

Faris R. Kirkland-Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 1

(Begin Tape 1, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: So one of the things that happens seems to me in a biography is you're trying to get the whole gamut of what one's contribution is, what one thinks about it. I guess my view about it is, your bent, which I think is a good bent, is to try to get at the human dimensionality of what the change was in the Army about all that. And I think that I was certainly formative in working that issue. And I don't—and there's no denying that. I think anybody that's got a grain of sense would understand that.

So it's not, I'm afraid that if you bill it as a biography it will not have the same appeal mechanism, that it will have as a story about the dimension, the human dimension of the Army, which after all is the Army. I mean, the Army is human beings, not machines. And I just think that when you get—

See, you're going up in the timeframe which is Colin Powell's going to come out with his memoirs, Rick Atkinson is taking Schwarzkopf [General Norman Schwarzkopf, Jr.] apart and all the like. And so the point is, who is this guy Thurman? The American public has long since forgotten who he is. You follow me? In the main.

DR. KIRKLAND: I don't intend to compete in a popular market, and probably a university press will be what I'll look for, though may end up with Sage or Greenwood or something like that. I would like this thing to be a good deal more serious. Did you ever read Allan Millett's biography of General Bullard [Auditor's note: Allan R. Millett's book, *The General – Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army 1881 – 1925*]?

GEN. THURMAN: No.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's the best military biography I've ever read, and its subtitle is *Robert Bullard and the Officership of the United States Army 1880s to 1925* or so. That's kind of what I'd like to model it on.

I think it's very important for people who are your heirs in the Army to know something that they can't possibly know except through a book, or whatever; and that's what the Army was like between 1953 and 1965. It doesn't have any bite to it if I were to make general statements. But if I can talk about what you did and what your first sergeants were like, how many privates you had that you had to courts martial, total slugs, what your battalion commanders and S3s knew, what your battery commanders did to develop you, this will give a picture of what the old Army really was.

GEN. THURMAN: So you're going to do it from '53 to '65?

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, that's sort of when the problem areas were. And then we get into Vietnam and sort of a crisis of confidence, and out of that came a bunch of guys like you and Bob Elton [LTG Robert Moffat Elton] and [General Frederick "Fritz"] Kroesen and the whole bunch of fascinating people; different kinds of officers I think than came out of the Second World War, and with different values.

And this is where the sort of—it's a long cautionary tale because it's so easy to slip into "the world owes me a living" kind of atmosphere that I think was around in the '50s.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Let me say to you, though, that if you look at my track record, it won't be viewed as reliable in that I lived with a force much, because I didn't. You know, if you look back at my particular record—and I don't know whether you've looked at it in detail—

DR. KIRKLAND: Your troop comprised the 11th Airborne and then—

GEN. THURMAN: 11th Airborne. I never commanded a battery.

DR. KIRKLAND: No, you never commanded a battery.

GEN. THURMAN: That's a very unusual thing. So people would say, he doesn't know shit about what went on with the troops.

The second thing is, I never was a battalion staff officer, okay? So the next time I come around as a commander, after being a platoon commander, I'm a battalion commander. I've been a battalion commander for eight months. And then the next time I come around I come around as a DIVARTY [Division Artillery] commander, and no other troop duty. Do you follow me?

So, that's one reason Richard Halloran ran a very interesting article in the *New York Times* in 1981 when I was advanced through the grade of lieutenant general that he talked about “Shy” [Edward] Meyer promoting the 21 generals to the grade of lieutenant general, some huge number like that, maybe 15 or whatever. And he went down and ticked all these guys off. And he said, “And Thurman is a manager”—do you follow me?—because I hadn't been a division, hadn't been an ADC, hadn't been a division commander, and now I'm getting advanced to the grade of lieutenant general.

So, I think you have to watch how you portray my knowledge base, the details of what the Army was doing in the field. In other words, I never put down a race riot in Germany, and there are plenty of people that did. So, I think you have to be careful about, is he a true representative. Nobody could make it to the top like I did, today. Nobody.

DR. KIRKLAND: No. You have to get all the punches. And even at the time that you were doing it, very few people did, though I must say there are lot of people who have very few commands who got to very high ranks in the '60s, '70s era.

GEN. THURMAN: We'll proceed on whatever track you want to. I'm just saying, even when I read letter two it says, we're going to talk about the human dimension—oh, by the way, look at it as a biography—I don't have any trouble looking at it from the human dimension. I think when you look at that, the biographical notion if you're trying to treat it fulsomely begins to dwindle and you're concentrating on one

aspect. And that's fine. I don't have trouble with concentrating on the one aspect, if that's what you feel you're comfortable doing with it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay. So moving along. It will shape as you see what it is you're going to do here.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, of course, it may take some turns. That's for sure.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I understand.

DR. KIRKLAND: I don't know you well at all. I know, I learned a lot of what I thought was a lot about you from Dave Marlowe because he saw you frequently and he would say what your perceptions and attitudes were and what projects you were backing. And I thought that was good. And then I met you once in March of 1987. Dave asked me to come along and help with the briefing, and to my astonishment, I found myself talking to you about one of the problems in the 7th Division was that a number of the officers were insecure, so they just didn't have the confidence to implement much more demanding leadership that COHORT [Cohesion, Operational Readiness, Training] requires. And we were talking substantively about this.

And I had never met another officer in the Army who was ready to engage on that kind of an issue. And so I got interested in you as you—just you. I think you must have—I don't know how you've got away with it.

GEN. THURMAN: Away with what?

DR. KIRKLAND: With being so independent, telling them to take their battery command and stick it, imposing your will about what branch you were going to be in when you were a second lieutenant, grabbing a battalion command by the throat,

and being an independent thinker. I understand how you were able to do what you did to recruiting command because you had backing all the way up. That was—

GEN. THURMAN: I had backing all the way up but nobody, nobody got into what we did. Authority came out and said fix it and we'll support you, and now you go figure out what “fix it” means.

DR. KIRKLAND: I know that. And then the whole fix-it idea—the recruiting command was run by NCOs for generations.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: And you were the first one who had the—

GEN. THURMAN: Discovered it.

DR. KIRKLAND: —independence I think—well, people must have known.

GEN. THURMAN: No. Confidence.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that what it was?

GEN. THURMAN: Sure. Be confident even when wrong. It's one of the things you have to—you know, I think this is true of any leader, I mean whether he's a manager or a leader he is—you have to, in a scene of ambiguity which is what war is all about, you have to be very confident and radiate that confidence down to the troops so they get behind you and do what it is you want to get done. They feel very safe, very comfortable, because they feel that you know where it is you want to go, and they're able to get on board and help you do that.

If there's a long suit I have I think it's that. That is to say, the ability to plot a course and make something happen.

DR. KIRKLAND: That does seem to be a thread that runs right through your life.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I look at some of the things that are currently going on, let's say in our foreign policy or national security policy, and the United States at the moment. And it's because it's ambiguous, and so nobody has seized the nettle and gone and said, here's what we're going to do, and let's all get behind and go do it. Rather, it's sort of; well gee whiz, that doesn't seem to be working, back off. Gee whiz, we'll try something else; if that doesn't work, we'll back off.

I think that is—you know, in a military organization, that's dispiriting. People expect the bosses in a military organization to know what it is we're going to do, and then go out and do it. People in the military want to be told what to do. They don't want to necessarily be told how to do it down to the gnat's eyeball, but they want to be told what it is we, what standards we have to maintain. That's the reason VOLAR [Auditor note: "Project VOLAR or Project Volunteer Army" initial concept of an all-volunteer Army in 1970] was a terrible bust because we said, gee whiz, we will lose our standards. And people said, we're actually going to have beer in a mess hall or in the barracks, you know, like you put in the VOLAR? Pretty soon you're just going—we're not doing that. Not only that, we're not drinking. Put the squeeze on it. Everybody said, you can't tell people that. We did that in the mid-'80s. Wickham [General John A. Wickham, Jr.] did that as Chief of Staff of the Army, and I remember him coming in seeing me one day and he said, "What do you think about if I just knock off happy hours and two-for-one drinks and all that?" I said, "It's a terrific idea, go do it. It's fine."

