

William E. Lamb Jr.
Dartmouth College Oral History Program
The Dartmouth Vietnam Project
April 9, 2026
Transcribed by Nora Cai '27

CAI: This is Nora Cai. Today is April 9, 2026 and I am conducting this oral history interview for the Dartmouth Vietnam project. I'm doing this interview with William E. Lamb Jr., and this interview is taking place in person in Carson Hall on the campus of Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. Bill, thank you for speaking with me today.

LAMB JR.: Oh, you're welcome. I'm glad to be here.

CAI: Awesome. So first off, I wanted to start with some biographical information. When and where were you born?

LAMB JR.: I was born in Watsonville, California, but didn't stay there very long.

CAI: Nice. Why didn't you stay there very long?

LAMB JR.: My dad was in the Navy, and I was born right after World War II. We moved. I have moved now probably about thirty-five times.

CAI: And when did you say that you were born?

LAMB JR.: On September 19, 1945.

CAI: Cool. You mentioned moving a lot in your childhood. How did that affect your experience? That's very unique.

LAMB JR.: It was interesting. It was a challenge. I went to eleven schools before I graduated from high school. So rather than having a group of people that were my friends through the whole time, almost every year those friends changed. It gave me the opportunity to meet people who I was pretty certain I wouldn't be around a year later, and try to make friends quickly and fit in and doing that time after time. By the time I went to my last school before graduating high school—I was reasonably qualified to enter someplace and feel comfortable.

CAI: That sounds right. And is there any particular place that you moved that left a significant impression on you or influenced you deeply?

LAMB JR.: I fell in love with Coronado, California, which is where my dad was stationed several times. For me as a child, it was idyllic. The beach was maybe four blocks from our house. It was always perfect weather. We stayed there for basically a year and a half, but it was long enough to fall in love with. I've moved back to the San Diego [CA] area since then several times. I'm torn between the San Diego area and the Upper Valley [NH], with Annapolis, Maryland as part of the three places that I really love.

CAI: You mentioned that you moved with your father. Did you also live with other family? Or what was your family like?

LAMB JR.: It was pretty well my mom, my father, and my older sister and myself. I have a year-and-a-half older sister. It was really difficult for her, because in those days, there weren't very many things for girls to do in school that engaged with a group of people. I always had sports that I was actually pretty good in, so people wanted me on their team. I got to know the people very quickly. My sister, on the other hand, had a much more difficult time making friends with people. She overcame that when she went to college, and today you would never know that she had that kind of childhood.

CAI: You mentioned that your father was very active in the Navy and stationed in different places. Did that run in the family, or did that influence at all what you thought that you wanted to do beyond high school?

LAMB JR.: It didn't really run in the family. His father had been a doctor. My mom's father was an attorney. Actually, he was a minister and then an attorney, and they were both fairly stable. My grandfather and my grandmother were divorced. My grandmother was from Virginia and grew up in a family that was recently well off, at least socially well off and bigoted in every way. My grandfather was also bigoted. He was a member of the KKK [Ku Klux Klan] at one point in his life, and was one of the only people that you probably ever heard of who, as an attorney, punched somebody out in court. But he did, and he ended up working for congressional committees as their counsel for a while. So it was an interesting upbringing. I didn't see a lot of my grandmother, and I really didn't like her. I grew to like my grandfather less because of his bigotry. But aside from always moving and having a military family and being able to see places that other people weren't able to see and having a variety of experiences in the process, it was kind of a normal childhood.

CAI: Did that influence at all what you felt like you wanted to do beyond high school, or were there any subjects in particular in high school that interested you?

LAMB JR.: That's an interesting question. My last three years of school, I convinced my parents—because I had spent the prior year in a public school in Annapolis and had learned absolutely nothing—I convinced them to let me go to a private school. After they checked around, they put me in a school called Gilman School in Baltimore [MD]. It was a five-day boarding school, and it was a relatively small school, and my class happened to be relatively small for the school for whatever reason. So we had about fifty-five boys in our class, and I boarded during the week and went home on the weekends.

After the first year, my parents moved to Troy, New York, and it's an interesting story all by itself. It had been arranged that I would stay with the headmaster on the weekends. So I stayed with him and his wife, who were absolutely wonderful people—stayed with them on the weekends and was treated as though I was one of their children. I was then sixteen. So that part was a little bit different. My family had moved to Troy, New York, and my dad, at that point, was in his final years in the Navy, but he headed up the Navy ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps] program at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and instructed for RPI on the side.

CAI: RPI is—

LAMB JR.: Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

CAI: Got it.

LAMB JR.: In Troy.

CAI: I see. So what year did you enter boarding school again?

LAMB JR.: Would have been 1961. I was class of '63 out of school.

CAI: Given that you traveled to so many places, do you feel like more of your learning came from life experiences or the classroom? Or was it a mixture?

LAMB JR.: It was a real mixture. I struggled with school early on in part because we were always moving, so I was never familiar with the curriculum. I was thrown into a classroom many times in the middle of the year without any knowledge of what they had studied already. And that was especially difficult for me in elementary school, where I was really

more of an annoyance to the teachers. Because now they've got this—halfway through the year, they have this new kid who doesn't know anything about what she's already taught, and now I'm a drag on her attention. And there were teachers who took that out on me as you can imagine.

But once we landed in Coronado for my seventh grade—second half of seventh grade—that problem went away. The people in Coronado had a better understanding of and willingness to help when kids came in in the middle of the year, because Coronado is divided from San Diego [CA] by a body of water. It's a very thin causeway that ends up being a large island, and in order to get to San Diego, you take a ferry across the bay. But Coronado is still one of the major naval bases on the West Coast, so kids were always coming and going. The teachers were aware of that and happy to meet new children in a positive way, which made all the difference in the world.

CAI: As your father was going on these military missions, did you hear at all about his activities and his expeditions abroad?

LAMB JR.: Yes and no. In the early years, he was a naval aviator and flew fighters. And his squadron, which he was heading up, was attached to the [USS] Valley Forge aircraft carrier. They were very close to Korea when the war broke out, and so they were really the first group of fighters that got involved with supporting South Korea against North Korea. My dad shot down one of the first MiGs ever to be shot down and came home a hero. He had been a Navy ace, which means he shot down more than five planes or more in World War II, and then he shot down this other plane. When he came home, it was a big celebration, and the media was there. I still have a picture of him getting out of his fighter jet with my mom, my sister, and myself in the background and a photographer taking the picture. So it was a big deal.

But in terms of specifically what he did during that period of time, I was totally unaware of it. I was just too young.

CAI: Do you remember approximately what year that was?

LAMB JR.: That was probably 1952, '53.

I didn't know much about his career at that point. I learned more about his career as I grew older. He ended up being stationed at the Naval Academy and was actually there at two different times. I became more aware of what he was doing there than what he was doing prior

to that, and pretty well stayed in touch with what he was doing for the rest of his career.

CAI: In general, just thinking about the photo off the fighter jet, was there a sense of pride associated—?

