Andrew Paul '60
Dartmouth College Oral History Program
Dartmouth Vietnam Project
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Transcribed by Karen Navarro

KESLER: This is Rachel Kesler ('19). I'm speaking with Mr. Andrew Paul. It's March 24th, 2018. We are starting right around 10:00 a.m. this morning. I'm located in Rauner [Special Collections] Library and Mr. Paul, you're in Vero Beach, Florida, is that correct?

PAUL: Right, that's correct.

KESLER: Okay. Can we go ahead and get started with, could you tell me where and when you were born?

PAUL: I was born August 14th, 1938, in New York City.

KESLER: And could you tell me a little bit about your family, your parents, and your siblings?

PAUL: Yeah, I'll start narrating if you want me to. I've thought about this. My parents were immigrants, and they came over from Hungary in, oh, about three, five months before I was born. And my father had been in the US the previous year. He was a doctor, and he was here on a, I don't know, he had an internship or a fellowship for about three to six months in the US, then he went back to Hungary. And he realized that World War II was going to, was imminent, and he wanted to get his family out of there, which was his pregnant wife. So they got on board a ship in 1938 and they came to the US, and debarked at the Port of New York, and stayed and lived in New York City after that. So, yes, they were immigrants. They became US citizens. I don't remember what the rules were those days, and it wasn't obviously half as complicated as it is today and controversial and so forth, because the US really welcomed immigrants from all over the world. And with the war starting like that, I think a lot of people were deciding this was a much better place to live.

KESLER: And can you tell me what your parents' names were?

PAUL: My father's name was Andrew, Andrew Paul, and my mother's name was Maria.

KESLER: And did you have any siblings?

PAUL: I did. I have a sister named Veronica, and she was born, I think nine years after me, so that would have been 1947, and she lives in California.

KESLER: And what did your parents do for a living after they arrived in the US?

PAUL: My father was a doctor. I think he had a very modest practice in New York City, although his office was on the corner of Park Avenue and about 92nd or something like that. It was a very modest practice and I think he just had a lot of patients, or the patients he had were from Hungary and, you know, I think that was about the extent of it. And I know he did some hospital time, because I remember going to the hospital with him on Sunday when I was a little boy to visit his patients with him. And so, that's basically what it was. But I think what was important about the whole thing is that the fact that they were immigrants is that I was raised anyway at least on the idea that you were very thankful to be here and that you did things the right way, so to speak. So I was brought up, you know, like a good European kid, and we had a very disciplined existence and it was very strict. And, you know, you did what you were supposed to do without complaining about it, because that was the price you had to pay to belong to a free society.

KESLER: I see. And can you tell me, tell me a little bit more about growing up. What was it like growing up for you in New York City?

PAUL: Well, I think we were very, you know, we were a very close family. And I thought growing up in New York City was a very interesting experience because there was a lot to do there, I learned a lot, we went to the theater a lot, we went to museums a great deal. And the first six, seven years of my schooling, my parents didn't want to just send me to the local public school, so there was a French Lycée there about four blocks from our house from where we lived that was established for the children of French diplomats living in New York, and they had some spaces for non-French speaking people. And somehow they got me into the French Lycée from pre-kindergarten, and I attended school there for seven years, in French, from pre-kindergarten through the sixth grade.

So, there were many benefits from that, and obviously one of them was that my parents wanted me to get a classical education, because again, they were immigrants and the one thing that they wanted the most was for their son or their children to have a classical education and be able to really get into, blend in well with American society, and to be successful. The other advantage was that going to a French school like that, I learned French when I was seven years old, and so it literally became, well, almost a first language to me, and throughout my life I've been very, very pleased and very fortunate to be able to use French in my business dealings and with friendships and things like that, and to this very day I speak it almost as well as English, and probably as well. So I've been bilingual my whole life. So, that's also helped. And curiously enough, you know, coincidentally it's also helped in the sense that the French were in Vietnam for many, many years before the Americans entered the picture, and roughly 1960, and that's another good reason why I recommended that book to you, *Embers of War[:The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America's Vietnam*, by Fredrik Logevall], because you'll get a very, very—you'll get a lot of the French perspective on the war, as well as the early stages of why the US entered. Anyway, I'm digressing. That was my childhood in New York City.

KESLER: I see. And tell me a little bit more about your sister. Were you two close?

PAUL: No, we weren't very close. We were seven years apart, and she was, I don't know how to say this, she was much more Americanized than I was, and she was much more rebellious than I was, being the second child, and so she followed an entirely different path. And then, my father passed away three days before I graduated from high school. I went to Scarsdale High School in Westchester County, New York, because we had moved there when I was about, I don't remember, sixth, seventh grade, something like that. And she basically grew up without a father, and so her experience has been a lot different than mine, and her life has been a lot different than mine.

KESLER: I see. And can you tell me a little bit more about what you were like as a child?

PAUL: I was a very disciplined kid. I did everything I was supposed to do, and I did my duty. I think that's basically what I was brought up to do. And, you know, that was what was expected of me, and I think a lot of that was typical of the European upbringing. And also, it was accelerated by the fact that my parents were new in the United States. They wanted to be sure that I got a really good education and that I was well formed. So, I was a pretty disciplined kid when I grew up, for those reasons.

KESLER: Talk to me a bit about what it was like moving to Scarsdale. Was that a big transition for you in life, or not as much?

PAUL: Well, it was a big transition because I left the French Lycée and I went into the public school system there, which was very, very good at the time, and still is. Scarsdale High School at that time was probably one of the top two or three public high schools in the United States. But what was different for me was that I was exposed to American kids for the first time on a much larger scale than I had been in New York City, and it was quite a revelation because, you know, they were smart, they were fun, but they weren't as disciplined as I was disciplined, and so my life was a lot more constrained than their lives were. And so, you know, there was a lot of adjusting for me to do in that respect. And, you know, I did that fine. I graduated well from high school, from Scarsdale High School, and obviously did well [laughter] because I got into Dartmouth. And the idea was, though, that Scarsdale, as I said, was one of the very top high schools in the United States at this time, and so coming from there, it was much easier to get into a very good college than it would have been if I had been to some other high school anywhere else. But, as I said before, that was really my first exposure to American society and being really blended in, because prior to that in New York I was mainly with, you know, I was around French kids all the time when I went to school and so forth.

KESLER: And do you recall any strong impressions of that first exposure, as you say, to American society? Was there anything that was surprising to you, or did it kind of come a little bit naturally?

PAUL: No, a lot of it came naturally. But what was surprising was the fact that they weren't as disciplined as I was, and that, you know, as I said, we did things the old way, the old

European way, which was you did your duty, you did what you were supposed to do, you behaved, and you were a gentleman all the time. I mean, there was no guarantee at the end of the day that that's what you were going to turn into, but that's what my parents tried really hard to form in me. And that's pretty much how I've been my whole life, and that's paid off well for me, so…

KESLER: Moving forward a little bit, you talked about your father just a bit earlier. Can you tell me a little bit more about his passing and that time period for you?

PAUL: Yeah, that was a very hard period, obviously, because it was very sudden. I was just finishing high school when he passed away. And he was fairly young. He was 54 at the time. And, you know, there was a lot of shock in our household. We were living in Scarsdale, but I don't think he had a lot invested or a lot saved, and we had to move to a smaller apartment in another part of town, and my mother had to basically go to work, because I had to go to college. And at the time, we didn't know what we were going to do. We didn't know how I was going to get through Dartmouth. So, she had to scrimp and save and work, and I got scholarships as I went through Dartmouth. And, you know, the first year or two was pretty difficult because we had to scratch all of this out. I would work in the summertime, and I had enough scholarship from Dartmouth to get tuition, to earn my tuition there, but everything else I had to do on my own. So, to do that for extra money, I worked in the kitchen at the Thayer Hall, which was the dining hall at the time. I don't know if it still is or not. Is it still Thayer?

KESLER: It's now called the "Class of 1953 Commons," but it's in the same building.

PAUL: Oh, [laughter] yeah, okay, it's in the old Thayer Building. Anyway, the food was terrible. But, you know, that's what it was in those days, it was a typical mass kind of college cafeteria. And I worked in the kitchen. I was the pots and pans guy, and did dishes and worked the washing machine and stuff like that, and that's how I earned my tuition. And then in the summertime I would tend the tennis courts at Scarsdale High School where I had gone, and I was the teaching pro there or I was the—as I said, I worked the tennis courts all summer. And I made enough money doing that in the summertime to be able to go back to college, and

then have enough money for expenses and books and stuff like that. And my mother sent me a little bit of money to pay for meals, and then the rest was taken care of by college scholarships.

KESLER: And could you tell me, if I might ask, how your father passed away?

PAUL: Oh, he had a heart attack at age 54.

KESLER: I see, I see.

PAUL: Yeah, he was a very heavy cigarette smoker. And it was a shock to everybody, but at the same time, it was sort of a warning sign that, you know, life can be short, and so take good care of yourself. And so that sort of has been, you know, I've sort of kept that in the back of my mind and that's been instinctive on my part, and so that's why, I guess, I've been able to live as long as I have. And I'll be 80 in a couple of months, so…

KESLER: That's a hard lesson to learn so early on, though.

PAUL: [laughter] Yes, it's a very hard lesson to learn and it's something you never forget. It's embedded in me, so…

KESLER: Moving back just a little bit, can you talk to me about any larger formative events that happened throughout your childhood or throughout your young life that you really distinctly remember?