And then everybody says, more righteous than thou and all that. The fact is, people—you look around the Army today and people are not, not in the debauchery state that you found the Navy in—"TAILHOOK."

DR. KIRKLAND: When you came in the Army it was almost obligatory to be—

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, I mean, if you went in the airborne I mean you had to—my early career in the '80s in the 11th Airborne Division you had to get drunk at the “Propblast.” If you didn't do that you weren't a member of the club. Okay? How do you want to proceed today, sir?

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, if these tapes are the same as what—

GEN. THURMAN: Then you don't need those.

DR. KIRKLAND: I don't need those. I'd like to talk about the, about the 11th Airborne.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay.

DR. KIRKLAND: Let's see. Did you have any assignments prior to the Ordnance Corps Basic Course?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I came, I graduated from college, North Carolina State University, with a bachelors in Chemical Engineering, and had interviewed because it was the tail end of the Korean War and had interviewed with several chemical firms.

DR. KIRKLAND: You actually had a job.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. And I went to work for Carbide and Carbon Chemicals Company in Charleston, West Virginia, polyethylene plant. And after being there six weeks or so I got inducted into the United States Army at Aberdeen Proving Grounds and went to the basic course there. And in the course of doing that—I was brought in from the Reserve component; I was a distinguished military graduate from NC State, happened to be the cadet colonel down there, brigade commander, whatever you want to call it, big muckety muck. And so they gave me a DMG, distinguished military

graduate opportunity but I didn't take it. So, I was going out and earn my fortune in industry.

So, I got called to duty as a Reservist, still at the tail end of the Korean War, and went to Aberdeen. And while I was there I couldn't stand it. That is to say, the Ordnance Corps. Now the Ordnance Corps isn't bad, it is what they were teaching us at the time—more spare parts management and ordering. So, they would bring you in huge lists of standard nomenclature lists, tons of papers, and you were supposed to go through there and find Part “X” and what the federal stock number was.

Then I got my first set of orders, which was to the Anniston General Depot as a supply officer. I said, “Like Hell, I'm not going to be in the Army for a two-year stint to go to Anniston and issue paper down there, spare parts and all that kind of stuff.”

So, then, I exercised my right—which you had a right for one year application to be a Regular Army officer. So I exercised that right. And so I wanted to go in the field artillery. And the Adjutant General of the Army came back at that time and said, “There is no more room in the field artillery.” And through the intervention of the then-Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, serendipitously, who was a field artillery officer, General Williston B. Palmer, he hauled up the Adjutant General and said, “Are you telling me you're so careful at making judgments about the longevity of officers that one more lieutenant in the field artillery would break the bank?” And he said, “Put him in the field artillery.”

So, then, I had to pass the physical for field artillery, which I couldn't pass because I had a bad eye, congenital, 20/50 non-correctible, 20/40, 20/50. Still see out of it, still get some peripheral vision, but it was a deficiency at the time. So, they said, turn him down for a Regular Army appointment. So, then I was able to get a waiver for service in the Regular Army through the efforts of then-Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Williston B. Palmer, who called the Surgeon General up and said, “What's wrong with this guy Thurman, why can't he be a lieutenant at the field artillery? “He can't pass the eye physical.” He said, “Well, don't you give waivers?” “Yeah.” “Call the board together and see if you can get a waiver.” So they came back to the Vice Chief and said, “Okay, he's waiverable.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Why were you so attached to the field artillery?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, my father had been in the field artillery as a sergeant in World War I. He was a National Guardsman for the state of Tennessee, had been in the field artillery. My brother was a field artillery officer. So I knew about it. And so that's why I wanted it. I didn't have any exposé on the guns personally or anything, but it appealed to me. It had some mathematical undergirding to it, and I had done well in mathematics and science and chemical explosions, what happens when you torch the tube and you get ready to fire a round. So, it fit with my general view of what I was going to do.

Incidentally, I was only going to be in the Army three years, so I figured that's what I wanted to do.

So, if the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army hadn't intervened I wouldn't have been there. Probably ended up with a supply clerk in Anniston, Alabama, and gotten out in two years. So, that is how I got into the Regular Army component, and I got into the field artillery. So, I went directly from Aberdeen Proving Grounds to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and took another basic course. So, I had two back-to-back basic courses.

And then while I was at Fort Sill I applied for Airborne School and went from Fort Sill to Benning and took Parachute School. And I was sort of unremarkable. On my third jump, a guy landed in my parachute and got hung up in it. Both of us came in on my reserve. He broke his back. And I didn't. And—

DR. KIRKLAND: Did he collapse your chute?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Then you deployed your reserve.

GEN. THURMAN: So two guys on one reserve.

DR. KIRKLAND: So it was a pretty high altitude jump, it seems.

GEN. THURMAN: No. We were jumping at 1,000 feet. And—

DR. KIRKLAND: That's not much time to do all that.

GEN. THURMAN: He had a—he landed on my canopy. It was an equipment jump, and he then—he had, didn't have a weapon container at that time. You had your rifle, and you tied it down upside down with the stock underneath your arm and he jammed the muzzle of the rifle in the skirt of the chute so that the hem of the skirt laid between his body and the rifle. That hem is several thousand test pounds, so it doesn't break easily. And he was trying to rip the skirt, but he couldn't, obviously couldn't do that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was his chute open?

GEN. THURMAN: No. His chute was—by now, his chute had collapsed down below me. And because of the drag, I mean I looked up and I saw my chute getting dragged down, so I said, "Gee, I guess it's time for a reserve," so I pulled my reserve, and it was none of this feeding it out. It popped right along, and he hit the ground, and I got a little respite, I got a little bounce out of that because he was hanging below me about 30 feet. And so I got about a 30-foot cushion on that. And I came in, and I sprained my ankle terribly, and so I hit it. There was a football player in my class, a guy named Bob Sigholtz [Robert Harris Sigholtz] who later becomes the head of the stadium, the DC stadium armory or DC Armory Stadium Complex running the RFK Stadium. And Sigholtz was a football player. And I said, "I want you to immobilize my ankle," which he did. And I made two more jumps on that for graduation and went on to Jump Masters School, made three more on that. Then when I cut it off, cut the bandage off, the tape off, my ankle ballooned up about twice its size. And other than that, I didn't have any major problems out of the Jump School.

Then, I went from there to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and was assigned to Battery C of the 457th Airborne Field Artillery Battalion in the 11th Airborne Division Artillery.

And sort of my entry went like this: A Sergeant Major was a guy named Leroy Browning. And Sergeant Major Browning would later die as the Sergeant Major of the 101st Division Artillery in Vietnam. And he and his commander was a guy named Richard Pole. And Browning said to me, “I know your brother, he was in the 187 Regimental Combat Team with me in Korea,” and he said, “I’ll take care of you for 30 days and then you’re on your own lieutenant.” And so that was sort of the nature of the NCO corps at that particular time.

The airborne is very tight fraternity between the 82nd, the 11th and people, this is the tail-end of the Korean War, so a lot of people had served together in the 187 overseas with Korea. So, I went straight to a battery, which was a 105 M109—no, a 105, 101A1 field artillery outfit. And I became the battery reconnaissance and survey officer. So that’s how I got started in the airborne.

Now this is, I came in the service in July of ‘53, and now when I get to the unit it is like April of ‘54.

DR. KIRKLAND: How many officers were there in the battery then?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it’s interesting that you ask that because there were 11 officers in the battery at the time. It was grossly overstrength in officers.

DR. KIRKLAND: So they had some guys with no jobs then.

GEN. THURMAN: A lot. And—

DR. KIRKLAND: Was it normally about seven?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Normally you would have had three FOs, and an RO is four, a battery exec and an assistant exec, so that would be six, and a battery commander is seven. So we were overstrength in officers. And that’s the reason I wasn’t a battery executive. The battery executive is a critical job. You know, you’re running the guns. But, there were eight officers. One was an FDO, fire direction officer. So those are

sort of the two principal officers in the battery at the time, and I was a battery RO, reconnaissance officer.