LAMB JR.: Always. The Navy Cross—I don't know if you're familiar, but somebody might not be. The Navy Cross is the second highest medal that the military awards. First is the Congressional Medal of Honor, and then there's the Navy Cross. The other branches of the military have similar awards. It's extreme heroism. We had—growing up—always had a copy of his citation in a frame, and it was a piece of paper like that [gestures] but framed. That was his award. In that kind of environment, you've got to be influenced. As a kid, I felt really proud of my father. And it wasn't just my father. It was also my uncles. One of my uncles had been in the engineering space of his ship in World War II when they were bombed, and the engineering space is at the very lowest level in a ship. He ended up going down with the ship. So the ship was sunk. He died. That was my mom's brother. And then my mom's sister's husband was in the Marine Corps during World War II. He was at Pearl Harbor [HI] when it was bombed. And then he was involved in the invasion into Guam—I think it was—and was heavily involved in battle there and came out with a really impressive award for his work there and came home severely injured. He was in the hospital for more than six months. So I had military around me and each of them did something that was very special—one by giving his life.

In addition to that, because of my dad's positions and friends, we often had real heroes coming to our house, and I got to know some of their stories. One of them was a childhood friend of his who was involved in the first bombing raid over Tokyo. A book was written about it and a movie, *Bombs Over Tokyo*. His plane, after they dropped their bombs, made it to China and crash-landed there because they were out of fuel. He ended up breaking his back in the landing but was taken care of by the Chinese people and made it back to the United States alive and good. He was one of my dad's very best friends. So he was in and out of our house as well as others. One of his friends lost his leg at Pearl Harbor. So in a military family like the Navy, the career people seemed to always be connected. Or many of them were—if you'd been there twenty years, you've served with other people that you know presently, or someone that you know who is a common friend with somebody that you were serving with presently. So they kind of stick together, and especially so with pilots because of what they do.

CAI: It seems like there was a lot of both pride but also knowledge of the possible loss or injury that could happen abroad. So when you were taking all of this in and observing it, did you think at all about if you personally wanted to follow in those footsteps, or were you not thinking about that at that time?

LAMB JR.: Of course. Yeah, I did. I'm named after my father, and at that point, there were only two children in the family. My dad didn't particularly like my sister for whatever reason. I was not only his namesake, but I was his favorite. My mom spent a lot of time—when he was involved with ships at sea—she spent a lot of time with the wives of the officers on board the ships. She was there when their husbands died and took care of them. So I grew up knowing that part of the service—it wasn't that I was driven to join it. I ended up—my dad had an expression: "If you want to go to college, you better save your money." And by the time I was at the point that I was ready to go to college, I had been away from my parents basically for three years—one year away during the week and home on the weekends, and the next two years living with a headmaster. I was not in a place where I could hold a job. I had enough work to do to catch up, because I was so far behind when I got to the school. So I had no money. And I did have the opportunity to apply for a Navy ROTC scholarship, which would pay everything and not a great allowance by the month, but some.

So there was never any question that I would either take a scholarship like that or go to the Naval Academy—one or the other—just economically. I applied at the Naval Academy and Dartmouth and Princeton. Those were the three places I applied. I was offered admission to each one, and I had fallen—as I shared with you earlier—for Dartmouth when I came up here to see it, so that's where I went. But being in the Navy ROTC was critical for me to get through college without having major bills—debt.

CAI: Before we move on to college, I wanted to ask what your father's name was.

LAMB JR.: Same.

CAI: Same name, right.

LAMB JR.: Yep.

CAI: Entering Dartmouth, you enter on an ROTC scholarship. Is that experience what you expected? Or do you remember what that was like—the first time stepping foot on campus?

LAMB JR.: I can share that. By then, my family lived inside the Naval Academy twice, and the most recent time at that point was when I was in ninth grade. I knew what Navy life was like for midshipmen. I was intimately aware of what midshipmen were doing, because they were always in and out of our house. So when I got to Dartmouth, I really didn't have any personal idea of what they were doing, but my dad had already spent a year at RPI running their Navy ROTC unit, so I had some sense, and it wasn't that much different from what other students experienced. The difference was we had some sort of drill every week one afternoon, and we were required to take a course—not every term. I can't remember exactly, but we either took an extra course or a substitute course two or three times a year. Aside from that, we were just normal students. And that was, for me, much better than going to the Naval Academy and having to put on a uniform every day and march every day and go through all the rigmarole that you need to go through that everybody sees when they look at a movie about the Naval Academy or West Point or whatever.

So it wasn't a big deal. The only thing that was a big deal about being in that program was you had to spend your summer someplace—. Freshman year, I spent my summer on an aircraft carrier. Then the end of my sophomore year, I went to Marine Corps training for part of the summer and Corpus Christi, Texas to be indoctrinated to flying. We learned a lot about airplanes and flew one a couple times, but with the instructor sitting with me. We had some indoctrination in terms of the Marine Corps. I got exposed to the Marine Corps and the Navy, both surface fleet and aviation. And that was summertime. We got paid—it was a pittance by today's standards, but we got paid for the time we spent during the summer. Aside from that, it was just like being a student like you.

CAI: And you came to Dartmouth 1963, is that correct?

LAMB JR.: Yes.

CAI: Okay, and you mentioned obviously, you do all the normal student stuff. Did you have thoughts about your major, what you wanted to study at Dartmouth when you came?

LAMB JR.: Not a lot. I had been so focused on just getting through school. I was very interested back then in what makes the world tick. The headmaster of the school, who I lived with on the weekends, had been—my school was not integrated. It was a private school, and he made efforts to get it fully integrated. I can remember going over to his house one Friday, and I guess I'd been out. Right after I came in, he came in, and he was really angry. And I said, "Mr. [Henry H.]

Callard, what's wrong? You're really upset." And he said, "I was just at the board of directors meeting. I had an incredibly well-qualified Black young man, and they refused to admit him." He had been at Gilman trying to get that done. He did a lot of wonderful things, but that was one of his goals. He was revered by everybody.

He submitted his resignation for the next year. And managed to get the young man who Gilman refused—managed to get him accepted to another school. It wasn't—we all think highly of wherever we were. Gilman, in my mind, was an incredible school. McDonogh School was okay. It was kind of a military-like school, but it was still in Baltimore. In my mind, it was probably number two. And he got him accepted to McDonogh. So a man of real principles, who was, in my mind, one of the most decent, wonderful people that I've ever met still today. I feel like living with him was a true blessing. He introduced me to an entirely different environment of the world than I had been involved in with the military, moving from school to school to school, and what I'd experienced when we lived overseas. It was really kind of filled in.

As a result of those things, I was really interested in what makes the world tick, more on a personal level than on a governmental level. Why do people treat one another the way that they do? What kind of problems really can't be solved, or what can be solved? That led me to majoring in sociology. People would ask me, "What are you going to do when you graduate with a degree in sociology?" I said, "I don't know, but I'll find something to do." Of course, I had four years in the Navy that was already staring me in the face. I wasn't all that concerned about what I was going to do with it, but I found it a fascinating area of study.

CAI: You mentioned that at the time Gilman was working on, or had not yet worked on integration.

LAMB JR.: They had actually integrated some in the Lower School.

CAI: Ah, okay.

LAMB JR.: And he wanted to integrate the Upper School. The board of directors didn't agree that it was the right time, which is a great excuse. "It's not the right time."

CAI: Interesting.

LAMB JR.: "Do it sometime later."

CAI: Dartmouth, at this point, had already been admitting both Black and white students. Did you notice any similar racial dynamics on campus, or was that mostly not an issue?

LAMB JR.: No, I didn't. I was very much aware of the reality that there were very few Black young men on campus. I think there were four. Might have been four in my class, but it was almost—they weren't here. I don't know if you're involved in a sorority or some other group house here, but I was interested in getting out of the dormitories. I was in Fayerweather [Hall]. I was also interested in experiencing some closer friendships than I had developed in Fayerweather. I looked at the various fraternities, and Alpha Chi Alpha at the time was one that was as diverse as it would have been possible for a fraternity to be back in those days. That's why I joined it—because I felt like they were people I wanted to associate with.

