which was a computer-based education, an attempt to implement computer-based education. So, I had been trained; when I was at Fort Bliss, I went out for a six-week course in San Francisco to learn about instructional technology, and how you design instruction based on the requirements at jobs and all that other stuff. So, anyway, long story short, I wound up in that part of the company as a manager, and once they figured out what I could handle, next thing you know I've got 22 projects and the other project managers have got two or three. And so, I'm jumping basically through my butt every day trying to get all these things done, which I do. And then, but I get tired of it. I get burned out.

And so, I tried to convince the company, went over and saw the president of that division—he was an Army veteran—and I told him what I thought, that the Army could use this, and that I would go ahead and sell the Army on it, put me into marketing and I would go ahead and try and get the Army to buy off on this. So I did that. It took me seven years, but finally I got a $40 million contract to have them start using that. And the company sent me to Hong Kong with my wife and all this other stuff. It was neat. Got a lot of accolades. But, the Army never really bought into it, compared to what they do today. I mean, I finally figured out we were probably five years, 10 years ahead of our time. They all use—all the services use it now, but back then it was too new. And they're not great innovators, even though it was a DARPA [Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency] initiative initially with the University of Illinois. So, anyway, I did that.

And then, after 11 years with the company, I got downsized. They decided they were going to close down that division, so they downsized me. And at that time—that was, I think it was '89 or '90—and so at that time my wife was looking for something to do. She raised and showed dogs, show dogs,

Shetland sheep dogs. And she turned out to be allergic to dog hair, after 50 years, at 50 years of doing that.

CALCATERRA: Oh, no.

BUTTERFIELD: So, anyway, I said, "Well, do you want a bookstore? Why don't we do a bookstore?" So we did a bookstore. And I kind of retired, retired to bookstore part-time and everything, drove my wife nuts because I was there all the time and I'd always been traveling or whatever. So, anyway, she and I got divorced in '98, after 37 years of marriage. We'd had problems with our youngest son, and she still does, and he's now 48. But, anyway, we just kind of grew apart, I guess, and she got rid of me. And so, I kind of *retired* retired. My daughter was working down here at Kennedy [Space Center] on the space shuttle, and then on the space station. So, I decided I'd come on down here, and really liked it. Years ago, when I'd been stationed in Miami, I bought a piece of property at Port St. Lucie, which is down the road apiece. But, anyway, I like this, and no cold weather. I hate the snow. So, I just decided I'd move here, and that's what I've done.

And then about, well, three years after my divorce, I met this lady. We were in Lifelong Learning together. She was a graduate of Penn, Class of '60, and she had lost her second husband. She'd divorced her first, and then lost her second one three years before, about the same time that I'd gotten divorced. And, so we've been together now for, what, 17 years, 2001. And we have a lot in common. We enjoy each other's company, and that's, you know—both Ivy Leaguers. Her father was a Harvard graduate. Her mother was a Radcliffe graduate, and a schoolteacher. So, anyway, that's my life story.

CALCATERRA: Yeah, that sounds like a really nice story there at the end of how you two found each other. I have just a few more questions to wrap up.

BUTTERFIELD: Shoot.

CALCATERRA: First, I'm wondering if you're still involved in any veterans communities, or are you still in touch with people you served with at all, currently?

BUTTERFIELD: Most of them have died. I think I have one or two. I'm a member of the Military Officers Association. I no longer go to their meetings, however, even though they have a chapter here. So, I

belong to the national organization. I'm 50% disabled, according to the VA. I don't use the VA for my medical things. I use civilian doctors. So I don't really have a lot of contact with them. And like I say, most of my contemporaries are dead. I have a few that are still around, I think, but I haven't reached out or anything. I think that's kind of about it.

I have a large social network. I live in a 31-unit condo, and we're all very close, constantly going out to dinner, to lunch, or to symphony or whatever. So, we have a close-knit community here. I have a retired Marine gunnery sergeant and a retired Marine aviation technician, and we kind of swap war stories a little bit. And then, I guess I have two Marines—three Marines, three of us here. And now I've got a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel that's—well, I've got two of those in the condo that one of them flew in Vietnam for the Air Force in Army aircraft, L-19s, as a forward air controller, and the other one I haven't met that much. He's brand new to the condo. And we always get together and talk about old times.

CALCATERRA: And, have you ever considered going back to Vietnam? I know some veterans like to take trips back there to where they served and sort of reflect or find closure. Has that ever been interesting to you?

BUTTERFIELD: You know, I kind of got my closure after I came back. I know a couple of people that I have talked with have done that. I considered it. But now, you know, at 80, and both me and Andy, my significant other, she and I are starting to have a lot of health issues, so travel is right now not on the books. Right now both of us are awaiting procedures to fix what ails us. Modern medicine is great. It does a lot of things. But, anyway, the short answer is no. I really don't have a lot of desire to do that. I love—I've been back to Southeast Asia in the '90s, spent a couple of months over there in Thailand and Indonesia and Singapore. I love that part of the world. I love the food. I love the people. It's just… But I've never had a big yen to go back to Vietnam. I've seen pictures and everything. That's about it.

CALCATERRA: Thank you. And I guess my last question is, how does it feel to talk about your narrative like you're doing today? What does it feel like? What kind of experience is it to reflect or share your story?

BUTTERFIELD: I enjoy telling about my experience so that others will—you know, could either learn from it, if there's anything to learn. I

don't know what the moral is or what the thing is. Like I say, I kind of enjoy it. It gives me a chance to vent again, and I don't really vent that much, I guess, but to reflect. And it brings up memories. But most of those memories are good. It's been a long time. We have a—there's a Vietnam Memorial. I've been to the Vietnam Memorial a couple a couple of times, both the one in Washington, and we have a traveling wall that comes here, and I go up and look for my guys' names on it, and a lot of friends, several other friends that I lost there. And most of the memories, like I say, are good.

During my command time, a total between the United States and Vietnam when I had a headquarters troop, I had five killed and 149 wounded. So, unlike an infantry unit, even though the numbers sound high, most of those or a lot of the wounded were shrapnel from mortar attacks. Like I said when I told you about that first night, or one of those first, that first week, you get 49 in one night, that's not fun. But, moments of panic and all that other stuff. Kind of like aviation, you know: hours of boredom, punctuated by moments of stark terror. That's kind of… Yeah, the other thing I tell people is there's old pilots and there's bold pilots, but there are no old bold pilots. A lot of these young kids, you know, they get out there and fly down too close, not paying attention and all that stuff, and they don't last long. So, you got to kind of temper everything that you do. Do it and do it well, whatever you do. But, I think the real lesson is you can do anything that you want to. I mean, I had a hard early life and everything, but not unenjoyable. I mean, I always had… Always find something positive in your life lessons.

CALCATERRA: Well, thank you so much again for taking this time and sharing your stories with me and with the Vietnam Project. Yeah, it was great to meet you over the phone. And basically what happens now is we transcribe the interview and put it into the Special Collections Library at Dartmouth. And yeah, if you ever have questions, feel free to reach out to me, and I can also connect you to the leaders of the program if you have any other questions for them. But, yeah, thank you again.

BUTTERFIELD: Well, you're certainly welcome. And I enjoyed it. I think it was a nice catharsis. I use every little bit like that to, you know, bury some of those memories deeper and bring other ones up. You never know. [laughter] All right. Well, I'll let you get to class.

CALCATERRA: Thank you again. Have a nice day.

BUTTERFIELD: I'll do that, Paulina. Thank you very much. Okay, bye-bye.

CALCATERRA: Bye.

(End of Interview.)