DR. KIRKLAND: You had a job even though you were the newest guy, and there were probably two or three other guys who had no jobs, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. My battery commander was an old salt. He'd served in—a lot of the officers in the 11th Airborne Division were veterans of World War II, and had gone up through the ranks.

DR. KIRKLAND: Had they been prewar enlisted men, pre-World War II?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, at least they started the war as enlisted men. How much before the war I couldn't tell you. But, my guy was an expert marksman. And he would get up every morning and go to the range and shoot his pistol.

DR. KIRKLAND: By himself?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't know. He sort of didn't come to work until about 9:00. He'd been out shooting his weapon. Where in the hell he was doing it, who with, I had no idea.

DR. KIRKLAND: It wasn't the battery going out then.

GEN. THURMAN: So the battery was rather loosely run from a command standpoint, although this guy had been a battery commander in Korea and it was at least his second battery; it might have been his third. And so he's fairly laid back. And we had basic training, advanced individual trainees. We got them out of the—the division was sort of filled up with draftees. We organized the battery around training trainees as opposed to having them all trained at the training base.

DR. KIRKLAND: The training base did the basic training?

GEN. THURMAN: Yep. And then we got them for advanced individual training. We had in there people with two, three years of college because it was the last vestiges of the Korean draftees, and so a rich population of troops. And they're all good troops, so we had pretty interesting opportunity for excellence there.

DR. KIRKLAND: How many of them were there? Was the battery huge?

GEN. THURMAN: No. The battery was a little bit overstrength. I'd say the battery had about 110 percent strength, and so with a, as I recall, the gun crew size was about nine, so the battery had a population of about 130 or 140 people.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have so many NCOs that they held all the jobs like gunner, assistant gunner, or did the trainees have jobs like that?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Had well-staffed and noncommissioned officers. And the noncommissioned officers were sort of two ilks. One were the, again, people who had come up in the ranks in Korea by virtue of reenlisting in Korea and extending in Korea. There were opportunities for promotion upward that wouldn't have been available to you in the United States on a quota basis, but over there if you occupied the job for 30 days you got the rank. So we had a large number of chiefs of smoke, those are the gun chiefs, sergeant in charge of six guns, who really didn't know what I'd call basic civilian or basic cantonment soldiering. But they had stayed in Korea long enough to get ranked, so they were grade E6, E7.

DR. KIRKLAND: But they only had two or three years' service.

GEN. THURMAN: And they had a very modest amount of service, but they were smart enough to have gone over there and served. But then when you brought them back into training basic trainees and the like, there was a lot of opportunity for them to

get increased in their skills. And at that time there were no NCO schools like we know currently.

The Division Commander was an interesting fellow. He was a guy named Wayne C. Smith. He'd commanded the 7th Division at Pork Chop Hill, and he came back to the 11th, and he took over the 11th. One of the things he looked at was this panoply of young officers, which were overstrength. And one of the rules he said was, "You had to go to a series of junior officer schools or otherwise you would not be promoted to the next grade."

So at that time you had to have a recommendation upward to get promoted. It wasn't automatic from the Department of the Army. It wasn't automatically on time but you had to have a recommendation to get that rank.

DR. KIRKLAND: From what level, the battery commander, or did it have to come from the division commander?

GEN. THURMAN: The DIVARTY commander had to recommend to a division commander for you to be promoted from the grade of second lieutenant to first lieutenant.

DR. KIRKLAND: And then did the division commander have authority to—

GEN. THURMAN: He has authority to promote you or not promote you. So Wayne Smith invoked the authority not to promote you unless you'd been to schools. And I got caught up in that as a matter of fact. And it wasn't because—see, it wasn't me getting to the schools. It was my Battery Commander getting me to the school. Do you follow me?

So my battery commander wasn't very diligent about getting me to school, so I got knocked 30 days' pay for example on getting promoted from second lieutenant to first lieutenant. In those days, promotion was supposed to be made in about 18 months on an average basis. It took me 19 because I didn't complete all the schools and I had to stick

around and get the schools completed because my Battery Commander was, it was a case where he wasn't taking care of his troops.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were the schools gunnery or administration or maintenance or what?

GEN. THURMAN: Wayne Smith had a series of hurdles you had to pass. If you look at those hurdles, although there was a lot of grousing about them at the time, that series of hurdles was not a bad paradigm for anybody. For example, I'll come to that later as a TRADOC Commander, so I'll come back to it as a DIVARTY commander, come back to it as a TRADOC Commander.

Wayne Smith said, that division commander said, "You must complete a 25-mile road march in 'X' amount of time with your full field gear." That doesn't seem to be too onerous. "You must complete compass course of certain duration. You must complete and fire your weapon 'expert' and if you are a member of an artillery unit you have to do not only the carbine, which is our personal weapon at that time, but you also had to do the 105 Howitzer."

DR. KIRKLAND: You had to be an expert gunner?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: They gave gunner's tests?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about to the enlisted men?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: All throughout the division?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. But for officer you couldn't get promoted. Then he said you had to go to Aerial Observer School, Forward Observer School, Mess Management School, and Wheeled Vehicle Maintenance School. That doesn't seem like too hard.

DR. KIRKLAND: These are all like a couple weeks?

GEN. THURMAN: Couple weeks. In other words, Aerial Observer was one week, as I recall it. Forward Observer is one week. Mess Management was two, one week of theory and one week of equipment.

DR. KIRKLAND: You really got into it.

GEN. THURMAN: So I was in a mess hall cooking as a second lieutenant.

DR. KIRKLAND: In your own battery or somewhere else?

GEN. THURMAN: No. We had somebody else's battery. You never did this in your own battery. There was a dining facility set up for us to do our work in and fed in that mess hall were the airborne trainees, people going to jump school.

We had a capability to train people at Fort Campbell; these AIT people that we brought in were being trained there. So, for example, I will never forget as long as I live cooking SOS in the mess hall one morning, 3:00. We were cooking on wood stoves, and the head sergeant cook running our shift. And I was in there making SOS, and the coal stoves burped. You know, they get a back pressure in there. And when the soot settled out of this stove, it must have been a half inch of soot on top of the SOS. So I turned to the sergeant and I said, I guess we better get out the alternative meal—which would be eggs or something like that—because we're now going to get behind in serving the chow to the troops. And he looked at me dead in the lights and he said, "Keep on stirring, Lieutenant, keep on stirring; ain't you never heard of charcoal broiled SOS?"

So I stirred the half inch of soot in there, and it was, you know, almost black. So when these kids came through they got their toast at one end and got a ladle of black SOS on their tray. It was hilarious at the time.

But we had to cook in the school and do all that, and if you didn't do it, you didn't get promoted. Pretty simple. So everybody got right with it, and most battery commanders got right with it.

Now the—

DR. KIRKLAND: Now was there a series of battery tests and so on going on concurrently?

GEN. THURMAN: We were training trainees.

DR. KIRKLAND: So you didn't do that sort of thing.

GEN. THURMAN: We were mainly trying to get the trainees up and trained going through their, whether it was 12 weeks—I can't remember, essentially a 12-week POI [Program of Instruction]. And then it was a train and retain proposition.

DR. KIRKLAND: You didn't have cycles of them?

GEN. THURMAN: No.

DR. KIRKLAND: So you couldn't go to battery tests afterwards?

GEN. THURMAN: Took our troops, got them through that. Then, we went into an Army Training Program to go through the battery test on through the battalion test.

Now, in the course of the work, this captain who had been my battery commander departed. And I got a new battery commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: This was after three or four months?

GEN. THURMAN: This was within six months. And the trainees were now ours, and now we were getting ready to train up to be the, through the battery test and on through the battalion test. We were sort of getting our annual qualification, getting ready to go.

And we had a battalion commander who had been in combat in Korea. And the way he wanted to run his preparatory work for the battalion test was, we left every Monday morning about 5:00 or 6:00 in the morning, went out to the field, shot all day, did our work, came back in the afternoon about sundown, cleaned up all the howitzers, and got to bed about midnight after doing all that and got up the next morning at 4:00 and went back to the field in the same day.