CAI: Aside from the fraternity, or within the fraternity, are there specific people that you remember and influenced you a lot at Dartmouth?

LAMB JR.: One of my sociology professors did especially. It was [H. Wentworth] Eldridge, and there was a story actually written in the [*Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*] a few years back about him. The title of the story was "The Professor Was a Spy." His course was on propaganda, and it was a fascinating course. I couldn't understand how this professor knew as much as he did. It wasn't stuff that was available in a book. I absolutely loved the class because his stories were so fascinating. I really regretted for most of my life that I hadn't sat down with him and asked him where he got his information from. How do you know these things? Turns out, he knew those things because they were his life, and I never understood that. He was influential. There were a couple of others—less influential.

How do we make those decisions? One thing I knew, even back then, was I didn't really want to do anything for the rest of my life. I wanted to do many things for the rest of my life. How do you make those choices? You're sitting here, you're soon gonna have to make a choice of what do you do in the next four years. And that leads to another period of time. And I didn't want to do that. I really wanted to experience the world and experience different aspects of the world, and that didn't work with most of the traditional career paths.

CAI: A this time, were you drawn to any student groups on campus? You mentioned your fraternity—any extracurriculars on campus?

LAMB JR.: No, I didn't have time for anything else. The only thing that I was drawn to was—the year that I moved to the fraternity, which would

have been sophomore year, I got involved with the—there was somebody in the house who had been coordinating the [American] Red Cross blood drive on campus. It was—I wouldn't want him to hear me [chuckle] say this—a half-hearted effort to do things. When he was ready to graduate, I offered to step in and take his place. So I got involved in the Red Cross blood drive in Hanover during that period, and it occupied a fair amount of my time. My story is written up in the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*. Actually, they ran it twice. But that's where I spent—that and diving—I was on the swim team—was where I spent most of my off-study hours.

The blood drive part was fun. I did a lot of different schemes to try to get people to give blood, and it really worked. Blood donations in Hanover went way beyond what anybody could have imagined. But I got a lot of support from the dean of students at the time, who was a guy by the name of [Thaddeus] Seymour, and that made a big difference.

CAI: And you mentioned your—that professor was Professor Eldridge. Do you remember their full name?

LAMB JR.: Nope, but I could tell you in a minute. I can look it up.

CAI: I can look it up afterwards. That's really cool.

LAMB JR.: "The Professor Was a Spy."

CAI: Interesting. During this time—it was '63 to '67, so the Vietnam War was escalating abroad. There was Operation Rolling Thunder in '65 and just various incidents that came to the US through news, and the public was becoming more aware. Did this influence at all your experience on campus, or did it reach the campus?

LAMB JR.: Oh sure. It was one of those things where I figured, I'm in Navy ROTC. If this war continues, I'm going to be there, because that's what happens with junior people. And at that point in time, I hadn't decided whether I wanted to be in the Marine Corps or in the Navy. There were things about the Marine Corps that I really liked, there were things about the Navy that I liked, and there were things about both of them that I didn't like. And I hadn't mentioned—my uncle at that point was a Marine Corps colonel and held a senior position. And the reality of death—knowing that you can be in a position shortly where your life ends—was unsettling, to say the least.

On the other hand, my upbringing, my family life, the ethics that the military family had were you serve. There was an expression that was

very popular back then: “my country, right or wrong.” I didn't buy into it. I believed that the US was making some serious ethical mistakes. I didn't think that we should have ever been in Vietnam. So I was very torn, which is—I didn't become vocally involved in any political groups. My only protest about Vietnam took place on the green, and I had second thoughts about doing it because I figured that the ROTC staff would be aware of it and not approve it, and finally decided I didn't care.

The draft is what kicked off the college's involvement. When I say the college's involvement—the involvement of the students here. As soon as it became a personal issue, it became important to people. Unfortunately, if I compare that experience to today, the actions of the country today are not all that different from the actions of the country during Vietnam. It was pretty much a war of choice, and yet it was something that all of the guys that went to Dartmouth back then were at least a little bit concerned about—concerned enough to actually show up to protest or support it but at least show up. Today, because we don't have a draft, there isn't that level of concern, and I think that's unfortunate. I don't necessarily believe that the United States should have a draft, but I absolutely, for many years, have believed that there should be mandatory service of some type in this country, so that young people feel like they're vested. And without it, we don't. I don't care what somebody does to be vested, whether it's in the Foreign Service or in a school or someplace but to make a contribution to the welfare of the country. I think if we had had that, we never would have been involved in Iran the way that we are today, and we probably wouldn't have the president that we do. So who knows.

CAI: You mentioned that because there was a draft, so many more people were concerned. Did you observe that visually when you saw those protests? Were there a lot of people?

LAMB JR.: Oh, yeah. When I saw the protests, when I listened to my peers. I had fraternity brothers who were talking about going to Canada. We had discussions about what do you do if you don't want to be drafted and people talking about somehow getting a deferral or failing a physical. So it was a topic that was openly discussed, and it was on everyone's mind, one way or the other. If your draft number came up—if you were not lucky and it came up, then you're faced to deal with it. Obviously, I didn't have to deal with it because I was already signed up. But that is, in my mind, what caused so many people to oppose the war and resulted in our finally getting out of there. I don't know what's going to happen now. We'll see. But I think we learned our lesson. We had our lesson. We didn't learn it.

CAI: That sounds right to say. You mentioned a lot of people having discussions about avoiding the draft and ways to do that. Did that mostly occur informally? Or were there official discussions or official protests that happened?

LAMB JR.: Pretty much informally. Within the fraternity house, we talked about it, and it was sometimes heated discussion. There were a couple members of the fraternity who were best friends, and they separated. It killed their friendship. One of them went to Canada eventually, and I can't remember whether the other one served or not, but it was really divisive.

I've recently gone through something quite similar with somebody who was a friend in San Diego, who was a friend for three years. We did a lot of things together. There were three of us who hung together. We got together for coffee every week and lived in the same condo. One of them served in the Russian army. He's from Russia and came over to the US many years ago. The other one was from New Jersey, and he signed up for Army ROTC—not with a scholarship, but signed up to be in the Army ROTC—and ended up having an accident and was no longer eligible for service. He is a strong Donald Trump supporter, and in my mind, is incapable of not thinking that Donald Trump is God. I view it as a cult mentality where anybody in their right mind would know otherwise. I broke with him about a month ago. We had been in Lebanon [NH] now for maybe three years, and we continued the relationship. Once a week, we get together on Zoom and enjoy one another's company. I got to the point where I just couldn't accept it. Couldn't talk about politics, because we were so distant from one another. But I think that unfortunately that happens, and it's happened in a lot of families. I expect you have peers who can't talk to siblings or aunts or uncles or maybe even their parents. And what do you do with it? I decided a couple months ago I'm done. I just can't. Brings me no pleasure. Brings me pain to hear people talk the way he talks.

CAI: Would you say that during that time at Dartmouth, there were also people on the opposite end supporting the draft?

LAMB JR.: Supporting the draft and standing up and saying it's your responsibility. "The US is saving the world. China's going to take over Vietnam"—all kinds of crazy things. But yeah.

CAI: You mentioned earlier that you participated in your first and your one protest on the Green. What eventually made it so that you cared more about that than the possible consequences with the ROTC?