PAUL: I distinctly remember the first couple of years in the French Lycée. I was one of the top one or two students in the class, and they would give out a—they gave out a French comic book, which in those days was made of very heavy paper, and they were very famous French cartoon characters, and I still have those books somewhere in my library here. And it was called, in French it was called the Prix L'Excellence. Do you speak French at all?

KESLER: I don't, no.

PAUL: Okay, it means the prize for excellence. And, of course, that means you were first in your class, or I was second in my class. And I still have those two big heavy cardboard comics at home, and probably once every couple of years I'll take

them out and look at them and say, *Gee whiz, you know, that was a long time ago*.

KESLER: And how about any large scale global events? For example, like Hiroshima, Nagasaki, or the Korean War. Do you have any distinct memories of those events going on as you were growing up?

PAUL: No. The only distinct event I have is being in a hotel room with my parents when the war ended, and looking at them. My father brought in the newspaper and he said, “The war’s over.” And we saw the headline, it said—I don’t remember what it said—“Japanese Surrender” or “Germans Surrender” or whatever it is, and “the war’s over.” And I thought, *Gee, this is really good news*.

But what was interesting at the same time was that one of the first things that I remember as a small kid playing was that I loved to play with soldiers, and I always had a big set of soldiers, and I was in my room and there was always some kind of battle going on between people. So, I can’t tell you why I was drawn to that. I think that was just part of growing up, and the war was on, and they used to simulate—when we lived in New York, they used to simulate war games and battles at some stadium, and my father would take me and we would sit there and watch the Americans fighting the Germans. Of course, it was all staged and put up, but that was a popular thing to do.

And also, I collected, they would give you little war bond books, and I had these, you’d get these little comic books that had pictures of Hitler and Hirohito and other horrible people that we were fighting against, and every time you went out and you bought a stamp, you’d paste it in the book, and when you had covered completely all the faces in the book with these stamps, you’d trade it in and you’d get a war bond. So, that was interesting. And then at the same time, about once a week, we’d saved all our tin cans, and once every week or so somebody would come from, I don’t know what government authority it was, and they’d collect all the tin cans. And I asked him one day what that was about, and he said, “Well, they’re gonna use the metal to make artillery shells and ammunition and stuff like that,” and I was very impressed with everybody kind of cooperating and throwing in like that.

And I also remember going to the butcher shop with my mother to go shopping when I was very small, and we had coupon—we had ration books, and, you know, she would ask about a loin of meat or some pork or something like that, and he would say, "Yes, it's gonna take—you need four stamps" or something like that. And I just distinctly remember that rationing, which was what we had to undergo.

KESLER: Moving forward a little bit, can you tell me about how you decided to come to Dartmouth and that first transition to college life?

PAUL: I applied to four colleges. I applied to Harvard [University, Cambridge, MA], Dartmouth, Wesleyan [University, Middletown, CT], and then Cornell [University, Ithaca, NY]. Wesleyan was my first choice. I didn't get in. And I didn't get into Harvard either, and I really didn't want to go to Harvard. And at that time, I don't know how it is today, but you always applied to a college that you knew you could get into, and that was your safety choice. I don't know, do they have that today or not, when you applied? I don't know.

KESLER: They still do. That's something that they tell…

PAUL: They still do that?

KESLER: Uh-hm.

PAUL: Look, Cornell was my safety choice. I got in, but I was also accepted at Dartmouth. and obviously that was where I was going to go.

KESLER: I see. And tell me about that transition to Dartmouth. What was it like first coming to the college?

PAUL: It was very hard, because I had spent the summer—you know, it was the summer after my father had died—I spent the summer working at the Scarsdale tennis courts, running those, and then I went off to college, and it was really the first time I'd been off on my own outside of, you know, going to summer camp as a kid or something like that. And it was a big shock to me because, first of all, I was really grieving for my father, and probably at the time I didn't know that. I mean, we didn't know about grieving and the psychology of these traumatic events at the time. And also, I was out—you

know, you're out in the big world by yourself for the very first time and you're meeting kids from all over the United States for the very first time, and they have different American accents and different ways of behaving.

And I think what struck me the most was how much freedom American kids had on their own compared to the way that I had been brought up, which as I said was pretty strict, was a pretty strict European way. So I was a different kind of kid when I went to Dartmouth. But the one thing that I did have was the sense of, or the fact that I really, really was there to study hard and to learn, and to be successful and to really enter society on a good foot when I graduated. So that's what I did.

KESLER: And did you come in knowing what you wanted to study?

PAUL: Nah, I thought I was going to be pre-med like my father, because he was a doctor. And there were all sciences the first… What are you majoring in, by the way?

KESLER: I'm a history/Native American studies double major.

PAUL: Yeah, a Native American studies, double major. The pre-med, you have to take certain courses. You had to take lab courses and science and stuff like that, and, you know, truthfully, I hated that. I hated science. [laughter] And I got thrown into physics and chemistry, and after about two weeks I thought, *Oh, my God, I can't do this*. So, I went to see the freshman dean and I just said, "You know, I gotta bail out of this because this is just not me." And he said, "What do you want to do?" And I said, "I think I'd like to major in international relations." So, I switched majors entirely, started—you know, you had to take the basic math and science courses, of course, which all freshmen had to do. And I started taking history, American history, and literature and whatever else. I can't remember that much, but basic freshman courses. And academically I was a lot happier doing that, obviously, than taking science, and I looked back on it and I thought, *God, how could I ever want to do that, take sciences?* But then I realized that was the influence of my father, and that was pretty much the last, the final influence that I had to change in order to strike out on my own, so to speak.

So, I became an international relations major, and in my junior year—and I took French all the way through, because I did well, for many obvious reasons. And at the time, there was a new program where I think you could either go to France or Spain for a semester if you became a language major. And so, because I spoke French so well, I went to the French Department in my junior year, signed up to be a French major, and then was able to go to France for the first five months of my senior year, and lived with a French family, and went to the French university there. And I just, you know, I had a ball. And it was really no transition for me to make because I spoke French as well, you know, fluently like a native, and I understood European people and I fit in well in that climate and that atmosphere. So that's what I did. And I came back, I guess, in late winter of 1960 and finished that semester at Dartmouth, and graduated as a major… My major was French with a minor in international relations.

KESLER: And was that your first time traveling abroad?

PAUL: Yeah, that was my first time, yeah.

KESLER: But you said that it was a relatively easy transition?

PAUL: Oh, it was terrific for me. I had a wonderful time. There wasn't a lot of air travel in those days, or it was very limited, so we took a boat over. I took the *SS America* or some Greek line ship or something like that. There were a lot of kids there on their way to France, and we just had the most wonderful crossing. It took about seven or eight days. And first we stopped in Kobe, Ireland, and we stopped in Southampton, and finally in France, and then took the train to Paris. It was spectacular. I can't tell you how that…

KESLER: Could you tell me a little bit more about what you were involved in in Dartmouth outside of classes?

PAUL: I can't remember very much, to be honest with you. I studied a lot. I was a good student. I did sports on my own. I tried out for the tennis team, but didn't get beyond freshman year. But I signed up immediately for [Army] ROTC and I spent a lot of time doing that. I was on the drill team and we would represent Dartmouth at different events and just, that was the right thing for me to do. So, I spent a lot of time doing that military stuff, and I studied a great deal, as I said. I did my homework diligently and tried to do the best that I could,

and then went to the gym and played squash and did different sports when I could do that. But I was there mainly to study. That was in my brain, so that's what we did.

KESLER: And what was ROTC participation like at that time?

PAUL: I loved it. It was wonderful. Well, first of all—and this is number one on understanding Vietnam and the Vietnam era—this was post-World War II, and at that time military service was mandatory for all males between the ages of what, 18 and 25 or whatever it was. And so, there was no question that when you graduated from college you could go off and do what you want, because you couldn't. You had to go in the military. And the choices were: you could be drafted, and then you'd be an enlisted person for two years or three years or whatever it was; you could sign up voluntarily for—they had a six month program, I think, in the Army where you'd go on active duty for six months and learn some specialty, and then go in the reserves for like four or five years; and then you could do what I did, which was become a commissioned officer and serve at least two years, and three years active reserves, by going through ROTC and getting a commission that way. And I loved it. I signed up for it. I was very happy that I did that. And I spent a lot of time reading military history, getting to know the military officers who were professors there, and really thinking about whether I should make the Army a career or not. So that was really the beginning of my—well, my military awareness had always been there, but this was the first time that I really had a choice, and that this was what I was going to do. And so, you know, that's what I did. I went ahead and that's the path that I took.

KESLER: And was it common for a lot of students to be involved in ROTC?

PAUL: Yes. I mean, of course it was. I don't remember what the numbers were, but literally, my class—I don't remember how many we had start with—we had maybe 800 or 700, 800 or something like that, and I don't know, I would say close to 50% were in ROTC, because that was a lot better than being drafted when you left college, or having to enlist and do your time that way. And so, you know, you chose between Army, Navy and Air Force, and I chose Army along with one of my other roommates, and the two others, one chose the Air Force and the other chose the Navy. So, we had a good

smattering of the services there. But I loved it. I looked forward to it. And it was just, you know, to me it was very exciting. And it sort of fit in with the way that I grew up, the discipline and…

There's something that overlays this whole thing, and I think it's really important to understand that when you start looking at the Vietnam War, and particularly, for example in your case, where you're looking backwards. And this isn't a criticism, so, you know, don't get me wrong. But, you know, you're looking at the war as a past event, and I got to look at the war as a future event, not that I knew it was going to happen when it did, but because it hadn't taken place yet. So, the mood at the time was, the national mood was, here the United States had just finished this horrendous European war, and beat the Germans and the Japanese, in this terrible, terrible world war that cost, what, 58 million lives or something like that, when you total up everything. And now the war was over, and the country was rebuilding. Everybody was back from the war. Everybody was going to college. Everybody, we had to rebuild the society, and we had this huge industrial engine in this country that had worked to put to put out war goods that now had to be transformed into creating a civilian economy.