Well, after about three or four weeks of that, the troops were dead. So then we took our battalion tests and we scored poorly on them. So the first unit I ever belonged to that went through a test cycle was an abject failure.

DR. KIRKLAND: Battery test had been okay?

GEN. THURMAN: Battery test had been okay, but battalion test wasn't worth a damn. And so they fired the battalion commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: What had gone wrong?

GEN. THURMAN: What had gone wrong I think can be best typified by working the troops to a frazzle and—

DR. KIRKLAND: So they were like zombies?

GEN. THURMAN: And the gunnery problem was not well-done. The fire direction problem was not well done. The troops can get into position, get out of position. The troops could, we could do the survey right. I was a battery survey officer, and I was also a battalion survey officer. So we knew how to do all that stuff. It wasn't a problem

with doing that. The problem was in gunnery, and the problem was in timeliness of fire, which is all a gunnery problem. And the fact the troops are dead. And so a new battalion commander came in.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were they mad, too, or sulky?

GEN. THURMAN: I couldn't tell if that was. There was a lot of irritability, but I couldn't tell there was any vicious undercurrent of we'll get the battalion. Everybody was reasonably well motivated about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did the battery commander handle the interface between these policies that were killing his troops and his officers and NCOs?

GEN. THURMAN: Nothing he could do about it because, in his case, he was a lieutenant, so he was a junior officer on the totem pole. But the other guy who was in the same battalion is a good friend of mine, Vernon Lewis, and you might get a little view from Vernon Lewis about the same time because he was a battery commander in the same battalion. He lives here. He runs MPRI [Military Professional Resources, Inc.] down here in Washington. You can sort of talk to him about the 11th Airborne Division because we were both in the same outfit.

DR. KIRKLAND: The NCOs? How did they—

GEN. THURMAN: They sucked it up. They sucked it up. But everybody was just tired, and they just finally ran out of gas. New guy came in. His name was Felix—Russ Felix. And Russ Felix brought in one guy with him, a new S3. And Russ Felix said, called all the officers together and said, “This is a good battalion, they've given me 30 days to retake the test.” Said, “This is a good battalion, we're going to retest, take the test probably next week.”

And he said, “What we're going to go to do, we're going to go to the field now for a—” he said, “We'll beat 30 days, we'll take it in less than 30 days. So we're going to

go to the field now, and we are going to report back to the DIVARTY when we're ready to take the test. And I think it will be long before the 30 days is up."

So he said, "I have confidence." He didn't say it like that but that's what he radiated.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was the S3 a problem? Was he part of the problem?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. The S3 was a fellow who didn't know his job, didn't know how to organize it. And the fellow that came in was a guy named Foss Cowey, F-O-S-S C-O-W-E-Y. And Foss was class of '46 from West Point, had fought in the Korean War as a battery commander; now he was a battalion S3, piece of cake. Went to the field on Monday morning, came back on Thursday night, cleaned up all the gear on Friday, gave troops off on the weekend Saturday and Sunday. Went to the field next week on Monday morning, came back on Thursday night, and we were ready to take the test.

We shot 96 on the test. Everybody in the battalion was the same except the battalion commander and the S3. Only two people. That sticks with me, later.

DR. KIRKLAND: Your whole sort of thing is, making winners out of who you have.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. You get dealt the deck you're dealt, and you get on with it. It's a quote I guess from *Red Badge of Courage*. You take what you're dealt.

I look back on that as, one, a division commander that sets standards and caused people to hold to them. Two, I don't think he lost any sleep at night by setting those standards for the lieutenants to pass these things to get promoted.

DR. KIRKLAND: They sound reasonable.

GEN. THURMAN: People grouched at it. There was a big B-ache about it. He also had a terrible training cycle. We went to work at 5:30 in the morning because he wanted to beat the heat; of course he let the troops off at 1:30 in the afternoon in the summertime at Fort Campbell and, of course, the officers came to work at 3:30 in the morning to get ready to go to work at 5:30, and the officers of course had to work in the afternoon. So it was working night and day. It was a terrible scheduling problem.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was there that much work to do?

GEN. THURMAN: The notion is for a bunch of officers to leave the battery at 2:00 in the afternoon and go to screw off all afternoon is contrary is the way most people thought. Most people thought you had to work during daylight. And you couldn't go back to a BOQ because temperature at BOQ would be 100 degrees. So it was a very discombobulating schedule for the summer, but Smith thought he was doing a favor to the troops by keeping them out of the hot sun, the hot weather, late in the afternoon.

DR. KIRKLAND: What did they do? Did they go back to 100 degree barracks?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, they did as a matter of fact. He had some interesting things. I mean, I'll give you an example. He called in the banker at the bank, Planters National Bank, and he told the banker the new operating hours of the bank are 1:00 to 5:00 instead of 9:00 to 2:00 or whatever. And the banker said, "No, no; bankers hours are from 9:00 to 2:00." He said, "In that case get your bank off post." The guy said, "Geez, I think operating a bank between 1:00 to 5:00 would be great." And then he had—

DR. KIRKLAND: Did everybody know about that, the division?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, sure. You couldn't get a haircut in the morning at the PX. PX was closed in the morning. All that ancillary stuff was in the afternoon—get your hair cut, go to the PX, play golf, play tennis, everything you wanted to do that was what I

call—he was trying to optimize people for training, present for duty training. That was what he was trying to do.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's a perennial problem.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. But I found that here was a guy that had some standards and he wasn't embarrassed about putting the standards out. You may not like what he did with it, but he did it. And you toed the line. You didn't get promoted unless you did these kind of things.

The officership was very peculiar in that unit. There was a little club at Fort Campbell, main officers club, and there was a little club down at sort of BOQ area, and every payday night there was a tremendous amount of gambling going on in that club, both clubs. I didn't participate because I wasn't a card player and didn't know a lot about it; played bridge, but didn't play any poker or dice, none of that stuff.

And there was one battalion commander, for example, who would watch a poker game go on and then he would approach a lieutenant. He was a major, battalion commander major. And he would say to the lieutenant, I'll buy the check you're holding for \$.50 on the dollar—because the check would be postdated to another 30 days or whatever—and he would give him cash half on the check.

And the lieutenant or captain would take it because it was cash money. And the other guy knew he had the fellow who issued the check by the neck, you know, if he didn't pay the check because he had been a wise old guy that was left over from World War II.

But the notion of the officers, battalion commanders, battalion S3s, battalion executive officers, gambling with the lieutenants on payday night was a tradition in that division artillery. The division artillery commander never said anything about it. Nobody ever made anything out of it. It's just what happened there in that particular division.

So it was a very unusual legacy left over from, principally, the 187 Regimental Combat Team which had fought in Korea, and all these guys that fought together for several years. And then they came back and they were sort of a clique that ran the division artillery.

And I was inside that clique because my brother had been a member of the 187 Regimental Combat Team.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he in the 11th Division at that time?

GEN. THURMAN: He wasn't in the division.

DR. KIRKLAND: You were a hereditary member of the clique.

GEN. THURMAN: I was a hereditary member. Well, that's the reason Leroy Browning, the sergeant major, said to me, "I'll take care of you for 30 days and you're on your own." So, on the one hand, standards by the division commander, sort of a perverse training schedule—

(End Tape 1, Side A)

(Begin Tape 1, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: —total reclaim reclamation project within less than 30 days. And so the battalion was, felt good about itself after we got the right leader. So a lot of it was bound up in the talents of the leader and getting the group to coalesce when, in fact, the raw material was perfectly all right.

This thing was salted with very good officers. If I look back at the people that were in the battalion and the division artillery at the time you got to be a fairly close-knit division artillery. Guys like Bill Burdeshaw [BG William Brooksbank Burdeshaw], Frank Palermo [BG Frank J. Palermo, Jr.], Vernon Lewis [MG Vernon B. Lewis, Jr.], those are some names; all of them made general.

DR. KIRKLAND: Lieutenants, then?