LAMB JR.: I don't know. In looking back, it was probably something that happened. I would guess it was probably a piece of news that I read that just put me over the edge. And maybe I was—I'm sure I was feeling guilty about the fact that I hadn't been out there before. But it's kind of hard to protest a war when you're, in many ways, a soldier. On top of that, coming from the background that I came from—the military upbringing—I placed a lot of loyalty to the military and remember hearing many times from people, either in my family or close to my family, that comment of "my country, right or wrong." In the military, you almost need to believe that. You don't say "no—I'm not going to shoot him, but I'll shoot him." It took me a long time to work through those things to the point that I was willing to be vocal, and that probably came with my willingness to do the work that I did on my first assignment in the Navy, where I had a captain who was crazy, and I had to fight him. And young officers don't fight captains.

CAI: And I'd really like to ask about that more. But before we get to your time in the Navy—so when you participated in that protest, what was the protest, and how did that feel?

LAMB JR.: I think it was the earliest protest where—on the Green, those who supported Vietnam, the war, stood actually on this side [gestures] of the Green, and those who were against it on the Dartmouth Hall side, diagonally in the path that goes right across the Green. So that's Dartmouth Hall [gestures]. And this is those against it [gestures], and these are those for it [gestures]. And you stand anywhere you want on the line. Visually, it was very effective. So it wasn't a big deal. It was just a matter of, are you going to put your body and stand for what you believe? It was a good idea—I don't know that I've seen it elsewhere—particularly with a place like Dartmouth or Hanover, it's a great idea to stand up for what you believe. And it was, for me, obviously conflicting. I'm standing against the war in Vietnam, but I'm going to serve.

When I was in my first command, there was a flagship for the Navy amphibious forces, and I was on board there as an officer. Shortly after I reported for duty, I learned that one of the other officers—and I guess there were about thirty of us on that ship—one of the other officers had filed for discharge as a conscientious objector, and I stayed in touch with him during the process. It's very difficult to claim conscientious objector status when you sign up voluntarily to serve in the military. His saga went on for maybe six months, and the decision was finally made in his case—and appeals—that he was not eligible to be a conscientious objector because he was in the military. And that's one of the things you give up when you go in the military. And he signed up voluntarily to be in the military—how can you object the

war? For me, it was a lesson, which is: I took the money for college, and now the military wants me to do something that is part of that contract. Which way do I go? And I decided I was going to honor the contract instead of bailing—going to jail—because I could not claim conscientious objector status. I could get removed from the military and spend some time in jail, which was not—and I saw that as dishonoring my family as well.

CAI: When you were on the Green with the two different sides, were you in uniform, or were you—

LAMB JR.: No, I was not in uniform.

CAI: Okay. Did that experience demonstrate anything to you about the different opinions of the student body? Or do you remember many people were on each side?

LAMB JR.: My recollection is it was close to even. But I felt like people were standing up for what they believed in and visibly stood up for what they believed. I still feel that. I have a sign that I use at Trump rallies: "Your voice counts." There is value in doing that. I think just simply showing up is really important, and that's what disturbs me right now about what's been happening. I've gone to No More Kings rallies and held a big sign. And the turnout isn't—it's been a decent turnout at the rallies that I've been to, but it isn't what it should have been. And I don't get that. That's why I say people have other things to do, and it's not as important as I believe that it is, so they don't demonstrate. I think demonstration is really important, and I guess going through that process of standing up for what I believe and knowing that I might have suffered some consequence from the ROTC group was a worthwhile experience.

CAI: After that experience, did you end up engaging in any other forms of dissent, or was that the tail end of your time?

LAMB JR.: That was my senior year. And no, I did not involve myself in other dissent with the war. I can't remember what month it was, but it wasn't very long before I was stationed on board a ship that was at sea.

CAI: And leading up to that protest, you mentioned that there were some other instances of dissent that you observed, but felt some guilt about not participating in. What was that atmosphere like?

LAMB JR.: I wish I'd had the ability to engage with the actions that took place in the South—many actions that took place in the South. And it wasn't something I could do. I didn't have the ability to take time off from

school, and my summers were occupied fully by the military. I had a classmate who went to a Black college—I think in Georgia—and spent a semester there. I wish I'd been able to support Martin Luther King [Jr.] and others who were protesting. It didn't work out that way.

There's always a question of: does it really make a difference if you stand up with a group of people and express dissent? And I think in terms of—until you get sufficient numbers, it doesn't work. Might cause a few people to change their mind, maybe, but it requires a lot of people, I believe, to demonstrate in order to get people to wake up. I think a lot of people have a hard time waking up, just like I can sleep through an alarm [chuckle].

CAI: Me for sure, too.

Did you think that at Dartmouth there was that turnout for protests against the Vietnam War at that time? Or did you also observe, just generally, not having enough numbers to create or affect change?

LAMB JR.: The question is—it was enough numbers to cause the students who weren't there to think about it, and yet even with the draft, those people who in the lottery got numbers that suggested they wouldn't have to serve—I think many of them just—the Vietnam War didn't make a difference. "I don't have to go there." Until a person is directly impacted, it's easy to walk around and ignore. Getting people to move from being passive to active is not an easy thing. Some people are gifted at being able to do it. I'm not, but there are those people who really are. We need more of them.

CAI: So there's, on the one hand, the "my country, right or wrong," but then on the other hand, the ethical dilemma of the Vietnam War that you became more aware of over time. Did this influence at all your desire to go abroad after college—bracketing the requirement to do so contractually—and also your relationship with your father's expeditions abroad in the Navy?

LAMB JR.: Not quite sure how to answer that. Repeat that question.

CAI: Of course. Just wondering how you navigated the tension between the loyalty to the military and a military family, but also the ethical issues of the Vietnam War abroad and your participation in a protest opposing that. Once you found yourself on the cusp of entering the Navy, how did you feel when navigating those?

LAMB JR.: Yeah. By not long after the protest, I was in uniform in Norfolk [VA] in the Navy, and I'd been commissioned. And it was not—I thought

about Vietnam, I thought about what we were doing there. I had reservations about it. But I was serving my time. And it's not like there's a place to protest on board a United States Navy ship. There, it's not legal [chuckle]. So I went about my business, paid attention to what was going on, and had my own feelings. Thought about resigning and taking conscientious objector status but then learned that I couldn't. I was continually at odds with the captain of the ship for other reasons, so I really didn't have time to—there wasn't a place where I would be involved at that point in any kind of protest movement. I was just dealing with: now I'm in the Navy, and this captain is crazy—what do I do about it?

CAI: You entered the Navy in 1967?

LAMB JR.: Yes.

CAI: Could you say more about your captain, and what were the conflicts on board? Or what was that first like?

LAMB JR.: We had about 400 people on board that ship. Everybody has heard—I say everybody—most everybody, at some point, has heard the term “court martial.” The judicial system is a courtroom in the military, and there are different levels of court just as there are levels of court here. So in the Navy, which is a little bit different from the Army, Air Force—and it's the same in the Marine Corps—in the Navy, the commanding officer of a unit, whether it's a ship or base or squadron, can charge a person under their command with a violation of a rule or law. In that charge, they identify how it's going to be tried.