At the same time, the idea that, you know, America was the most powerful country in the world was just a fact. And part of you was to participate in that by doing military service, and so there was no question about it. And there was no question about the fact that when you did that, it was because the United States was the most powerful country in the world, and it had obligations that it had to live up to; witness the terrible Korean War that was waged between 1950 and 1954, just before I went to college. But, that was really, I mean, that was a very important and terrible war, but it was at the same time still obviously not on the same scale as World War II.

So this World War II mood prevailed over the entire country, and with it the sense that you had a duty to be part of rebuilding, and you had to do your best, and you had to make your contribution to making America the greatest country in the world, because it was. And because the military was the greatest military in the world, and that's also a fact. And those became, when you start thinking about leading up to Vietnam, and maybe I'm skipping ahead and

you don't want me to yet, but those were very important motifs, should we say, or trends in thinking that you'd have to take into consideration when you start to ask yourself why did the US ever enter Vietnam in the first place. And so, anyway, if I'm jumping ahead, I'm just kind of giving you a little preview of what's to come. [laughter]

KESLER: No, that's all right, that's all right. Interviews are often led by the narrator as well, so whenever you feel the need to kind of set the context or anything, absolutely feel free.

PAUL: So, you get a lot of context.

KESLER: Yes, that was great. And one of my first interviews actually was with a previous Dartmouth history professor, and so the challenge there was that he was really great at setting context and giving you the ideas of like, this was what was happening on the world stage, but I kept having to remind him of like, let's talk about what was going on in your life. And that was a funny challenge, but a very interesting interview, for sure.

PAUL: Yeah, but you also have to understand that, and it's very different today, but what was going on in our lives in those days had a much broader historical context, I think, than it does today. And it's not a criticism. It's just, that's the way things were, and that was because that was the residual from having won World War II, and the residual from the US then being the most powerful country in the world, and you had to assume that responsibility. I mean, that was what the train of thought was, and that's how people behaved, and that's what drove a lot of people to national service at the time. And, in fact, working for the government and being in the military in those days was really, a really good thing to do, and it was a nice thing to do on people's parts.

KESLER: And can you tell me, thinking about this idea of motifs and of larger historical context, let's talk a bit about the Cold War and how that shaped this time period for you, if at all.

PAUL: Yes, that's a good question because that's a very deep part of it. And I think from day one, it was understood, and you know the history of World War II obviously, that our gravest enemy after having won World War II was obviously the Soviet Union, and your entitled being was wrapped up into dealing with the threat of Communism and the threat of the

Soviet Union in our everyday lives and in the fact that they were a world class adversary. And everything that we did had to deal with how to counter that threat. And I didn't have to put my head under the desk in high school because we were worried that we were going to be bombed, but later, you know, kids coming in behind me had to do that as the threat became more and more serious in the '60s. But that was the prevailing—a lot of people decided, you know, "That was how I'm gonna spend my life. I'm gonna counter the Soviet Union. We're gonna fight them, and this is what our world calling is, and by golly, that's what we're gonna do." And that's how people thought. And that, of course, was the natural sequence of thinking after having won World War II the way that we had, and then being the most powerful country in the world. So, we had a global responsibility and that was part of it.

KESLER: And zooming back in a little bit to specifically your time at Dartmouth, can you talk to me about any of these larger global events that you might have remembered? For example, Sputnik or any others that might have really stood out to you.

PAUL: Sputnik was the first thing. I remember being in a—I was in a seminar on international relations and there were about a dozen of us, and somebody breathlessly came into the room and said, 'The Russians just launched an orbiting satellite," and everybody thought, "Oh, my God, that's just terrible. They might even catch up to us one day." And so, that was obviously an important event.

KESLER: And that was in, would that have been your sophomore year?

PAUL: Yeah, that would have been my sophomore year. And I'm trying to think of what other events took place between that. I think the US was in Lebanon in, in was it 1958? But I can't remember exactly the history of that, but I don't think it had a lot to do with the Soviet Union. But there were lots and lots of confrontations, and of course, well, we'll get to that in a few more—I'm just a couple of years ahead here, so you go ahead and keep asking.

KESLER: Moving on to a little bit of your time after Dartmouth, can you tell me about your transition from Dartmouth into—you went right into the Army, is that correct?

PAUL: Yeah, I had a summer job in New York City, and then I went right into the Army. I was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant in ROTC. I really thought seriously about becoming a regular Army officer, but I wasn't sure about it, and so I was commissioned as a reserve officer in Army Intelligence. I went through infantry training at Fort Benning, Georgia, and then from there I went to…

KESLER: And what was like, the infantry training?

PAUL: Oh, it was terrific because I was always a good athlete, and if you were a good athlete, you'd get through basic training like that, infantry training. I had been to basic training at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, between my junior and senior year, which all of us in ROTC had to do. And I had a wonderful time there, and I earned a distinguished military student rating there. And then in basic training in the Army officers infantry school I had a wonderful time because, as I said, if you were a good athlete, you could do really well, and if you really liked the military as much as I did, I thought it was fascinating. And so, I went through that, and then from there I went to Fort Holabird, Maryland, and I attended the Army Intelligence School, and I stayed there and became an instructor for the rest of my time.

KESLER: And can you tell me about your time at Fort Holabird? What was that like?

PAUL: Yeah, it was, you know, it was obviously a military installation. It wasn't a combat post obviously, because everybody went to Germany, and I think I had sort of hoped to go to Germany and be with a unit there. But, they liked my French language ability, and so I stayed there and taught at the school. And it was pretty much like, I don't know, it was almost like going to Dartmouth but with a little more discipline attached to it. But you were finished at 5:00 every day, and I went home and I roomed with a couple of other 2nd lieutenants and we had a wonderful time. And I know if I had been in Germany, for example, with some of the NATO forces and something, my life existence would have been a lot different because you would have been with a front line military organization, right, you know, facing the Russians on the other side of the Fulda Gap in Germany. And a lot of my fellow lieutenants did that, but I stayed behind. They asked me to be an instructor at the school because I spoke French,

and they wanted me to help there, so that's what I did. And it was a great experience. I met wonderful people. It was more of a civilian type experience. I mean, there was more civilian like parts to it than it was pure military, although it was a military installation, and, you know, you had to do everything the right way, and all the discipline was there.

So, when I left there at the end of 1962, I went to Washington, DC to get my master's degree at Georgetown [University] in international relations, I still had three years of active reserve duty to accomplish. So, I picked up—I kept my military activity going, and as soon as I got there, I joined a reserve Special Forces unit that was near Andrews Air Force Base, and I was an intelligence officer there. I went back to Fort Benning and went to parachute school. And I spent three years doing that as an intelligence officer, still in the reserves, at the same time going to Georgetown graduate school to get a degree in international relations. At the time and it's still—it was called the master of science in foreign service. It's still called that today.

KESLER: And you said you went to Georgetown in 1962?

PAUL: Let's see, I left the Army in '62. Yep, and I started classes right away, yeah, because I applied, I think I had applied to Georgetown while I was still in the military. I was still at Fort Holabird. And so, I was accepted and I went to school immediately there, and I had enough money saved to do that, and I think I had some GI Bill that I was able to use, and so I started that.

KESLER: And how did you come to the decision to go back to school and pursue a master's?

PAUL: Well, I mean, because it was, again, it goes back to my upbringing, you did the right thing. And if I was going to be a success in American society, I really had to bolster my credentials by doing more than having a bachelor's degree, which, you know, at that time everybody had a bachelor's degree, so to speak, if you wanted to make anything of yourself. So, to keep going and to do it one step further, you had to do more than that. So that's why I went to graduate school. And at the time I had aspirations to be a foreign service officer. And so, I did that. I took the foreign service exam while I was in graduate school, but I didn't make it. I passed the written exam, but when I went and took my oral,

[laughter] the feedback I got was that it was too close to being out of the Army. Yeah. They were looking for a different kind of person than what I was offering at the time.

KESLER: And at that same time you said that you were in the Special Forces?

PAUL: Uh-hm.

KESLER: And if I'm correct, is that also– they're colloquially known as the Green Berets?

PAUL: That's correct.

KESLER: Okay. What did being a part of that group mean to you?

PAUL: That was fantastic. I mean, that was one of the highlights of my lifetime. I had made such wonderful friends. We did a lot of exciting things here in the United States, and we knew that we were really good at what we did in terms of military activity. And, you know, we were just waiting to be called up if that's what it was going to take. But, we really, I mean, everybody was very accomplished. Everybody had seen a lot. Everybody was very, very dedicated to the military, because you didn't do that stuff unless you were really dedicated. And so, I made incredible friendships, and people and things that I still remember to this day.

KESLER: How did you become a member of the special services [sic]? Did it take several stages or…

PAUL: It was called Special Forces. And special services in those days meant people who ran the recreational activities for the military. So, you don't want to call a Special Forces person a special services person. [laughter]

KESLER: I see, uh-hm.