GEN. THURMAN: They were all lieutenants.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about the battalion exec? When you first got there, the three didn't know his job, and—

GEN. THURMAN: The exec was out picking up paper and he's a nonentity.

DR. KIRKLAND: So your field grade crowd was not too good.

GEN. THURMAN: Not much.

DR. KIRKLAND: Even though the colonel had commanded a battalion before.

GEN. THURMAN: In combat.

DR. KIRKLAND: You said there were two kinds of NCOs. There were the ones who had gotten to quite senior rank in two or three years and what was the other kind? WWII vets?

GEN. THURMAN: The two classes of NCOs were a group who had stayed in Korea to advance their personal interests and get rank, and they didn't know a lot. Then there was another—so they were not, they knew how to get the job done in combat. But the business of training people well, they didn't know how to do that very well. It was sort of a survivorship operation in the Korean Conflict.

And the second group of NCOs was a very talented group of people that then we went on. And I was in a division for better than four-and-a-half years, I guess—got there in '54 in April and left in September of '58. So I was there four-and-a-half years.

That group, the really high-quality people, were really first-class NCOs. And we went on to Germany and served in that unit, and there was a guy named Westerman for example, a guy named Sabotir, who later worked for me in the rocket unit, and they were really terrific NCOs. So, it was sort of a bipolar group of very high-quality guys and then some people that had made rank in Korea and weren't really worth a damn.

DR. KIRKLAND: What did you do about those guys? Anything?

GEN. THURMAN: It turns out that there's another episode that begins in 1955 which is going to Germany, the gyroscoping of the division to Germany. And we had been identified as the unit that would go and replace the 5th Mechanized Division which is located at that time at Southern Bavaria, Munich, Augsburg. And so when that occurred, Wayne Smith [MG Wayne C. Smith], now still the division commander, had to line up the NCOs to go to Germany.

DR. KIRKLAND: He didn't take just the division as it was?

GEN. THURMAN: No. It had an infusion of people to try to get it—you had to volunteer to go there. I mean, that is to say the division wasn't ordered lock, stock and

barrel to go there, and, oh, by the way there were NCO deficiencies. And then you got into the business of reenlisting so that you had three years to do in Germany so you could spend the whole tour.

DR. KIRKLAND: So you couldn't go unless you had three years.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right.

DR. KIRKLAND: So that meant some of your AIT people—

GEN. THURMAN: Wouldn't go.

DR. KIRKLAND: Some of your NCOs would be coming up—

GEN. THURMAN: Would be coming up on enlistment and had to encourage them to enlist or they could walk off. I'll never forget it as long as I live. Wayne Smith came down and he brought with him a mobile sewing machine team from the QM [Quartermaster] on the post with a stack of stripes, and we had a meeting in the day room. And he came into our day room with all the NCOs and he said, "We're going to Germany; and they'd be able to sign up for three years. Anybody that wants to reenlist for Germany for three years, if you will do that I will promote you from your current grade—one grade, and then I will make you an acting one grade higher." And he said, "If you sign the paper today the sewing machine is outside and we'll sew the stripes on today."

So here is a guy that walked in the room as a buck sergeant and came out as an E7. With no disrespect, now, you understand there was not an NCOES program going on ad interim.

DR. KIRKLAND: So he maybe got three or four years' service.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. So he went from grade E5, he could be a section chief or an E5. He'd be promoted to grade E6, which is really the rank for a Section Chief, but then he'd be given an acting promotion to grade E7 and he could be a Chief of Smoke, which is a platoon leader.

DR. KIRKLAND: Where the hell did you have the slots for all these guys?

GEN. THURMAN: They looked at the total number of people, and a lot of people didn't want to go Germany for three years.

DR. KIRKLAND: So there were a lot of vacancies then.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. So get one for pay and then get another one for advancement. So then we really had a duke's mixture of talent to get ready to go to the famous downtown Europe. And at that time we got an infusion of people from the—they levied the 82nd, and when they levied the 82nd we got all sorts of ash and trash in, the riffraff out of the 82nd.

As a matter of fact, there was a penal unit constructed to take people by prison train from Fort Campbell to New York, put on a ship, prison ship overseas, prison train from Bremerhaven down to Augsburg, and they were then put in their units over there. To use the word "prison" is a little harsh but they were incarcerated.

DR. KIRKLAND: They were in the stockade, then.

GEN. THURMAN: Stockade train is better. So it was an interesting—

DR. KIRKLAND: Give the 11th Airborne in the states totally, so these excellent NCOs you mentioned, were they people—

GEN. THURMAN: Some excellent NCOs.

DR. KIRKLAND: Had they been in the Second World War?

GEN. THURMAN: No. They were all since Korea. They were all—since the war—they were mostly Korean war veterans.

DR. KIRKLAND: Where was the nexus of know-how in the battery? Were the officers, lieutenants, were they guys who knew stuff or were they just out of school?

GEN. THURMAN: Most of them were recently out of school. The battery executive officer in my battery was a West Point class of '53. I had been NC State '53 but because I'd gone to two basic officer courses and he'd gone to one, he got there four or five months ahead of me, and therefore he was the battery executive officer. So the officers were thin.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about the lieutenant who took command of the battery?

GEN. THURMAN: He was a Korean War vet.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he West Point?

GEN. THURMAN: No, no. He was an OCS guy.

DR. KIRKLAND: Had he served as an "EM" in Korea? Had he been an enlisted man in Korea?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: Then he served there as an officer as well?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: So he still was only a couple years ahead of you.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right.

DR. KIRKLAND: Didn't have depth of—

GEN. THURMAN: He was less than three years' service, because you were getting promoted to captain with three years' service.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were you really? I'll be darned—

GEN. THURMAN: In other words, the time in grade for getting promoted from second lieutenant to first lieutenant was a year and a half, and then three years as a first lieutenant, so four and a half years' service. So he had less than four and a half years' service.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about the DIVARTY staff? Did you have any contact with them?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. In fact I became the general's aide after a while, the DIVARTY Commander's Aide in the summer of '55. And the DIVARTY staff had a very senior colonel as the DIVARTY XO, a very senior guy as a DIVARTY S3 lieutenant colonel; the adjutant had been in this 187 mafia. So the general who had been was the division artillery commander was a very senior brigadier general. And he was not a professional paratrooper in any way, shape or form. He'd been sent there to be a division artillery commander. In fact he had put in his papers to retire.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he Thomas Watson?

GEN. THURMAN: No, no. He's later. This guy was Ralph Morris Osborne [MG Ralph Morris Osborne], and Osborne had been the head of Panmunjom, Operation Big Switch at Panmunjom. And when Max Taylor [GEN Maxwell D. Taylor] was made the Chief of Staff of the Army he wrote a letter to him, and I remember because I was the aide at that time, and he got a letter right back saying, "You're not going to retire, you're going to get promoted," because you didn't have to go through any boards at that time. He said, "I want you to get promoted and you'll go to Berlin."

So he went to Berlin to be a Commander in Berlin. But he didn't know anything much about the airborne. He was a novice jumper when he came there and I used to incite him to go out and make parachute jumps just so he could get his senior wings. And tried to get mine, too. But, he really didn't know a lot about airborne parachute operations.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did he know much about artillery?

GEN. THURMAN: Average. Very remote from it though.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about the exec and the S3?

GEN. THURMAN: The exec, the S3 knew more about it because this guy Felix was the S3 who later would come down and take over the battalion. And so he knew a lot about it. And he sort of kept it going, but I'm recalling that the other two guys were administrators and walk-around looking at things, but they didn't know a thing.

I mean, being able to put an imprint on the division artillery wasn't their bag. They were too old for it, if I could use that. They were in ceremonial positions more than in direct leadership positions, as I look later at battalion commanders, brigade commanders, and DIVARTY commanders. There's quite a different caliber of people.

DR. KIRKLAND: The question I had before of where is the nexus of knowledge? Who knew what the hell was going on? Obviously—

GEN. THURMAN: Resided in a few artillerymen. Now Vern Lewis [MG Vernon Lewis, Jr.] is one of those artillerymen who is a first-rate artillery officer and he'd fought in Korea and knew how to gun and did quite well at it. Our battery didn't have very good stable of real knowledgeable artillery. Some noncommissioned officers. The chiefs of smoke, in the main, worked pretty good.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is before that.