One way in the Navy—and only in the Navy—that it can be tried is that the captain, or the commanding officer, if the ship is at sea, can hold court himself and decide on a punishment. No one else is involved. It's just—you're the captain, I'm the offender. You talk to me and you say this, and that's what you got. And there's a limit as to how much punishment you can mete out. One thing you can do is send me to the brig—a jail cell, if you will—for a period of days. I think it's three days. You can sentence me to bread and water—that's all I get to eat. You can reduce me in my rank by, I think, one level. So those are those kinds of things. Then there's a court martial. That's called non-judicial punishment. And then there's a court martial. There are two kinds of court martial: a special court martial and a general court martial. A special court martial has a certain level of punishments that he can mete out. And then the general court martial—almost anything is available for punishment. The people who went on board a ship—the people who are basically the judges—are

identified by the captain of the ship. So it could be three men that the captain chooses to be aboard for hearing this case.

In one case, what happened was we were in Boston, and the captain ordered a court martial—a three-person board. They had a total of fifty or sixty years of service among the three of them, so really experienced people. They held the court martial, and the man who was being tried was sentenced to some sentence. I can't remember exactly what they gave him. We happened to be in Boston at the time. They came back to the ship, and the captain restricted all three members of the board to the ship for what turned out to be a period of two weeks. He was so mad that they had given that man a small sentence instead of the kind of treatment that he believed he deserved. Unlike our normal criminal courts in this country, the captain of a ship, under some circumstances, can do just what he did, which says, "I'm not happy with the judgment. Go back and try him again." He did that. Meanwhile, he told the three men that they were restricted to the ship until they tried this man again, and until they had reported to him that they had reread the *Manual for Courts-Martial*—a book about this big [gestures]. That was all illegal, as it should have been. And I found out that had happened from talking to the three men.

About a couple weeks later, somebody who was in my division—an enlisted man in my division—came up for court martial. I can't even remember what he did, but he came up for court martial. The captain appointed those same three men to try him, and that gave me an opportunity. At that time we were in Boston, so because we were in port—the Navy has a JAG office—Judge Advocate—in Boston that provides both prosecutors and defense counsel. I was the assistant defense counsel, and I got with the defense counsel out of the JAG office and told him what had just happened in the prior case, which was illegal. He and I decided that what we would do was: when my man came before the court, we would ask the members of the court martial board—the three men who had been in trouble—we would swear them in and then ask them to testify about what had happened in the previous court martial and disqualify them as objective. And file charges against the captain for manipulating the Navy's criminal justice system.

The captain found out what we were going to do before we did it, because the guy that I was working with was buddies with the prosecuting attorney, and as a courtesy, he told the prosecuting attorney, who told the captain. The captain came on board the ship—the attorney came on board the ship as we were eating dinner, and the captain was at the table. And he says, "Talk to you." And they

went to another room and talked to him. The captain came back, and if looks could kill, I'd be dead. He canceled the court martial, so it was never on the record. And that was the end of my career in the Navy. I left that ship not long after and ended up in Vietnam with the Marine Corps.

CAI: And what was the captain's name, if you remember?

LAMB JR.: It was Barkley.

CAI: Barkley was the last name?

LAMB JR.: Yes.

CAI: Okay. Do you remember the first?

LAMB JR.: No, it was just Captain Barkley. I'm sure I've got my records.

CAI: Yeah.

LAMB JR.: And that's the kind of thing that takes place in closed organizations where nobody is looking carefully at what is going on. Our ship had 400 men on it, roughly. An average ship with 400 men might see maybe four or five court martials in a year. We had fifty-five.

At one point, we were out in the middle of the Atlantic, and somebody saw a man fall overboard. Over the intercom system for the entire ship: "Man overboard, man overboard, man your stations." And my division was responsible for saving the person. You ever seen World War II movies where there's this—it's called a landing craft—where a boat comes down to the beach, and then the front of it drops down and tanks roll out? We had two of those, and I sent one of them out to pick up the man. But the ship is still moving, and the man is back here now. So the boat went to get the man, and the seas were high—about ten-foot swells. So with binoculars, I couldn't really see what was going on. Every once in a while, I could see the boat, and at one point I thought I saw the man in the water, but the man in the water looked to be swimming away from the boat, and I couldn't understand it.

The Navy frowns upon a captain who doesn't immediately get a man back on board ship when they fall overboard. It took us a half an hour, and the captain threatened me with a court martial over the speaker system for the ship—everybody heard it—because I hadn't recovered the man quickly. When my men got to him—and we didn't have radio communication—when my men got to him and tried to pick him up, he said, "I'm not going back on board that ship with that captain. Leave

me here. I want to die." Well, the side of the landing craft—it's not a normal boat. The side from the water is about this high [gestures] from the water. It's not easy to pull somebody out of the water.

CAI: About five feet?

LAMB JR.: Yeah. And one of them ended up jumping in the water, then another one jumped in the water, and they overpowered the guy and eventually got him into the boat. But it took a half an hour to do it.

So I never got court-martialed. But that's how much he was—he didn't get court-martialed. I think he was transferred out. But fifty-five court martials instead of two or three—the morale on the ship was terrible. It was a little bit similar to *Mutiny on the Bounty*. It was a terrible experience. I was so glad to get off that ship, even going to Vietnam.

CAI: So after that happens, how do you end up in Vietnam? Is that just the next assignment, or the captain sends you?

LAMB JR.: I was due to be transferred. And my next duty station—I went to school for a while—service school—and then was transferred to the unit that I served with in Vietnam, which was a unit called ANGLICO [Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company], which was a Marine Corps unit. And the officers in the unit—half of them were Marine Corps officers, half of them were naval officers. We did the same jobs. Our job was to lead a team—my team had three Marines in it—and we were ashore communicating with ships at sea, directing their fire support for the Korean Army division that I was working with. So we told them where to shoot. But we stayed ashore with the Koreans. And there were teams like the team I was on up and down the coastline. It wasn't a terrible job. It wasn't a great job.

CAI: What year, do you remember, did you end up transferring?

LAMB JR.: '69. Part '69, part '70.

CAI: After hearing so much about Vietnam during your time at Dartmouth, is it what you imagined, serving abroad?

LAMB JR.: The serving part—it was different from what I had seen. In part because I was assigned to the Korean Army Maeng Ho division, and that division is, in Korea, a very famous division. They are feared. I worked out of their headquarters. And unlike the American fighters in Vietnam, they took everything quite seriously. In contrast, I'll give you an example. If this was a base [gestures], then you would have perimeter security, which would include armed people spaced around

to protect it from the VC [Viet Cong] or the North Vietnamese Army. And during Vietnam, a lot of American soldiers smoked pot. So you had a reasonable chance that a number of them were smoking pot. And the attitude of many of the American soldiers in Vietnam who had been drafted was “I don't give a shit, what are you going to do, send me to Vietnam?” As a result of that, there were a lot of instances where either the NVA [North Vietnamese Army] or the VC penetrated those bases and killed people.

The Koreans—this was their base [gestures]. The Koreans would clear the area around it, put Claymore mines in the clearing, barbed wire in the clearing, and they would have sentries just like the Americans all around. The difference was that the sentries that the Koreans put around were told, “Don't fall asleep, don't do drugs. If we catch you asleep, you won't be happy.” The rule was if the supervisor could walk up to you and put a gun there, then he could pull the trigger. And it happened one time when I was there. The result of that was that the entire time I was with the Koreans, no one ever got into the base. No one even shot at the base. In the American bases, it was routine that rockets and other things were coming into the base. So I was very lucky in that regard and had a very good experience with the Korean Army. They were very professional, and they're good allies, in spite of what Donald Trump thinks.