PAUL: But, in World War II the origin of Army Special Forces came in the form of the activities of the OSS, which was the Office of Strategic Services, which can be confusing, that later became Special Forces. And at that time, the mission of Special Forces was not what it is today. Today it's much more in terms of special operations. In those days, because the Soviet Union was still a major threat, and it still is today, but it was *the* major threat, Special Forces were based on a

World War II model of the OSS, where if war broke out again, American teams were going to have to go behind the lines in occupied countries in Europe and organize them for guerrilla warfare to fight against the Soviets. And I seem to remember that our target country for at least my Special Forces company was Hungary, which was great, but I mean, we didn't know a lot about Hungary at the time except for the fact that there was a big revolution there in 1956, and that was the target country we were assigned to. So, we all had parachute training. We parachuted as often as we had to to keep up our rating, which I think was once every three months. And we went on exercises in the United States regularly. We drilled once a week and one weekend a month, and we did what we had to do and served our obligation that way.

KESLER: And the reputation of the Special Forces at this time was kind of at its height, right? Because this was also the time of the "Ballad of the Green Berets" [by Staff Sgt. Barry Allen Sadler]. So, it was…

PAUL: Well, the "Ballad of the Green Berets," that's very true, and John Wayne made that Green Beret movie. But that was really at the initial stages of Vietnam, and Special Forces did play a special role in the Vietnam War, of course, and I think they became even better known from the war. But at the time that I was in, which was from '62 to '65, Vietnam was really never large on the map. And I say, if you go back and read the *Embers of War*, and maybe you already know this, the American participation was very small in Vietnam until the end of 1965 and 1966, which is when it became a war war, and was no longer a special type of engagements, because the whole concept of the war changed at that time.

KESLER: And before we move on to talk a little bit more about Vietnam and about your time after the Special Forces, can you talk to me about, again, some of the larger events that were going on during the time in which you were in the Army, for example, the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis? Were you heavily involved in any of that or was it kind of something in the background?

PAUL: No, I was already—I had just started… Because that Bay of Pigs was what, '61? No, Bay of Pigs was '63. Fall of '62 [sic] maybe. No, I had just started Georgetown grad school, and I remember watching Bay of Pigs on television, and what

happened there. And I can't say that we were particularly worried about it. It was just one of those things that happened, and it was sort of natural that the US would be training Cuban counterrevolutionaries in that respect. And the fact that it didn't work out in 1963 [sic], I don't know, it was a terrible, terrible event, but I don't think that people looked back on it the way they do today and said, "Well, it was a terrible thing that happened," I think. "We tried." And at that time, of course, again we were all brought up to fight Communism and this was one of the ways that we're trying to fight Communism, so it couldn't have been all bad. Hang on, I'm just going to take a gulp of water.

KESLER: Okay, sounds good.

PAUL: Okay. Wow, I haven't talked this much in my life.

KESLER: [laughter] It's a very different experience, I know.

PAUL: A different experience. And you know, in about five or ten minutes I am going to just walk over and get another handset, because I don't know how long the battery will last in this. Or if the battery dies, you can just call me back and I'll use another phone. So, it'll work out.

KESLER: Okay, perfect, and just let me know and I can go ahead and pause the recording whenever you need to switch out. Can you also talk to me, because in '63, as well, was President Kennedy's assassination. Can you tell me a little bit about that from your perspective?

PAUL: Yes. At that time I was working in the Department of Commerce. I had a job there. In fact, I was offered a job there by another guy who ironically had gone to Dartmouth and saw Dartmouth on my application and he gave me a job. He was a wonderful guy, a foreign service officer. And I was on the elevator, and someone got on the elevator and he said, "Oh, my God, the President's been shot." And so, we all rushed off to our offices and turned on the TV, the television stations, and saw what had happened, and it was just, obviously a terrible, terrible event. And so the funeral was that following weekend, and I remember I drove home to see my mother because I think they had closed the government for a couple of days for the funeral, and I watched the whole thing on television. And a couple of members of my unit, my Special Forces unit, were detailed

to accompany the funeral caisson with Kennedy's body in it, and I remember seeing them on television.

And what was also ironic was Oswald, who was the rifleman who had shot Kennedy, was being transferred from one jail to another, and his transfer was on live television, and Jack Ruby, this Texas businessman who lived there, I mean, this was on live television, you saw him walk into the jail where Oswald was being taken out, and you saw him actually shooting Oswald on the television screen. And it was live, it was real time.

And there was huge, huge shock in the country, I mean, the whole thing. Kennedy's death was sort of the unraveling of this great American dream, because he represented everything that was good about the United States. I mean, he was young and clean-cut and he was well-spoken, and he gave hope, and it was just the most uplifting and wonderful time. And I remember when we voted, the first time I voted was in 19… See, when was he elected? He was elected in '62 [sic]? No. Yeah, and I think that…

KESLER: I think you're right. I think it was '62 [sic].

PAUL: Yeah, I think that was the first time I voted, and I voted for him. And, so it was a huge shock to the country, and it was also a big revelation that there were things going on under the surface that we weren't aware of. And the fact that somebody like this guy Oswald, who could go to the Soviet Union, and just by the simple, I think it was a Carcano carbine that he used, I mean, you could just buy that almost by—by the mail. There were really no firearm restrictions in those days and anybody could buy a gun. And apparently, that's what he did. And then, as a result of that, as you probably know, there are all kinds of conspiracy theories and I don't know what else, and nobody will ever know the truth because it's such a long time ago. But, yes, I lived through that, uh-huh.

KESLER: And during this time were you still living in DC?

PAUL: Yeah, I was. I never left DC. I never left DC after that. I stayed in DC for the rest of the time.

[Both talk at the same time]

KESLER: Sorry, what was that?

PAUL: No, go ahead.

KESLER: I was going to ask, what was it like living in DC during that time, right after President Kennedy was assassinated?

PAUL: Well, it was obviously very sad. It was very, very exciting that he'd been elected President. It was very sad when he was killed, and then Lyndon Johnson became President. And, you know, he had made a reputation as being the Speaker [majority leader in the Senate]. And the whole—well, he was a political animal, and the idealism that Kennedy, and the hope that Kennedy had brought to office with him, kind of changed after Johnson became President, because he was much more of a political animal, and that showed.

KESLER: Tell me a little bit more about your last few months at Georgetown, and then also your last few months in the Special Forces. How did both of those kind of come to an end before you moved on into your next stage in life?

PAUL: Well, they came to an end where I took a year's leave of absence from doing my studies at Georgetown, because I just couldn't do everything all at the same time. And then, 1964, when [Senator] Barry Goldwater ran for President against Lyndon [B.] Johnson, I was asked to be on his campaign as a national advance man and as a security person. So I took a leave of absence from my studies at Georgetown, and I was on the Barry Goldwater campaign airplane, and I did some, I don't know, a couple of months I traveled around the United States either advancing campaign stops or traveling with him and working on a security detail, or doing other stuff as a campaign aide. And I really did that just because I knew it was a great experience, and it was something of national importance. And he lost the election and we all came back to DC, and that's when I finished my studies at Georgetown I got on the GI Bill. I left Special Forces at the end of '65, and I got myself into the civilian economy, and went from there.

KESLER: And can you tell me about working on Barry Goldwater's campaign? Yeah, what was that like for you?

PAUL: It was very, very—I mean, I can't tell you anything that was more exciting than a—let's see, how old was I?—26-year-old

kid could do than to be on the campaign plane. I met a lot of press people who were very well known as they were covering him, and the press coverage on him was very bad and very unfair. But, you know, he was the first—he was conservative for that time, although he wouldn't be considered a conservative today. So he was an easy target for criticism by Lyndon Johnson.

But I had just an unbelievable working on the campaign. I did a lot of security work, because he was the last candidate for Presidency who did not receive Secret Service protection. It was only after that that opposing candidates automatically received Secret Service protection. I think that was all due to Kennedy's assassination. So, he had to hire a private security detail, and he had, I think, a deputy sheriff from Los Angeles County who was the head of the security, and he had law enforcement people from all over the country. And they knew that I had been in Special Forces, so they asked me if I would be part of the detail, and I said "sure." And so, I had a wonderful time with those guys, protecting him, did a lot of strange things that you wouldn't normally do in civilian life, but it was, you know, some eye-opening things. And I also got to travel on the plane and do just regular stuff. I talked to the press a lot. I saw what they were like. And I understood the political thinking and the conservative philosophy a lot more. So, it was a real education for me, given the time and the place. And it was a great experience, you know, something you have to do once in your life. And you should remember that, too, if you ever get the chance.

KESLER: Um-hm. And what were some of your favorite places that you traveled to?

PAUL: On the campaign? I don't remember. I used to keep a list. I think I went to like 32 states or something like that during the campaign. And he was a pilot himself. We had two 707s. I think we had a United and an American 707, and we flew on those. And Goldwater was an Air Force pilot himself. He had thousands of hours of flight time. And I do remember on one occasion where he actually sat in the cockpit and he flew the plane himself, obviously with the regular, you know, with the civilian pilot there. And it was really the beginning of jet travel. So, you know, as I say, for a young 26-year-old kid who really hadn't done a lot in politics, it was an eye-opener and it was just a wonderful, wonderful experience. I came back and finished my master's degree at Georgetown, and I

graduated finally in 1967, after having taken one or two leaves of absence to either do military time or to work on the Goldwater campaign.