GEN. THURMAN: This is the platoon sergeant.

DR. KIRKLAND: Before the general exodus.

GEN. THURMAN: Before the general exodus to clean it out. But in the main the NCO corps was probably pretty good at the grade of E6 from artillery knowledge; and at the Chief of Section level not so hot, grade E5. Weren't so hot. E4s occupying E5 billets. Everything was OJT. There weren't any schools like there are today for skill basis as we look at it today in our noncommissioned officer education system. Just didn't exist. It was all OJT in the battery.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who was teaching who what? Sounds like there were—was Vern Lewis in your battery? He wasn't, was he?

GEN. THURMAN: No. He was in the battery next door, D battery.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he the commander?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. He was the executive officer until he and the battery commander had a fight. So next day they moved him to make him a battery commander of another battery, moved him from executive officer to be a battery commander. So it was—

DR. KIRKLAND: Your own battery commander liked to shoot a pistol but didn't—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, the first guy liked to shoot the pistol. About four-to-six months after I arrived there he, then, departed. We got a new guy, and the new guy was always scrambling.

DR. KIRKLAND: 'Cause he was very new.

GEN. THURMAN: He was a scrambler. This was his first battery. He was not a real airborne guy. He'd gone to jump school, to sort of get this job and he didn't know much about being battery commander. He wasn't a very red hot battery commander. He goes on to retire later as a colonel in the Army, and I think he commands some battalion but does not go beyond that. The battery commander never went beyond the battery commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: He retired out as a major, or captain?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, retired as a major. I always looked upon it, I might have been worth something if I'd had a decent battery commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: I was wondering about that because they were very scarce in those days.

GEN. THURMAN: The one thing, though, that service in the 11th Airborne Division did was, there were spending four-and-a-half years at it, being a reconnaissance and survey officer, being a liaison officer to the infantry which I was—I was a battalion liaison officer to the infantry—and being a general's aide and then being a DIVARTY assistant 2 and then later being a platoon leader in the Honest John. Four-and-a-half years' service, I knew everything there was to know about a division. Very comfortable with that because although I moved around in jobs, they were all inside the division. So

when people, people sort of look and say, “Gee, how did you go back and command a battery, a battalion?” It was easy.

DR. KIRKLAND: You’d done everything else.

GEN. THURMAN: Done all that stuff so I knew how to do that.

DR. KIRKLAND: What it looked like was, at the outset, it was for train and retain ideas almost like the COHORT system. But then it was all torn apart by this ATS business when you had to—

GEN. THURMAN: Gyroscope overseas. Very much so. But then you got a new cohort for a period of three years, except we had a cohort that was a mixed breed cohort. One was double promotion inside your own division, and then it was filled by the riffraff out of the 82nd Airborne Division.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you keep any of your trainees?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, some of them elected to stay in, but the vast majority of them were people that were in for two years and wanted to go back to school or do whatever they wanted to do. Then, we got a lot of riffraff in at the bottom which caused us later in the 82nd a tremendous amount of difficulty in Europe.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were you still the 11th Airborne when you went to Europe?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. But now I’d been up in the division artillery staff, and I’d been the general’s aide for three months. He got orders to go to Berlin. By that time we knew we were going to Europe, and I said I wasn’t a very good general’s aide because being a dog robber for somebody just wasn’t my bag...

And the upshot of that was I went in to see him and I said, “Okay, General Osborn, am I going with you to Europe or do I have the opportunity to go with the

division to Europe?” He said, “What do you want to do?” I said, “I want to go with the division.” He said, “Okay, you’re released from being an aide,” which was good for both of us. And so he went on to Berlin.

And I went, I then became the assistant adjutant for just a little while, and then I became the XO of headquarters battery division artillery for a guy named Arthur Lombardi. Art Lombardi still lives down in Clarksville, Tennessee, and he later was a division artillery commander with the 101st.

As the Headquarters Battery Commander Exec, I went over and signed for all the property on the Advanced party. And—no considerable trick—because I took with me three sergeants: this guy named McGinnis who was a Supply Sergeant; and I took the Comm Chief, Communications Chief, his name escapes me here at the moment; and the Operations Sergeant a guy named Westerman. And we went over and signed for the Headquarters Battery Division Artillery property in advance of the arrival of the Division Artillery Headquarters, itself, like in November or December 1955. And that—

DR. KIRKLAND: Between the three of you, you had to inventory all radios, all trucks, all the furniture?

GEN. THURMAN: Right.

DR. KIRKLAND: Beds, foot lockers?

GEN. THURMAN: Everything. And I gave the Battery Commander a report of survey for \$30 some thousand, which was sort of unheard of at the time.

DR. KIRKLAND: That’s what it was short?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have a disinterested officer at that time or was it just you and him?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I did it, but I had bought all the standard—here's where my ordnance training had paid off. I bought all these manuals, and I told him—I said, "You've got to lay this stuff out just like the manual says lay it out." He later came to me and said, "You can't do this to me." I said, "Why is that? He said, "Because I had to take over his property in the field and you have the luxury of taking it over in garrison. I took over from relieved battery commander." I said "Don't tell me your story; tell that to the report of survey investigating officer. I'm just the guy counting property right here."

So these two sergeants, McGinnis and the other fellow whose name I may think of after a while, they knew everything about property. So it was a tremendous opportunity to learn about how to take over property. I had never taken over a battery before, but I knew how to inventory. And we socked it to the DIVARTY Commander. And then they appointed a Board of Officers from the division to look into it—this is a hell of thing.

In those days radio only cost \$650. RT60 set of radio transmitters 67, which was mainstay of the artillery at the time, cost \$500 or \$600 bucks, and so \$40 some thousand dollars' worth of reported survey made news. And so you had to appoint a big court of inquiry to find out what went on.

But, we inventoried the property, and when we met the new troops, Lombardi came in and we turned all the property over to Lombardi. And then I became the assistant S2 working for two guys, one guy named Lou Crenyak, who was a captain, again from the 674, 187 mafia; and a guy named Burt Gorowitz who later became a brigadier general in the Vietnam War and retired brigadier general. So they were the 2 shop; then I became an Assistant 2 there for six months or so.

DR. KIRKLAND: What were you doing as a 2? I've seen a lot of—

GEN. THURMAN: I went to school as a photo interpreter, bearing in mind I couldn't see with one eye very well. I became the only single-eyed stereo guy in the industry. But I did re-doing of the war plans. I was war plans guy and worked for a guy

named in the war plans game Charlie Hall [LTG Charles P. Hall], later became a lieutenant general. Guy named Joe Fam later retired as a major general.

So we really had some talent because they filled up the division with talented officers at that time. We had sort of a bifurcated problem. We had excellent officers, in the main, and we had—we didn't have the problem as much as others, but we had some really lousy troops that had been foisted off on us by the 82nd.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about the officers in the battalions and batteries?

GEN. THURMAN: I wasn't in a battalion at the time, but I later became a battery officer, again, when I went into the Honest John business. And got a terrific set of officers there, terrific set of officers.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about the ones you'd been with in Fort Campbell? Did they come—

GEN. THURMAN: These were the same coterie.

DR. KIRKLAND: Same guys.

GEN. THURMAN: Meanwhile we're all going to the field all the time, and there's a tremendous amount of experience base and, interestingly enough, whereas we went overseas thinking we'd get promoted in three years, we went overseas and came home without being promoted.

DR. KIRKLAND: Took about five-and-a-half years.

GEN. THURMAN: Took about five-and-a-half years. So what was happening was, this group of officers who had come into the division as lieutenants in late 1953 and early '54, left the division in '58 and '59 and were still lieutenants. And so the lieutenant pile had really gotten field savvy.