CAI: Did you go immediately from the captain's ship to the Korean base? Or did you spend any time—

LAMB JR.: No. When I came in, I flew into Saigon. I picked up my weapon and some clothes—black jacket and such—in Saigon, got on a plane and flew from Saigon to an area called Phan Thiet. My job was supposed to be to relieve a Marine captain who was in charge of the naval gunfire unit there. He and his team of three other Marines lived in two underground bunkers. The ground was dug out and sandbagged all around, and a roof of sandbags—so they were reasonably well protected. And there were two of them side by side.

The day that I got there—about four or five o'clock in the afternoon—he sat down to brief me. I was going to relieve him. His name was Larry Doak. I was going to relieve Larry. About halfway through his briefing, we took an incoming rocket that didn't land near me, but it was near enough. And when we took the incoming rocket, the men that I was supposed to lead jumped up, ran outside, grabbed their chairs and sat on top of the bunker to watch the show. It was like a fireworks show to them. They were crazy. They were absolutely crazy. I'm not sure they were fearless. They were crazy. They were

probably fearless too. And Larry turned to me and said, "Bill, we take this almost every night." That was unsettling for me.

The next day, the person who was doing what became my job with the Koreans was sent home because his wife was in distress. And the reason his wife was in distress was because—the guy that I relieved was scum—he had made a bet with another man that he could send pictures of himself. They had been to a whorehouse, and they'd taken a lot of pictures. They were looking at the pictures, and somehow their conversation went to his wife, and he said, "I could send these to my wife, and she wouldn't do anything." And the other guy said, [inaudible]. "No, I can." So they decided to bet a bottle of Johnny Walker Red that he wouldn't do it or that he would do it. Two dollars, it cost at the military store. And he sent them. He dropped the pictures in the mail and sent them. What happened was his wife ended up in the hospital. Imagine that. He was sent home on emergency leave because his wife was sick.

Anyway, I took his place, and it was a really good place to be. The Koreans saw their time in Vietnam very differently from the way that the Americans did in good and bad ways.

CAI: You mentioned that a lot of the American soldiers were in Vietnam and not super caring emotionally about it, because "what are you going to do, send me to Vietnam?" Where did you fall in terms of your investment in what you were doing and how you felt about just the daily activities?

LAMB JR.: The Korean Army operated so differently from the way the American Army operated. When I went there, I was committed to doing my job, period. The Korean Army had the way that they wanted to use naval gunfire support. Fortunately for me, it was not seriously dangerous for me. That is unlike what would have taken place had I stayed in Phan Thiet. I escaped from a dangerous job into one that was not so dangerous. I appreciated it, obviously. I was very fortunate in that regard. I don't know why, but I was.

CAI: You were in Phan Thiet for how long?

LAMB JR.: Twenty-four hours.

CAI: Wow. And then you spent how long Korea? Was it the rest of the—?

LAMB JR.: I spent probably ten months with the Korean division there in Phan Thiet, and then flew down to a place called Nha Trang—if you ever get a chance to go to Nha Trang, it's a wonderful place—which was

the main office or the center for—Vietnam was divided into four corps, and Nha Trang was the II Corps headquarters. And ANGLICO had about eight teams in II Corps, but they were run out of Nha Trang. So the person in charge of all those was in Nha Trang, and I was sent down to do that for a couple months before I left.

CAI: And that was after—?

LAMB JR.: After the Koreans. I spent about ten months with the Koreans and then two months in Nha Trang and came home.

CAI: So it was around 1970 when you arrived in Nha Trang?

LAMB JR.: It would have been 1970—end of it would have been probably March or April of '70.

CAI: And throughout that time, were there any memories or moments that really shaped your opinion of serving in the war and in general the Vietnam War that maybe changed from before you went abroad?

LAMB JR.: Just reinforced it. I had discussions with my Korean boss a number of times. And his attitude was—and the attitude of the Korean Army—was that they were there to support the United States. The United States had been there to support them during the Korean War. They were not there to kill Korean soldiers. They were there to kill North Vietnamese and Viet Cong. And so they operated much more carefully than the American Army and seldom lost their people. The way that they fought was quite different. So if they had intelligence that there was a North Vietnamese or VC operation or unit here, they would surround that, and then they would use artillery that they had to pound it. And then they'd move in gradually and pick up the pieces. The American Army, if there was somebody here—if there was an enemy there—was more inclined to spread out this way and bring their soldiers in and have face-to-face combat. It was a very different approach to war, because the Koreans would not get close to the enemy until they had inundated them with artillery, so they didn't lose people. The division artillery commander, who was very close to the general who ran the whole operation, felt very strongly about that. He was very careful about the missions that I flew, and that's what kept me alive.

CAI: What was his name?

LAMB JR.: Kim. What a surprise, right?

CAI: Would you say that during that time you felt a sense of safety? Or—

LAMB JR.: I felt very safe when I was on the ground and in that compound. For me, that was the safest place of the places that I spent time in Vietnam. During the entire time I was there, there was never a shot fired into our compound or a rocket that landed in our compound. The Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army were scared of the Koreans. In contrast, the other American locations that I spent any time—all of them, on a regular basis, had incoming rockets or attacks. I don't know how I became so lucky. Maybe I deserved it after dealing with the captain of my ship. But working with the Koreans was a real gift. Nice, wonderful people.

They worked a little bit differently than Americans when it came to dealing with their deceased soldiers. I think they cremated all of their dead. I could see this from standing outside where I was living. I could look off in the distance and see the smoke whenever someone was being cremated. So they were very careful to make sure that their soldiers were not killed.

CAI: When you went to Nha Trang for two months afterwards, did that feeling change? Did it feel comparatively more precarious?

LAMB JR.: No, Nha Trang was a fairly safe city. It was a big city. The American base there was close to—it was kind of part of the airfield.

The only time while I was in Nha Trang that I felt at all threatened was two days before I was due to leave Nha Trang. I think it was two days. It was raining, and we had rockets coming into the base, and one landed and hit the barracks building next to us. Our barracks buildings were similar to this [gestures]. If you think of this glass being screen that started that far off the floor and went up to where the roof was, kind of like this [gestures], and they were all one story. So you're fully exposed with screening around.

CAI: So at three feet the screen starts, and then the roof is maybe ten feet.

LAMB JR.: That's right. You got it.

CAI: Okay.

LAMB JR.: I was in a double room and I had just gotten somebody who was new to Vietnam as a roommate. I was three days away from leaving the country, and it was pouring down rain outside, and all of a sudden you hear these rockets come in. And when it was quiet afterwards, I started laughing. My roommate says, "What the fuck are you laughing about? We could have been killed." I said, "Yeah, but we weren't. Think about it—those rockets, somebody had to carry those rockets.

And they carried those rockets all the way down here, probably from Hanoi [VN], on the back of some poor North Vietnamese soldier, and he finally got that rocket down into a nice cave not far from here. And what happens? It's raining cats and dogs outside, and his first sergeant said, 'Soldier, we're going to war.' And he marched all the way close to here and shot it, and he missed." [laughter] So that's my reaction.

The other side of my reaction was—everybody talked in war—if you're close to leaving, they talk about a short-timer's attitude. It happens in a lot of different areas of work, but short-timer's attitude—where you really don't want to get killed then. You made it through the whole journey. Now just let me go. And so after that incident, I slept the next night in the bunker. I said there's no way, so I curled up in the bunker with my weapon, and then two days later, I went down to Saigon and left.