KESLER: And what was your next step after you graduated from Georgetown?

PAUL: I had to get a job. So, I mean, kids would travel, you know, like today, I think, I don't know what happens when you graduated from college. A lot of kids say, "What are you gonna… Are you gonna get a job?" "No, I'm gonna travel around the world for a year." So, they're gone. And I don't know, [laughter] maybe that's what you're gonna do, I don't know.

KESLER: I think I'm in a similar boat as you and gonna be looking for a job soon afterwards.

PAUL: Yeah. [laughter]

KESLER: But I do know a lot of people who do the like "I want to take a year off and just travel" kind of thing. But I think it's relatively equal split nowadays.

PAUL: Yeah. Well, you really didn't do that in those days. Some of the kids did it who could afford to do it and stuff like that. But really, you know, you gotta get back to the ethic that was America at the time, which was you did the right thing, and the right thing to do was to go out and get a job and contribute to the economy and to the national security and whatever else you have to do. So, I went out and I got a job. And my first job, I can hardly remember, was in 1968, and it was with—no, it wasn't either. It was before that. I had a job for a few years. After the Goldwater campaign I was unemployed, and I remember walking around DC looking for a job and I ran into a guy from the Goldwater campaign who was a former—he had worked in the US Intelligence Services, and he said, "What are you doing?" And I said, "I'm looking for a job." And he said, "Go to such-and-such an office and ask for this guy's name"—I don't remember his name. So I did, and I walked in and I saw on the door, Air America. And are you familiar with Air America?

KESLER: No, I'm not.

PAUL: Yeah, well, I wasn't either. And at that time it was the CIA private airline that they ran. And they were flying missions all over Southeast Asia, including Vietnam. And I went in, and I remember there was a very pretty blonde girl sitting at the front desk, and I said, "I want to see Mr. so-and-so," and she said, "Are you a pilot or a bundle kicker?" And I don't know if you know the terminology. You know what a pilot is, but do you know what a bundle kicker is?

KESLER: No, I don't.

PAUL: Okay, a bundle kicker is someone who drops supplies out of an airplane by parachute, and the way you did it was you hooked it up and then you just kicked it out the door, and became known as a bundle kicker. And I said, "No, I'm not a bundle kicker, but I was a parachutist," and so forth. And she said "okay." So anyway, I interviewed. They offered me a job to go to Vietnam, and this was in early 1965, and I just, I don't know, the little voice inside of me said, *You know, it's time to do something else. It's time to get established in American society and to get a good job, and to become a little more conservative with things*. And so, I turned the job down, and I went ahead and finished grad school, and then got a job in 1968 with Motorola, which as you know is a big Chicago electronics company. Where are you from, by the way?

KESLER: I'm originally– I'm from Arizona.

PAUL: Oh, really?

KESLER: Yes, I grew up in Flagstaff, Arizona. As you were talking about—our airport in Phoenix has the Barry M. Goldwater Memorial Terminal, is Terminal 4.

PAUL: Right.

KESLER: So, whenever I am learning about that campaign or whatever, I always flash back to when I'm traveling to or from Dartmouth, that's the always the one that I fly out of.

PAUL: Oh, isn't that… I have to tell you a really funny story about the Goldwater campaign. Election night, the whole campaign staff, we flew to Phoenix, and we went to the Camelback Inn. Are you familiar with the Camelback?

KESLER: I am.

PAUL: The owner was a good friend of Senator Goldwater's, and he hosted the whole campaign staff at the hotel to watch the elections. And of course the elections were over very, very early, and we were very disappointed. And I remember someone saying to me, "You gotta go back to the airport and check the airplane, because we're gonna leave because the election's over." And I hadn't had a drop to drink and all the whole back side of the pool leading into the hotel, it was all glass, all glass, including the door, and I walked right into a glass window, and practically knocked myself out, and of course that was the big joke. Anyway, that was my experience at the Camelback. But we stayed in Phoenix quite a few times, and I came to really, really love Arizona.

KESLER: It's a beautiful place, yeah.

PAUL: Oh, it's a wonderful, wonderful place. Anyway, I'm digressing.

KESLER: No, that's all right. Yeah, like I said, I just always think about that airport terminal whenever I'm talking about or like in class and learning about Barry Goldwater, because that was our big… He and McCain a few years ago were our two big Presidential nominees. And that's Arizona's claim to fame, so far.

PAUL: Uh-huh. Are you a McCain fan?

KESLER: So, my parents are interesting, because my dad's a Libertarian and my mom's a Democrat, so I kind of run the middle road as far as all of that goes. And obviously, respect him so much for all of his service, but don't know as much if I agree with all of his political records. But, obviously, you know, everything that he's going through right now, just really hoping that everything ends up okay for him, and respecting everything that he's had go on in his life.

PAUL: Uh-huh. Well, I ended up my career, I spent most of my time as a lobbyist in Washington, DC, and I had the occasion to meet him a couple of times. And he is the most wonderful, warmest person you've met.

KESLER: That's what I've heard. My dad actually met him in an airport once and was reading President Bush's memoir or

something like that, and he approached McCain and was like, “Oh, it’s so good to meet you.” And Senator McCain goes, “Oh, would you like me to sign that book for you?” And so he signed—it wasn’t, I don’t think it was President Bush, but it was another politician, his memoir, but it was McCain who did it, and my dad always talks about that and how it’s just a funny, funny interaction. But, I’ve heard he’s a very, very nice person, yes. [pause] Moving back a little bit and kind of like zooming out a bit, let’s talk about Vietnam and just the Americanization of the war, because that was right when you were finishing up with the Special Forces, is that right?

PAUL: Right. That’s right. And I’m glad you said that, because I wanted to get back to that. At the time, you know, again at the time, with the prevailing national mood and national atmosphere… And I have to say, though, that with the assassination of John Kennedy in 1963, a lot of stuff—oh, God, I don’t want to say the ills of the world—but a lot of stuff that had been unseen at the time began to surface. In other words, a lot of the unhappiness in US society began to emerge that people hadn’t seen before, and it was sort of like the assassination of Kennedy was the demarcation point for all this stuff being able to come out.

And as we went along, I think the Vietnam War just began to, you know, happened to accelerate a lot of that stuff, and it became, at the time that the US got committed—and when you read *Embers of War*, you’ll see how the US really got involved in the very, very beginning, and it’s really a much different story than you think it is. But, it was… Ah, I don’t know how, I don’t know what’s the right way to do it… You know, at the time everybody had their, I don’t want to say this demeaningly, but everyone had their little colonial war. You know, the British fought in Malaya, the French had fought in Algeria and in Vietnam, and now this was the United States’ turn to have a colonial war, so to speak. And, I mean, that’s very, maybe you think that’s a cynical way to look at it, but I’m just trying to state it objectively.

And you and I are talking with the benefit of hindsight, and that’s a very, very big factor, because at that time, we didn’t have hindsight. It was still, the mindset still was, *This is the greatest country in the world. Our job was to fight Communism, and it’s obvious what’s happening in Vietnam.* And you’ve got to read *Embers of War* to understand the

politics of it, the relationship between the United States and France, why France left, and why the United States moved in, and what were the domestic forces behind the US participation in Vietnam. And I can't say that it was all based on foreign policy, because we really had no foreign policy over there at that time. Our foreign policy was: *the French had been involved there, so maybe there's really something to it after all*. And when you look at US domestic policy, there was the big McCarthy Red Scare going on. Nobody wanted to be branded a Communist or associated with Communism, and it was very easy to say that because China was supporting North Vietnam, that it was obviously a Communist movement when, as we learned today, it was really a nationalist movement. I mean, Communists were involved in it, but it was really basically a nationalist movement. And that's again why *Embers of War* is such an important book, because if you don't understand all those things…

But, now we understand all those things looking back on it. And I have to say, in my working life, with all the demonstrations that were going on in Washington, DC from, say, roughly, I don't know, 1968, 1970 through 1975, Kent State, all those things, all these things emerged. And for someone like myself, it was very difficult to try to decide what was right and what was wrong, because obviously I was a patriot, I was brought up to be a patriot. In fact, it was my duty because I was the first generation here, and I was going to have to help keep America what it was. But by the same token, all these underlying forces came into play and were ignited and allowed to surface because of the Vietnam War. And I could understand a lot of that, as well. And I could understand the opposition to the war. What made it more difficult was that the hippie movement and all this stuff, the flower movement, all came on. Everything against the government that was contrary to the government became unleashed with the Vietnam War as the reason for it. It was like they unzipped everything that was underlying the American society, and it all emerged in the flower generation and all the hippie movement and all this other stuff. And I don't say anything—I am not being disparaging. So, don't get me wrong. I'm just trying to make an objective analysis as to how this whole thing trended and why it did.

So, here we were, the people of my generation who were very traditional, very nationalist oriented, wanted the United

States to continue its position to be to counter the Soviet Union. And on the other side, here are these millions of people who were against the war, were visibly flouting the US government, and were disobeying, were burning their draft cards, were burning the American flag, were fleeing to Canada. And it was very difficult. And now when you have the luxury of sitting back and reading how terrible combat was in those days and the terrible military mistakes that the military leadership was making in the conduct of the war, you really can understand why a lot of this happened. But, they didn't know it in those days. No one really could see that lack of leadership.