We'd done it once, we'd done 100 times. And there was a very high level of competency in that division when it was later sort of demobilized and replaced by another division. And the 11th went off the books, went into be the 24th. And by that time the officer content was absolutely astonishingly good. So were the NCOs, after we got rid of the bad ones.

Now the, what happens in the saga is that Wayne Smith did not go with us to Europe as division commander. A guy named Daryl M. Daniels did. Daryl M. Daniels had been the assistant division commander of the 82nd. Very distinguishly decorated in World War II. And he was an entomologist, Ph.D., entomologist at Clemson, gotten called up during the war, early paratrooper. I mean, he had half a dozen silver stars, very distinguished in combat, and he'd moved up to be a division commander.

And he, unfortunately, had this group of renegades that had been put over to us by the 82nd, and so the division had its share of troubles with the Germans. It had a tremendous number of incidents; it had the famous grenade in the "gasthaus" event down in Munich. I mean, it was just, it was the terror of Bavaria. "Boravia" is what the troops call it, terror of Bavaria.

And so they fired the division commander. And when he restricted the division, he restricted the entire division to the kasernes one weekend, and I believe Wilber Brucker was the Secretary of the Army at the time, and Wilber Brucker fired Daryl M. Daniels as division commander and replaced him with a guy named Hugh Harris [GEN Hugh P. Harris] who later would be a four-star general as the Commander of Forces Command.

Hugh Harris came in and gave you another one of these cases whereby— making several key changes—he was able to get this thing going in the right direction. Harris was an old airborne soldier. He called in the provost marshal and fired him, was a colonel. He made a captain the provost marshal. He told the captain that nobody could be an MP in the division unless he wore sergeant stripes. And go out to levy the division for sergeants to put in to the MPs and that their duty was not to write tickets; their duty was to keep good order and discipline. It changed the whole complexion of the division.

Then he called in all the brigade or regimental combat team commanders at the time and told them, "I want you to get rid of all the riffraff, I want it gone in 30 days."

We threw out an enormous number of people out of the Army in that period of time. Once we did that, we were perfectly okay.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was there an expeditious discharge provision?

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. You bet. So we got rid of all the thugs. And all the battery commanders knew who the thugs were. And so they were gone.

I mean, a guy like Vern Lewis, he could tell you, he had a mortar battery at that particular time. I didn't have a battery. I was up on the division artillery staff so can't give you any data about that, but battery/company commanders got rid of the riffraff that essentially had come in. By that time, we knew who the good ones were out of the 82nd and we threw out the riffraff. And everything was copacetic after that. Turned around the division in a matter of two months, totally different division.

DR. KIRKLAND: When did the division become a pentomic division? Was that part of this process, or did that come later?

GEN. THURMAN: It comes during this process, it reorganized from a standard division with three—at that time—regiments and one DIVARTY to five battle groups and a DIVARTY.

DR. KIRKLAND: So then you could afford to have a lower strength?

GEN. THURMAN: I was a lieutenant, and I don't know that much about that. I couldn't tell you what went on about that. I know that—

DR. KIRKLAND: I was wondering if you threw a bunch of thugs out and got another bunch of thugs ...

GEN. THURMAN: No. We didn't get any more thugs. We cleaned out the division, and from that time on it was in good shape. So that lasted for another year, and

then the second year or so it became a pentomic, went through the metamorphosis. We're now, this is '56 when all this is going on, so in '57 is when it became a pentomic division because that's when we picked up the Honest John game and I went back down to troops and went in the Honest John business.

DR. KIRKLAND: So you were in the 2 shop for a couple years then sounds like.

GEN. THURMAN: A little over a year.

DR. KIRKLAND: The Honest John, you were nuclear right from the start, weren't you?

GEN. THURMAN: Honest John—let me try to transition there. Now I've been on the 105 battery and it was time for me to go back to troops. So I said to the assignment guy who by the way is the same guy, adjutant guy, named Gentry. Gentry is still the adjutant. He's a different grade now, but he'd been there since I'd—we all knew everybody.

I could go in the officer's club and tell you all the officers in the infantry battalion. We just knew everybody. This group had been now together since 1953. I didn't join it until '54, but now it's '56 and '57 so we'd been down there two-and-a-half to three years together.

So I went in to see Gentry, and I said, put me in the Honest John business; that's something new and I want to learn something new. So they said, we're going to take a battery out of the 544th, which is our medium battalion, a 155 TOW'd outfit, and turn into the Honest John business. So we got this battery and we had terrific NCOs in that thing. And we all had to go to school and learn how to do the Honest John.

So we went up to Schwäbisch Gmünd and learn how to operate the Honest John. I came back to a school here at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, warhead school, as did all the officers. I had to assemble a warhead and all that. And we took over the battery. A guy named Keeley was Battery Commander, and we had two battery commanders—Jim Keeley and

Roger Lacomp. Roger Lacomp later becomes DIVARTY commander of the 82nd. Keeley gets out of the Army as a major and goes to work in Miami, Florida. But Keeley and Lacomp both were very competent, very competent field artillery officers. And we had 13 officers in this battery.

Art Wells was the executive officer. He works down at MPRI. He works down at Cypress Incorporated here in Alexandria. Frank Palermo was in the battery. Guy named John Young was in the battery. All of us, except me, had had extensive—Pat Lowery was in the battery. All of us had extensive period in the division. And most everybody had extensive troop duty except me. I'd had 12 months' worth down at the battery level and 14 months down there.

All these other guys had been executive officers in batteries. So very highly talented group of people to put into this Honest John outfit. And we got very good at that because you had to do the technical delivery means business, go through all the delivery or the putting together the warhead and all that kind of stuff. We had live warheads in storage at Mutlangen in Germany where they had the Pershing II missile blew up not too many years ago in 1986. But our warheads were stored up there, rocket motors stored up there.

But, we were stationed in Augsburg and then moved the battery down to Munich later on. But that was another opportunity to go to the field and get refurbished in all the skills. And the officers in the division artillery at that time having gone there to spend a full three-year tour, and the NCOs to spend the full three-year tour, were a terrific group of people.

And we all knew one another. Very high rapport amongst the officers in that division. It was a hell of a division. I mean, it was a terrific division. I went with the unit, took it to Lebanon—the Lebanese crisis in 1958.

So we knew what we were doing, and it was a very professional outfit. First class after we got through the rabble-rousers, threw them out.

DR. KIRKLAND: What did all those 13 guys, 13 officers in the battery do?

GEN. THURMAN: It was broken down into two platoons. And in each—I was the platoon leader. And in my platoon leader I had—let's see if I can count the officers up for you here—I had an ammo officer. His job was to go get the rocket motors and make sure we had the rocket motors and the warheads in the right place. I had a nuclear weapons assembly guy. His job was to see to it that the enlisted crew and himself could do all the assembling and check out functions for the nuke weapons. I had a fire direction officer.

DR. KIRKLAND: Your own FDC.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. And I had second FDO, so there were two FDOs. So myself, there were five guys. So five guys in a platoon and a battery commander and the battery exec, so there were 12 officers I guess.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have any survey capability in the battery?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I had survey in the battery, but I didn't have—I may have had a reconnaissance survey. That may be the sixth guy. So it would run something it would be 13 or 14, 12 to 14 officers in the battery. But the platoons, in those days the Honest John was normally organized two firing platoons per battery. Each one of the firing platoons had one launcher. But ours was a four-launcher battery.

DR. KIRKLAND: You had four?

GEN. THURMAN: We had two in each platoon, and so these platoons were autonomous, and the battery commander was in the overall charge of it and he was captain, very senior captain. But those crews were just terrific.

DR. KIRKLAND: What did you do about chow, mechanics to fix the trucks?

GEN. THURMAN: Those all came under the battery province, but when we went to the field they gave me part of an S6. They gave me some maintenance, so I had two M62 wreckers, I had four five-ton extra-long wheel-based trucks for pole trailers to carry the rocket motors, and I had two launchers. In other words, it was an enormously heavy equipment battery.

DR. KIRKLAND: Those are big trucks.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I remember going into a field one night, stamping on the ground. It was frozen. Drove all this stuff in the field and went down to the axles. Everything went down to the axles.