Anyway, it was such a stupid war. Most every war is a stupid war. I lost my brother-in-law to brain cancer. I think it was brain cancer due to Agent Orange. I was exposed to Agent Orange. I'm on a list of people who've been exposed to Agent Orange, and it impacts us in lots of different ways. So far, it hasn't touched me, but it certainly impacted an awful lot of people in Vietnam, and it's sad.

CAI: Throughout that time, did you think more about the people on the other side who you were responsible for combating against—the formal enemy?

LAMB JR.: There's a big difference between defending one's country and attacking those who are defending their country. I felt like we were in the wrong. I felt like it was an unforgivable war that really didn't have to happen, but it was the US's fear of communism and the spread of it. It's hard to say—it's hard to understand that I really and truly did not take it personally in any way, shape, or form. Very different from World War II, where my dad and my uncles fought. But not that dissimilar to what we're doing now in Iran. I think it's very close to the same. I accept it. I think what we're doing in Iran is worse.

I don't think I've ever looked back with regrets for having been there. Unlike some of my friends, I never saw the eyes of anybody that I shot at. They never saw mine. It was as impersonal as it can be. I have friends who had experiences that would have changed my life in bad ways.

CAI: Are these friends that you knew at Dartmouth who also ended up going, or that you met in the military?

LAMB JR.: Mostly not. There's one friend that I have from Dartmouth that ended up being very severely wounded and spent months in the hospital. And never fully recovered from his wounds. I lost my brother-in-law to Agent Orange. I had a close friend who worked for me for many years, who I think was in many ways traumatized by his time in Vietnam. He was a Marine and experienced some horrendous fighting. I was lucky enough to avoid that. It's toss the dice—toss the dice of whether you go, toss the dice whether you come home. But from my point of view, none of us is guaranteed to wake up tomorrow. I think that anybody who's involved in war has lifelong impact from whatever that involvement is, and that's whether you're a soldier in the war, or whether you're a mother or a child who's impacted by it. It's not something that leads you one way or the other.

I do believe that a mistake that this country has made is not having a museum that really addresses the awful side of war. Maybe we would be less inclined to go out and do what we do.

CAI: You leave Vietnam in which year?

LAMB JR.: '71.

CAI: '71, okay. So from '67 to '71.

LAMB JR.: Yep, four years.

CAI: Once you return—you mentioned that war never leaves you. How did it shape what you wanted to do when you got back?

LAMB JR.: I had another year to spend in the Navy, and I spent that year in Norfolk teaching at a Navy school—teaching people how to do the kinds of things that I had done in Vietnam.

And then I really wanted to—I never intended to stay in the Navy, and what I wanted to do was go into juvenile counseling. I had some appointments set up for work in New England. I was called by the state of Maryland for an interview—I had taken a test down there, the entry-level test for college graduates—with Maryland's Division of Correction. And that started a new phase of my life. I got involved in—first it was evaluating federally funded programs—there was a lot of federal money that was being thrown into criminal justice—and evaluating the effectiveness of the programs. I had done some evaluation in the Navy. And writing grant proposals for Maryland Division of Correction. Then I got involved with trying to put together a community-based system of small institutions that could help people integrate back into their communities.

And then I got involved in trying to set up a different approach to parole in the state of Maryland. Parole is an arbitrary system—still is in most places—where as an inmate, you go through and do a certain amount of time, and generally a quarter of your time—and if you got a twenty-year sentence, about the fifth year—at least in Maryland, you appear before a parole board, and they would interview you and make a decision whether or not you were going to be paroled. Every certain number of years, you would get another appointment and appear before the parole board. It wasn't the whole board. The parole commission had, I guess, seven members on it, but you appear before one or two of them.

The problem was that if—I had been on a group trying to prepare people for their release, and we were telling communities around the state that they were going to be at the end of their sentence, or within certain months of release from prison. But you couldn't tell them that if they were going to be paroled, because the correctional system—the Division of Correction, the prison system—doesn't make those decisions. The parole commission does. So we needed to know when people were going to be paroled ahead of time. But the parole commission doesn't work that way. The parole commission says, "You're paroled, go get your stuff and get out of here," and now you're on the street with no support.

So what we wanted to do was adjust the parole commission to make a contract with you that if you do A, B, C, D, and the Division of Correction supplies access to the things that you need to do—whether it's education or some sort of skill building, or if you have a psychological problem, counseling—if you do all those things that need to be done, then you're guaranteed parole. So I put together that plan for the state of Maryland, which is called mutual agreement programming. It's a contract between an inmate, the Division of Correction, and the parole commission. If the inmate does what they have agreed to do, then on a certain date—it's specified in the contract—they're paroled, which makes it way more effective than just the arbitrariness of a group of old men sitting around a table saying, "Okay, we like you, goodbye," or, "No, not today." So I did that, and then—

CAI: And you remember which year approximately?

LAMB JR.: It would have been—I was probably doing that in '75, thereabout. And I had a project that was given to me. I worked for the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services. So that's state police, Division of Correction, parole commission, the parole department, probation. I worked for the deputy secretary running those things for a

period of months, and he gave me a project. Said, "Bill, you've got a Navy background. It's been suggested that we should get a ship and park it in the harbor of Baltimore and turn it into a prison—an old Navy surplus ship," because we were overflowing with inmates. So I worked on that project for a while. It was a bad idea. Politically, it was never going to happen.

And then I left and opened up a business in downtown Baltimore, which was the beginning of a number of other ventures. It was a do-it-yourself car repair place. I bought an old Pontiac dealership that was about a city block long, and opened it up to the community. Had some lifts that people could rent, and had some mechanics who knew what they were doing, because I didn't. Had a woman who taught women who wanted to learn how to fix their car. It was a community kind of thing.

And then I had a problem when I was with the Division of Correction. I was involved in putting together grants and getting programs started, and I could never get a contractor to contractually agree to have any kind of results. They wanted the money, they wanted to run the program, but they would not guarantee results. And it used to drive me crazy. So here I had this shop, and we weren't using all this stuff. And I thought, I'm going to do that. So I went to the city and said, "I'd like to have a school here to teach people to be auto mechanics, and you can tell me where you want them to come from, and I'd like some of them to come from the Division of Correction. And I'll guarantee results. I'll guarantee that they get a job and hold it for at least"—I can't remember—"three months or six months." And they said yes. So that's what I did, and it was a great program. We probably had somewhere around twenty people at one time, and about a quarter of them were on work release from various facilities. Great results.

And the story goes on—I went back to the Division of Corrections. Somebody called me and said, "How about taking over the minimum-security system?" It sounded like it could be rewarding. It wasn't, but I did.

CAI: So you started the car business in—

LAMB JR.: It would've been '77, —

CAI: Approximately?

LAMB JR.: Yeah. '77 to '80.

CAI: And then you go back—

LAMB JR.: And I went back to the Division of Correction and ran what we called the pre-release system. I had locations around the state—maybe ten locations—that were minimum security. Most of the people in them were nearing their release date within six months to a year, but they were all minimum security. Unfortunately, when I got it, there were fifty-five people serving life sentences that were in that program. And because they were in the program, they were eligible for other aspects of the program, one of them being family leave. Family leave would be a weekend going home someplace. I had a problem with that. There had been some disastrous situations where people who had that status had hurt other people. I took a stand that we would not accept anybody with a life sentence until someone else with a life sentence left. We had fifty-five people in there with life sentences. But there was no way for them to leave, because a life sentence in Maryland and some other states requires that the governor approve the release, and the governor would not. The numbers of them had just built up, built up, built up. And there had been some disastrous incidents. So I said, "That's enough. We're not taking any more people with life sentences." And that wasn't popular.