I think if you read *The Pentagon Papers*, which you may have read, or if you read a wonderful book called *The Best and the Brightest*, [by David Halberstam], you start to see how some of this evolved. And there were writers and people who began to see how, you know, the evolution of this whole thing. But, no one had the benefit that we, you and I, have today to be able to look back on it with stark objectivity and say, *Oh, my gosh, why did we ever start doing this in the first place? One, why were we ever there in the first place? And then, number two, why was the war prosecuted in the manner that it was? If you decide you're going to wage a war in that environment, why did you wage it the way that you did?* And so, getting involved in Vietnam was never an issue for me, because as I said, that was the natural and national proclivity of the day. We were protectors of the Free World, and this was a natural thing for us to do. But, looking back on it, when you see the tactical and the strategic mistakes of what the leadership did over there and what they put those poor guys through, had to do, was really a very difficult thing, and it obviously was not the right thing to do, but you couldn't see it at that time. It's only with hindsight. And did you see the PBS documentary on Vietnam?

KESLER: Yes, actually the professor who heads the Dartmouth Vietnam Project was somebody who was consulted on the documentary, and they showed it at Dartmouth earlier. I think around this time last year was the first time they premiered it at Dartmouth.

PAUL: Right. And you saw all, I don't know how many episodes are there? 12 episodes or… Did you see the whole thing?

KESLER: I've seen I think the first few, and then clips from the last couple. But it's also on my list to go back through and continue watching it. I was studying abroad when the full thing came out, so I wasn't able to see it as it was coming out.

PAUL: Where were you abroad?

KESLER: I was in London over the fall.

PAUL: Oh, you're kidding. Where did you go to school there?

KESLER: We were studying at the University College London, and then we took one class through SOAS, which is the School of Oriental and Asiatic Studies, I think.

PAUL: Right. Oh, God, that's a great experience. You'll be happy you did that later on in your life.

KESLER: It was an amazing… That was also, similar to you, that was my first time traveling abroad was when I studied abroad.

PAUL: Right.

KESLER: And it was just really incredible, so I'm already kind of trying to find excuses to go back. One of my friends will be in Ireland this fall, so I'm trying to go over and visit her if I can.

PAUL: Ohhh, what a great idea. Here's a little kid from Arizona studying in London, right? [laughter]

KESLER: Exactly. So, it makes you very aware of the different ways that you're very American. So, there were just certain things like needing personal space even is a very different concept, especially even from Arizona to the East Coast, but then also, once you get over to Europe, it's just very different. And we spent a few days in Prague, as well, and that was also just a very different experience. But overall, absolutely loved it.

PAUL: Isn't that good? I think that's terrific. I married a Swedish woman, and so we go to Sweden every year for a month to see her family. And it kind of keeps you in touch with Western Europe, or let's say, a different type of civilization than what you have in the United States, and it gives you

some very interesting dimensions. So, that's good that you do that. I think that's terrific.

KESLER: Uh-huh, it was very, very worth it.

PAUL: Sounds like it.

KESLER: But, I also want to touch on what were your first few impressions of the war when you first heard about the Americanization, and then, also the anti-war movement?

PAUL: Well, those are two different eras. And when I first heard about the war was probably in '63, '64, when there was a small American participation there. I don't know, they were just maybe a few thousand American troops there and they were advising Vietnamese units. And I don't know, you know, I thought, *Gee, that's pretty cool. These guys are over there and they're getting some combat experience, and it's not a major conflagration that we experienced in World War II*. And as I said, I'd always loved guerilla warfare and small unit warfare. So, it was very interesting to me, and I sort of, you know, daydreamed once in a while that maybe this wouldn't be a bad thing to do. But, obviously I didn't do it.

KESLER: And the first few people who were there were members of the Special Forces, is that correct?

PAUL: Yeah, and they were Special Forces people and they were advisors. They weren't fighting units. They were advisors to the South Vietnamese Army, and that was their role for quite a while, until the US, and I think it was [General William C.] Westmoreland was the commanding general, they decided to really implement warfare against the North Vietnamese on a much, much larger scale. And I think that was the big difference. Again, you've got to look at the context of everything. That was a transition point between America being the leader against Communism and being involved in Vietnam in a knee jerk way without really understanding the history of Vietnam and why the North was fighting the South. And I'm not a great—I don't know all the details of the Vietnam history. I just know some generalizations.

But, there had been conflict between the North and the South for, you know, going back to 1900 or something like that. And the Chinese had always been a threat to

Vietnamese nationalism in 1900, because I think the Chinese would really have liked to have the outlets to the ocean that Vietnam provided. So, the North Vietnamese was more of a nationalist movement than anything else, although there were a lot of Communists who were involved in it. But it wasn't the Red Scare that everybody was so afraid of at the time. And that was the big issue in those days, it was the Red Scare. And the Red Scare was abroad, it was with the hegemony of the Soviet Union and all its satellites in Eastern Europe that they had taken after the war, which was a terrible, terrible thing. And our job was to stop that, or to fight them, or be prepared to fight them whenever the big day came. [laughter] We were ready, so no matter what it took.

Now, here was a small war that people because it was a nationalist/Communist movement automatically fit it into the overall puzzle and said, *Oh, gosh, this is part of the fight against the Soviet Union. We can't look like we're soft on Communism at home in the United States, so somehow we've got to get engaged in this thing*. So, from the political point of view, that's what drove it. Once the war started and they committed to using US military on a very, very large scale, there were terrible, terrible mistakes made in the way the war was conducted. And maybe you've heard this from other people, as well.

KESLER: Uh-hm.

PAUL: But, the US had the most powerful military in the world at the time. They had nuclear weapons, they had an unbelievable amount, hundreds of thousands of trained military people who had been through World War II and Korea, who really knew their stuff. And so, but—and there's a big "but"—the US Armed Services are trained to fight what I would call a linear war, which means the two sides lined up against each other like they did in Germany, you know, at the Fulda Gap. There was the Russian Army on one side and the US Army on the other side, and it was going to be simple math. And we were the most powerful army in the world and we were just going to beat whatever was in our way. But this was not what I called a linear war. This was the US's first experience with a guerrilla war, which in today's parlance is called asymmetric warfare. Have you heard of that? Have you heard that term used?

KESLER: I think so, uh-hm.

PAUL: Yeah. Asymmetric, which means it has no form. There are no lines. There are no demarcation lines; there are no distinct lines between enemy forces that you could draw a line through and then you attack one sector and so forth. These people fought guerrilla warfare, and they'd do raids or they'd attack American units, and then they'd just disappear into the jungle. And you can't fight those people in mass formations. You can't beat them with bombers and Napalm and God knows what else the US used to try to kill them, because all these traditional methods of warfare didn't fit the pattern that the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army was using to fight the Americans. They were smart. You know, they knew how to use their terrain. They'd spent, I don't know, 20 years fighting the French doing this the same way, and they knew that they could never beat the US Army in a head-to-head battle. So they avoided it. It was simple. They used small unit tactics. They drew small American units, you know, platoon size, company size, into these traps, and then they'd shoot at them for a couple days and do what they did and then disappear into the jungle. And there was no amount of bombers, and there was no amount of tanks and large military formations that were going to be able to deal with that kind of warfare.

So, from a military point of view, just because Westmoreland went from—and I don't have the numbers in front of me, but you probably have them—he went from, I don't know, 58,000 troops up to, I don't know how many hundreds of thousands were there at the peak? That really wasn't going to make one iota of difference because that wasn't the kind of war that they were fighting. So, we were the greatest traditional war machine in the world, but we didn't know how to fight a guerrilla war. And you don't fight a guerrilla war that way. You fight it so many other ways, so many civilian ways, and, you know, as they said, hearts and minds, and there was never any guarantee that the hearts and minds of the South were really happy that the US was so-called "protecting" them, because maybe they really weren't.

Anyway, we're able to say this now with hindsight, and as I said, at the time that I was living through it and I was working in Washington, DC in the several jobs that I had during the war, it was a very difficult time, and it was very confusing, because opposing the war went against everything that I learned and it really went against the grain for all the training

that I had and for what I believed in and for what my parents had taught me, and why my parents came to the US in the first place. That whole thread was running through there for me. But then, by the same token I saw all these unnecessary deaths. I saw all this huge hippie movement develop which I was never really fond of, but it didn't seem very productive to me, but it was an overall rebellion against the entire US establishment, and I think this was the reason they needed to do what they did.

So, as I say, you're torn between the two, and it was very, very hard to decide who was right and who was wrong. And at the end of the day, both sides were—both parties were wrong, with somewhere in the middle, the truth was somewhere in the middle. And we're finding that out just today by the benefit of hindsight. But, you know, unfortunately all the literature today really points out all the political and military mistakes that the US made in becoming involved in the war.

And if we hadn't become involved in the war, the North would have taken the South anyway, and we would be exactly where are were today, and maybe it would have been even better because now that we're friends with all of Vietnam, and people go over there regularly and we trade with them and invest there, and so forth and so on, maybe that would have happened a lot sooner if the North had taken over the South and we had never been involved there. So, that's the irony of it. And again, I'm sorry to reiterate, for me it was difficult to discern what was the right. If you had to take a position, it was difficult to… Are you there?

KESLER: Yes. Can you hear me?

PAUL: I tell you what, while we're talking, I'm going to go get another phone, because was that your beep or mine?

KESLER: I didn't hear anything on my end.

PAUL: Okay, okay. That's my phone telling me my battery's low. I'm going to go as we're talking, I'm getting another handset, and we're going to make a transfer.

KESLER: Okay, perfect.