And we had school programs—school leave or family leave. We had about fifty inmates in Baltimore that were going to school and had been approved to go to school. I had people follow them to see whether they were actually going to school. First, I contacted the schools and said, "If you don't mind, could you take attendance of these people and have a report?" "No, what are you talking about? They're students." I said, "Well, no, they're inmates, who are students, but they're two sides." "No, we're not going to do that." So I had some people follow them. And a majority of them were not going to school on a regular basis, and so we kept them in the institution. That wasn't popular with the guy who ran the entire Division of Correction. He told me to let them go.

The bottom of that story was that the police guy—I was working with the police department. He didn't know it. And the police department came and arrested them all and did the arrest on Six O'Clock News live. We transported them by bus to—the bus would park at the Baltimore Civic Center right there. And he had alerted the news media and arrested them as they were getting on the bus. I've never been afraid of fighting City Hall if it's the right thing to do. The end result of that was I rewrote the policies, did some work for the guy in charge of the department, and then got fired because I said I'm not going back to that job, because there were people who were gunning for me, and it wasn't gonna be fun. And that's when I went back into another business.

CAI: You really did do a little bit of everything.

LAMB JR.: It's been fun. That was a software—actually, that was real estate, and then software, and construction. Built some houses in Woodstock [VT] actually, two houses right next to the elementary school. I learned a lot about pollution in the ground. It was a site that had major issues underground. It had been a gas station. So we cleaned up the site and put up a duplex. Fast food business. I got into the Hardee's business. Had some Hardee's restaurants. But it's all connected, because it's all dealing with people and ideas and life. You make mistakes, and you go forward.

CAI: Throughout all this time, did you ever go back to Dartmouth and meet the people in your class?

LAMB JR.: Some of the writing that I—one of the pieces that I wrote came about as a result of my 25th reunion, when a group of us got together and talked about how Vietnam had impacted our lives. I don't know whether you have any information about that, but it was in the bottom of Dartmouth Hall, and we went around. We sat at a large collection of tables and went around and just simply shared how it had affected our lives. It was really impactful. Those who'd gone to Vietnam, those who had gone to Canada—one or two of them had gone to jail. But it was, for me, a very touching meeting.

Actually, a couple years ago—because I had not been really in touch with my fraternity brothers except for reunions—I started a monthly Zoom group. Every month we talk on Zoom. It's our class—class of '67—and a couple classes on either side.

[Recording paused, break.]

LAMB JR.: I probably should have mentioned that one of the things that formatively was really influential for me was my dad got transferred to NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] when I was eight. So we moved to Naples, Italy, and we lived in an Italian neighborhood. I went to a school that was taught in French—not that I could handle being—I bailed out of that school after a few months and went to an American school. But while we were overseas, we did a lot of travel. My parents really wanted to expose my sister and myself to the world, so we biked through different parts of Europe. And saw a lot of Europe and also got to see a little bit of Africa and Greece and Turkey, and really opened my eyes to the rest of the world. So I came out of that year and a half with, for me, an amazing education that was with lasting benefit.

CAI: Were there any big lessons or memories that you have from that time that influenced you?

LAMB JR.: When we traveled by train, we traveled fourth class, which I don't even think they have anymore in Europe. And that allowed us to interact with poor people. And my parents made friends with Italian families—not high-level Italian families, but like the janitor of our building—I say janitor, maintenance person. And that was followed up by the Hungarian Revolution. So I was heavily involved in interacting with people who were not Americans at hostels—that's where we would stay—and socially with my parents. When we came back, the Hungarian Revolution had broken out, and we ended up going—my parents, at Christmas time, told us we were going to have a different kind of Christmas. We went up to where they were arriving, on an army base in New Jersey—can't remember the name of the base right this moment. But our Christmas, as structured by my parents, was to take a carload of gifts up for a family there and take them on a shopping trip. So we ended up spending the day—my dad and I with the man and his son, and my mom and sister with the wife and the daughter—and that was the Christmas. We didn't get anything. My sister and I—the deal was everything goes to this other family.

So there are things my parents did that had a big impact on our lives and how we view the world, and they lasted for all of us. I have a younger sister and brother who continue doing good things through their life. So I think worldview, which I'm sure you have—worldview really changes lives. I wish more people had it.

CAI: And what year specifically, if you remember, was that Christmas?

LAMB JR.: It would have been about 1950, '51.

CAI: And then returning back to the reunion, do you remember any stories that you heard from your classmates that you were now meeting after so long? I think it would have been '92 now. Do you remember what that was like, hearing from them?

LAMB JR.: [pause] I'm not comfortable sharing the stories because they were their stories, and I don't have their permission. But what I walked away with was—and it makes just logical sense—every one of us had gone through trauma of one sort or another as a result of Vietnam, and we still carried it.

Going to jail for a principle that you believe—there were plenty of people who avoided going to jail, who still got conscientious objector status, but there were some stringent—you needed to trace your

beliefs to a church, in essence. And if you couldn't do that, then you couldn't get it. There were other issues with that as well. It made it very clear that it's very hard for somebody to get close to a war and not be impacted by it for years, and it doesn't make any difference what you did. You still walk away with deep-seated memories, most of which are not good.

CAI: If you were to have a reunion now and you were talking about how the Vietnam War shaped you, how would you think about that now? Do you still feel like your experiences in the war have shaped you in the same way?

LAMB JR.: I really don't know what I'd say. It's a chapter. I went back and took a fresh look at it. But my life is full of chapters, and it absolutely affected me politically. It creeps into my head when I look at the news and hear of people who are at war. It angers me when I hear somebody like Donald Trump talking about wiping out a civilization. That's so much worse than saying, "I'd like to go kill somebody." Killing a person is bad enough. Wiping out thousands or tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands or millions is unfathomable. So when I hear—like my old friend that I cut off—when I hear somebody saying, "Oh, that's okay, that's just Donald Trump," or "he's doing what's right for the country," I have a hard time standing in the room. I have enough experience of having heard those things and having stayed in the room to know that it's not going to make any difference if I stay in the room. There's a sickness that consumes people that makes them want to hurt other people and take joy out of it, or stand by and watch other people do it. I wish I knew—I've done a lot of things. I have no idea what anybody can do about what's going on in this country today besides taking every opportunity to stand up. But you're not going to convince a MAGA fan of Trump or a MAGA person to do anything other than what they're doing. Vietnam hurt us a lot as a country. I felt like we probably had recovered. I'm not sure we'll ever recover from this. Maybe if I hadn't gone to Vietnam, I wouldn't be as pessimistic as I am, but I'm very pessimistic right now.

CAI: If you were to tell students right now who are in your position when you were at Dartmouth in '67—maybe with an ROTC scholarship, with relations to the military, but also amidst US war abroad that we're all living in—what would you want them to know?

LAMB JR.: Those are very personal choices, and sometimes there are two wrong choices for different reasons. You have to make a choice and live your life doing your best to do right. One event doesn't make a life. I guess that's what I would tell them. Follow your conscience, and sometimes it's really hard because there are two bad choices.

CAI: I think we're reaching towards the end of the interview. Is there anything else that you would like to add before we conclude?

LAMB JR.: I don't think so. I've enjoyed it. Thank you.

CAI: Awesome. Thank you so much for speaking with me today.

LAMB JR.: You're welcome.

CAI: I will end the recording here.