PAUL: And if for some reason we're cut off, you can just call me right back. But I'm going to make sure we're not, so hang on. Are you there?

KESLER: Yes.

PAUL: Okay. We're transferred. Good.

KESLER: Perfect.

PAUL: That was good. That was perfect.

KESLER: Easy peasy.

PAUL: Easy peasy.

KESLER: And you were saying that for you, it was– just kind of depended on what was the right thing to do, and you didn't necessarily have this idea of hindsight.

PAUL: Yes. I mean, if you lived during the time, it was very difficult because you wanted your country to be right, and you wanted to be patriotic, and you wanted to do the right thing. But by the same token, you saw these terrible—and the flip side is you saw all these, you know, you saw the hippie movement, you saw the flower children and all that, and that didn't seem right to me either. That didn't seem to me very productive. But then you saw what was wrong with the government and why these people were doing what they did, and the mistakes that the government were making in prosecuting the war. And it was hard not to be against it. It was hard to be against that, too, not to be against… Well, you understood why they were doing it, so it was… I wasn't confused. It was just very, very difficult to make a final decision, and you didn't have to make a final decision because the war ended and it was a terrible tragedy.

And I can tell you something very interesting. I was playing golf. We live in a golf community and I was playing here with some friends, and one of the guys had a guest from another part of Florida, and we started talking while we were playing. And he was a retired colonel from the Marine Corps. And I told him I had been in Special Forces. And he was the helicopter pilot who flew the last helicopter off the roof of the US Embassy with the ambassador in 1975.

KESLER: Really?

PAUL: So, you know that famous photograph?

KESLER: Yes, I know just the one you're talking about.

PAUL: Helicopter hovering there and the people climbing on. He was the pilot of that helicopter. And very interesting to meet somebody like that. Anyway, that's a digression. It was difficult if you had to make up your mind who was right and who was wrong when the war was over. And it's only now with the benefit of hindsight and all the books. And now there are much more dispassionate, objective analyses of the war, and *Embers*—I'm sorry to keep going back to *Embers of War—Embers of War* being one of them to really help you understand all the trends and all the themes that took place during the war that made it what it was. And that helps you arrive at a much more rational, a clear and rational decision. But it's taken, you know, 20 years or more to be able to get to that point. And that's why I also have a knee jerk reaction against literature that comes out while something is going on that says, "Oh, this is terrible" or, you know, "We're doing the wrong thing." It's hard to arrive at a decision on your own until all the facts are in, but, you know, during the time like that, you have no choice. It's either one or the other, so… That's what we had to face at the time.

You're living in an interesting era because there's no compulsory military service. Yeah, and you may not agree with me, but I think that was a very big mistake to abolish the draft, because military service adds something to a person's character and gives you a sense of direction and so forth. But, that's neither here nor there. We don't have that benefit anymore, so you gotta deal with what you got. So, we are where we are today. A lot of the literature that's come out on Vietnam now is very much more analytical, and you can understand stuff a lot better, rather than saying to yourself, if you read it 20 years ago, *This is still knee jerk stuff, and the person just was against the war, period, or he was for the war, period, and there was no discussion*. So…

KESLER: Yeah. Can you talk to me a bit more about your impressions of the anti-war movement?

PAUL: I just didn't have any respect for it. It just seemed to me that all the young people who were involved in it were

undisciplined, had no sense of direction, and where it was just a complete sense of rebellion against the government, against their parents, against organized society, or whatever it was, and they were using this as an opportunity to just go ahead and let themselves go. Now, again, in retrospect, there was a lot of, you know, it was a good thing to do, and there was a lot of healthy stuff about it, because the workings of the US government became more open and people understood historical context a lot more, and these people had a lot to say, and there was a lot of artistic creativity that was involved, and self-expression in things that we had never seen before that wasn't as traditional as we had been used to in the past.

By the same token, I saw a lot of fabric of US society get torn away, and that was difficult for me, given my upbringing and the fact that seeing my country succeed was very important to me because of my family upbringing, and because the opportunities the society gave my family, and more me—I mean, I benefitted more from the opportunities than my family did, my parents did. But, you know, this country just gave me everything that I got, and it gave me the freedom to pick and choose that I got, and I knew that if you worked hard, you were going to be successful, because that's the way the system worked. And then to see all this, to see the people trying to tear down the system and not want to be involved in it, you know, that was difficult for me to look to see. And so, but by the same token, I understood what they were rebelling about.

KESLER: Yeah. Similarly, can you talk to me a bit about your impressions of the civil rights movement going on just around the same time?

PAUL: I was very sympathetic, obviously, but I think in those days, oh, first of all, you didn't have the co-mingling in society between blacks and whites then as we do today, and segregation obviously was very, very prevalent in the South. And, you know, I think there's something to be said about white racism, if that's what you wanted to call it. You know the history of the United States, and it was founded by white Puritans from England, and so there is a white Protestant tradition that has pretty much prevailed from the time the *Mayflower* landed to pretty close to today. But the civil rights movement I looked at as a pretty heroic thing, because there was a lot of injustice to it, and I saw some of it firsthand on

certain occasions when I was, after college when I was traveling, and I saw what was going on, and I didn't quite understand how that could happen.

But by the same token, you were fighting—racial prejudice was an enormous institution in this country, particularly in the South, where they had been living with it for a couple hundred years anyway, and slavery was so prevalent. But it was hard to even imagine what integration could look like, in those days anyway. And now today, I think there's a lot more freedom and there's a lot more integration going on. I hate to use that word, because I'd probably be pilloried for it, using the word "integration." But, you know, there's still a lot of racism in society, and when you're brought up Caucasian, and Caucasians pretty much have run this country until not too long ago. It was unusual to see a black in the place of power, you know, senators, congressmen, leaders, and stuff like that. So, it's a quiet domestic revolution that's unfolding on its own, you know, as we speak. Which is very healthy, I think, very good.

KESLER: Kind of maybe taking a step back a little bit, I want to ask about what the rest of your family was up to during this time, your mother and your sister?

PAUL: My mother was working. And, again, she had the work ethic. She made a very—she'd never been to college, and she ended up being a very successful executive at IBM.

KESLER: Wow.

PAUL: Yep. And she worked at IBM—when did my father die? '56—she worked at IBM for almost 30 years. And someone who had no college training and started out as a secretary there, she ended up as the head of personnel for the IBM's international world trade division. So, she was a very, very remarkable person on her own in her own way, and she was a very successful person. So, I'm very proud of her for doing that, but she also reflected the ethic that my family brought to the US when they came over in 1938.

KESLER: Wow, and what was your sister up to during this time?

PAUL: My sister was completely the opposite from me. She broke away after college from home as soon as she can. I think she had a job. She worked for an airline for a couple of

years, and then she just took off and went to California, and she's lived there ever since. She's raised a family there. I think she's quite happy there. But, she and I are just polar opposites. And they're living in a community of—let's see, libertarian isn't the right word—they're I guess it's all, you know, it's like a Bernie Sanders, they're all progressives up there in her community, and that's the life they've chosen.

KESLER: I see. And can I ask when you met your wife?

PAUL: I met my wife in 1985, yeah, something like that. So I got married pretty late in life, and she did, too. She was a diplomat at the Swedish Embassy in Washington, DC. I was a lobbyist at the time, worked for Paramount Pictures, and we met—I think we lived in the same apartment building or same condominium, and someone introduced us, and it just went from there. We've been married a little over 30 years now.

KESLER: Wow. Congratulations.

PAUL: Yes, thank you.

KESLER: Taking a step back, then, before we get up to that point, let's talk a bit more about your career. So you said you got started in 1968 at Motorola, is that right?

PAUL: Right. I worked at Motorola as a marketing person, a government marketing person. I did a little bit of lobbying from there, and I really learned a lot about lobbying while I was there. And then I moved from there, in 1975, I went to work for a big New York corporation called Gulf and Western Industries. It's not Gulf Oil. It's Gulf and Western Industries. And Paramount Industries was one of the companies that they owned, and I did a lot of lobbying for them. Eventually they sold most of their holdings with the exception of Paramount Pictures and a publishing company called Simon & Schuster, which you may have heard of, and a few other businesses. So I became a Washington lobbyist for Paramount Pictures.

KESLER: How long did you work with them?

PAUL: Until 1990, so that was 15 years. And then from 1990 to 2001, I was the senior vice-president of a trade association that represented the United States satellite industry.

Satellites at that time were becoming the rage. You know, that was the new great form of international communications, and the US was launching a lot of satellites. A lot of satellite services were starting, including a lot of entertainment. So I became the public affairs and the Washington lobbyist for that trade association. And that went on until 2001, and then I did some consulting for about five or six years. I was a consultant with a large military company, which I really, really liked, because it was sort of—I ended up where I had started. [laughter] I started at the military, and then I ended up doing military work for the last five or six years as a marketing guy for a large defense supplier. And then I stopped really working full-time in probably 2007 maybe, 10 or 11 years ago.

KESLER: And tell me a bit more about what it was like being a lobbyist in DC during this time period, or I guess throughout those couple of decades?

PAUL: It was a real eye-opener, because it was very, very competitive. People who go to Washington, DC, they come from all over the country and they do it because they're really interested in politics, and they really have, they're really very strong people who really, they're very ambitious and they want to get ahead. And that's the kind of person who becomes a lobbyist. But I'm not saying that I was that vocal about it. Obviously, I'm ambitious. But these people were just—there's a lot of cutthroat ambition that was involved there, too, because it's a very, very difficult and competitive business to be in, because you've got to know people and you've got to be able to get in to see them, and it's like being in college every day, because you have to really, really know your stuff and what you're arguing for, and you have to do a lot of studying and a lot of reading. And so, it's very educational at the same time. And I did very well in it, although my wife complains that I was probably too nice to be a lobbyist in the scope of things, but, you know, I did it for over 30 years and I was very happy with all those experiences.

KESLER: I see. Now, moving forward a little bit, talk to me a bit more about your later career, where you ended up, and I guess like I suppose how you got back into working with the military?

PAUL: Well, I had a very good friend when I retired. We had a very good friend down the street. It turned out to be a French couple. And I'd been speaking French all my life. My wife is fluent in French. So we had a lot of French friends. And this person was the president of the US CUP subsidiary of a big Belgian company that was a defense supplier. And he knew I was a lobbyist. He knew I spoke French, because we were very, very good friends. And he offered me when he knew I had stopped working full-time, he offered me a job to be a marketing and legislative consultant for the company, and I did that. And it was sort of like, it was like the end of the round trip, because I started off military, and I finished off military. And I can remember coming home from having been at the Pentagon and at one of the Army installations doing marketing and working with the military, and then I'd come home in the evening and I must have had a big smile on my face. My wife could say that "this is what you started and you finished, and this is where it is." And it was very, very satisfying, and it was a wonderful way to end my career, because I had this military theme throughout. And I was able to finish on that note.

And what I do now, because we're retired and we live in Vero Beach, Florida most of the time. I'm very active here with the Veterans Council of Indian River County, which is the group, a very large group of veterans that does a lot of work on behalf of the community here and for veterans, veterans who are returning from the Middle East, and I'm meeting a lot of people who were in Vietnam and even some in World War II and Korea. So, it's, you know, I sort of continued it that way, and it's very, very satisfying from that point of view.

KESLER: And I know that in your volunteer database sheet for the Dartmouth Vietnam Project, you talked about having strong feelings about military service, and I want to give you any time to add anything that you would like to, if you have more comments about that.

PAUL: When you're in the workplace, or when I was in the workplace, I could tell the difference between employees who had served in the military and employees who had not. And it's not a matter of—I'm not, you know, going to discriminate from the other, but you could tell by the way people worked with the kind of discipline they had, with the kind of respect they had, with their worldview, how they

treated the organization, the way they could pull together, or the way they treated other people. Military people are people with military training. They just do it differently.

And it's very hard to explain today to people because nobody serves in the military anymore, or if they do it's all voluntary, they're limited, and they appear from time to time running for Congress or doing this or that or something else. But for the most part, when you go into the workplace today, you probably will meet hardly anybody who's had any military service. And it's a shame, because it brings so many things to your life. It builds character, you learn discipline, it makes you aware of what's going on around you, and it helps you to judge people, and it also gives you an enormous sense of self-satisfaction that you did at least something to serve your country. And when you look at the opportunities that this society offers for anybody who wants to work and get ahead, it didn't just happen by itself. I mean, you just didn't—you know, Rachel or Andrew just didn't wake up one morning and this great big bountiful society was sitting at our feet waiting for it to be taken. It had to be built. And a lot of people sacrificed to make it what it is today. And if you want to keep it that way, then I think you have to earn it, and you earn it by serving your country somehow in a way that makes everybody pull together and do things as a unit, and not as just individuals alone.

KESLER: And looking back now on Vietnam and on your time in the military, do you have any additional impressions of especially the Vietnam War era that you would like to add?

PAUL: No, I don't. It's funny. I keep going back to *Embers of War*. And I just read the book maybe not even a year ago. After having read that book, I think I finally understand everything that I need to understand about Vietnam, and how it happened. I always knew the context, because I lived first in the post-World War II era, the son of the Greatest Generation, and so I had the Greatest Generation mindset going into American society and into the workplace, and you did what you were supposed to do, and there was a good reason for it. And now I can look back and say, you know, I understand that mindset, because I had that mindset, and this is why we got involved in Vietnam. Now it's easy with all of the literature and having history on our side to look back and say, "You know, this wasn't such a great idea." But how you could come to that conclusion in 1963 or 1964, without

having all this hindsight and knowledge, would have been a very difficult thing to do, in my view.

KESLER: Taking a couple of steps back, I also want to ask you about, because it seems like we've kind of been like stepping through the larger events that have gone on through your lifetime, and I want to ask you about [President Richard M.] Nixon's time in office and his potential impeachment and how that shaped your views of American government and American democracy, if at all.

PAUL: You know, it never shaped it. That event didn't shape any of my views. You know, I think I, yes, I voted for Nixon. He was not a very savory character. I mean, in my mind, he never really—you looked at the guy and he didn't look like a shining example. And one of the issues at that time is that everybody was still thinking about John F. Kennedy, and he was young and handsome, and he represented everything that was good about the United States. And anything that came after him, including Lyndon Johnson, was, I don't know, was just a letdown. I mean, nothing could have compared to John Kennedy. So, what Nixon did, he was a very, very good and devious politician. He understood what to do, but, you he got himself involved in stuff that there was no excuse for, and then he got caught. And, well, he left before he could be impeached, but, you know, that's how it is. That's the history of the guy.

And when you look back at some of the things he did, he did some very good things. He opened up China to the US. No one's ever done that before. And he did other… He did end the Vietnam War, although the irony is that I think in 1968 when he declared finally that he was going to figure—we were going to get out of the war, the war was going to end and we were going to leave eventually, there had been 19,000 American soldiers killed over there at the time. Well, by the time, you know, when he finally made people realize we were going to leave, the nature of the combat changed, I think the North got very, very encouraged, and another, well, I think the total of 58,000 Americans died over there in combat. So, from 19,000 to 58,000, which was almost, what, 40,000. Almost 40,000 more young people had to die in the war before it was over, even though he had announced in 1968 or after he became President that he wanted to end the war. So there's a lot of irony in that and a lot of tragedy. And I think it's those remaining years where the killing kept going

on and casualties kept on mounting that made the war look totally senseless at that point. Because, we were going to be gone, but we couldn't leave until 30,000 more people got killed. So, that's the tragedy of it.

KESLER: Well, as we're wrapping up a little bit more, I also want to give you the opportunity to touch on anything else that you feel that we haven't talked about sufficiently quite yet, if there's anything?

PAUL: No, I think that, you know, when I first heard about this project, I thought gosh, this is really interesting to me, and I was glad Dartmouth was doing it, but I thought, well, you know, I didn't serve in Vietnam. I missed it. I was pre-Vietnam. But by the same token, I thought maybe the project would be interested in the context of it, which is what I've been able to live through, because I was World War II and then pre-Vietnam, and then the war, and then looking back on it now 20 years later or whatever. So the context to me had been always very, very interesting, and I was really pleased that you and the College were giving me the opportunity to talk about the context, because that also has helped me to understand the war a lot better.

KESLER: Absolutely. And it's always, as I said earlier, it's interesting to see the different perspectives that different narrators bring to the interviews, and just the idea that we're not just focusing on the war, but also being able to talk to people about the entire course of their life, I think, adds a lot to interviews oftentimes. And it's always interesting to see, like I said earlier again, what different people bring to these, and what's important for them to touch on.

PAUL: Right.

KESLER: Well, with that, then, let's chat a little bit more about present day, again, just as we're kind of wrapping up. I guess I'm just always curious about your impressions of current political movements, because a lot of people do draw parallels between present day and the political movements that are going on and what was happening during the Vietnam War era. Do you have anything that you would like to add on that?

PAUL: I don't know whether… Ah, it's very hard to relate that for me, to draw a connecting line between that. Let's say that,

you know, the hippie movement or the flower movement or counter—I don't know, whatever you want to call it—I don't want to disparage it—but it really opened up how we live in America and how America is governed, and it also lent some amount of… mistrust in government that started because of the war and has really never stopped. And, now whether that's good or bad, I don't know. You know, government's obviously always been wrong many times in the course of the history of the United States. But as I said in the very beginning, the US won World War II, and this country was unified maybe like it had never ever been unified before, in terms of foreign policy, and by the same token we now became *the* major player on the world stage, which the United States had never done before either, because if you recall, after World War I, we kind of retreated back into our shell, you know, being protected by the oceans on both sides and being the insular country that we are.

So, the Vietnam War uncovered all of their ills, but it also let loose the typical rebellious nature of Americanism, which is both good and bad. It's good because of its creativity and it's bad because you keep tearing down institutions and things that may be beneficial in the long run. So, to the extent that it exposed the invalidity of the Vietnam War, but it did it in a different way, and maybe that was the only way to do it that would make people sit up and listen and see what was really going on out there, and not just accepting what the government was saying, which as it turned out in the end, was not the truth about the war. So, there's a lot to be said for that. But by the same token, just rebellion for the sake of rebellion, which I think a lot of it was, I don't think that was particularly healthy from that perspective.

KESLER: I see. I suppose with that, is there anything else that you would like to add to the interview?

PAUL: No, I think, as I say, I thought about this interview quite a bit before, you know, the last couple weeks knowing that you were going to call, and I think I took all the points that I wanted to make and that I put together, and I think I've expressed them pretty well. In fact, I'm kind of pleased the way that it worked out, so… You did a good job of guiding me.

KESLER: Thank you. [laughter] Well, with that I'm going to go ahead and stop the recording. Thank you so much for speaking with me, and I'm stopping the recording right now.

[End of Interview.]