But as I said, we went to Lebanon. It's interesting. We tried to load out to go by air. And the Austrians and the Swiss cancelled overflight rights, which meant we would have had to be flown back through Germany, through France, down to Marseilles and then across the boot of Italy and into Crete or Cypress to refuel and then over into Lebanon. This is on C—Globemaster, C124s.

And I remember getting ready to load out in Fürstenfeldbruck, had been waiting all day to load up, my turn came about 5:00 in the afternoon. This guy says, "Okay, it's your turn to load." He said, "Weight on that thing again is 48,000 pounds?" And I said, "No. Weight on that's 62,000 pounds. Just like I told you before." So he recomputed and he said, "Gee, we're going to crash this thing right about Crete." So he said, "You're not going by air, you're going by sea."

So we left at midnight that night. We had a Soviet liaison vehicle that went with us all the way from Augsburg to Bremerhaven. And I crossed the checkpoint, start point at midnight, which was my time, and there's a Volkswagen was there. But the Soviet liaison plate's in red and yellow writing on it in Russia, Soviet Union on there. This guy looks at his watch and he goes, "Right on time, right on time."

DR. KIRKLAND: He knew your orders.

GEN. THURMAN: He knew what I was doing. And so we drove that stuff to Bremerhaven and loaded it on-board the ship and drove it through the Mediterranean, picked up a tank battalion at Cherbourg and drove it into the Mediterranean. We lost a screw, which made the trip rather interminable getting through there.

I remember going through the North Sea that I was the only officer on board the ship that wasn't sick, so I became the sanitation officer. There were 2,000 troops in the hole and they was swill up to your boot-tops down there. And I remember a great big sergeant was sitting down there munching on an apple when I went down there the first morning. I said, "I'm in charge of sanitation around here." And he said, "Yeah, I'm a Sanitation NCO." He's eating an apple, and this swill is sloshing around in here and everybody'd been throwing up all, all day and all night on board that ship. So that was a memorable sea voyage, and I've never been on another one since then.

But we got to Lebanon, and then they ordered me up to the bridge. They said, "Lieutenant Thurman, report to the bridge." So I did. And I got up there. They gave me a set of orders. They said, "These set of sealed orders for you from the Joint Chiefs of Staff."

I didn't even know the Joint Chiefs of Staff existed. And it said in there, "You are to report to the air base, you are to leave all your hardware loaded on board the ship; it will be returned to Bremerhaven. You will report to the air base and secure passage for your troops back to Germany. You will not unload any Honest John launchers in Lebanon."

So we went to the Olive Grove in Lebanon, stayed there several days so we could transport out because what had happened was, Khrushchev said if you unload those rockets there—because everybody knew they had nuclear capability—that we will take out selected Turkish rocket sites.

So that was my introduction to international politics at a very high level. Troops loved it though. They had German beer within another three or four days after we got them all back there, and had to go back to Bremerhaven to retrieve our equipment, bring it back down. But the division had sent a battle group over there, and we were part of the team to go. And so it worked fine.

And after we amalgamated with the, changed over from the 11th to the 24th, since the 11th was not going to be kept on the active duty roles, then I became an temporary aide for Al Watson [A. L. Watson] who came in as the new division artillery commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was that amalgamation, was there something already there that the 11th blended with, or did it just change its name?

GEN. THURMAN: No, we changed the name, changed the patch. I was temporary aide de camp to him, to Al Watson when he took over.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was it getting now close to the end of the three-year life of the division in Germany?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. As I recall it I guess the 11th went off the rolls on or about 1 January, whatever the fiscal year was in those days. I guess it went January in those days. Or it's 31 July. So probably went off the rolls in summer of '59. That sounds right? Lebanon is '58, right?

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah, about a year after Lebanon.

GEN. THURMAN: So it goes off the rolls in late '58, early '59. Then I come home in late '59 and go to the advanced course.

DR. KIRKLAND: By then you're a newly minted captain by then?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I make captain in September of, as I recall it's September of '59. I'm sort of like in transit when all that occurs. So, I arrive at Fort Sill as a captain. I am, then, put in charge of my first battery. I was the battery commander I guess for 60 or 90 days or something and they dissolved the battery, so then I didn't have a job, and so I became the billeting officer.

(End Tape 1, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland-Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 2

(Begin Tape 2, Side A)

(Side A is an incomplete Falklands War interview and not part of Kirkland-Thurman Interview)

(Begin Tape 2, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. Not long enough to get a ticket on it as I recall. I don't think I got an efficiency report out of. I became the billeting officer at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. People often ask me, "To what do you attribute your success?"

I guess my own view about it is the only way you're successful is you do whatever job you're asked to do, do it the very best you can because if you look at being the Billeting Officer at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, that's not a very exciting job. I was snow birding waiting for school to start, and so it's pretty difficult to claim any great credit for any formative business operation when you're the chief of billeting, when you get a zillion students going through the school at the time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who was your boss then?

GEN. THURMAN: No idea. Some staff and faculty, some colonel that ran the student detachment, which is a pretty sizeable student detachment, but I couldn't tell you.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have lots of civilians and odds and ends of soldiers?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, had a little soldier staff ran the in-processing, and I ran a bunch of cleaners and sheet changers, and all that kind of stuff. I remember one salutary incident when I got a call from one of the BOQ maids, hot as a firecracker as Fort Sill in the middle of summer, and there's a Nigerian guy sitting in the middle of his bed.

He had a pail of water—this is in those wooden, two-story BOQs, and he had a pail of water, and he had a sheet over him dousing the sheet. Of course that was soaking through the mattress, a pool of water on the floor. So it was exciting work.

DR. KIRKLAND: This guy was probably a major.

GEN. THURMAN: Probably.

DR. KIRKLAND: What did you think of the basic course and the advanced course that Fort Sill gave?

GEN. THURMAN: Basic course, that was new stuff at that time, and I didn't know anything about the artillery; so it all was brand new. I did know how to fire my weapon, and I'd been through an Army school before I got there because I completed the Aberdeen Proving Grounds Course. But I didn't know a lot about the artillery. But gunnery was easy because I did very well in mathematics in college, so that was easy. Survey was easy, all mathematics. Shooting bullets I thought was easy as a forward observer and didn't have a great problem about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Didn't have any problem with binocular vision?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I was a pretty good shot. I knew you had to get an over and short. That's pretty simple, and if you can see the target you can tell that it's over and short and so you— binocular vision really wasn't important. Fortuitously, the reticules are located in the left eye. So measuring the distances was reasonably easy.

I thought the basics were easy, it's fairly long; basics was about I think about 16 weeks in those days. And I thought the basic course prepared you academically to do the duties of a battery officer. The reason I say academically, because the amount of field training I got, most of it was in a classroom-like setting. The howitzers were in the classroom out of the heat or the cold because it gets pretty cold in Fort Sill. Obviously you had to shoot, you were shooting outside.

Service schools, in the main, spend more time indoors than they should, and then whenever you get to run a service school you need to go in and flush it out so it goes outside because after all that's where you work, it's work outside. But invariably if you leave it up to the schoolmasters, they'll put it back underneath hooches or some damned

thing in order to make sure that you get out of the weather, because that's done for the sake of the faculty.

Shooting bullets in the impact area, you've got to be out there. And when you go out and shoot bullets at Fort Sill the famous wind blows. So it gets pretty chilly out there. But other than that, a lot of people like to go back inside. So later, as a TRADOC Commander or something like that, you got to force people to go back to the field, get out in the field.

But I think looking back on it I thought the basic course was heavily oriented on Korea. So there was a lot of business about digging in static positions and less on mobility.

A general named Watlington [MG Thomas M. Watlington] was the Assistant Commandant at the time. He had been in Korea as a corps artillery commander. And so as I recall he had huge parapets all over the post where guns were put into position, a la Korea where you were on a stalemate situation and therefore that's the way the artillery was dug in. If you have time to dig it in, you dig it in.

So he got everybody imbued in what I would call overhead cover and that kind of business, which is not bad except it gave you the notion the artillery was static as opposed to highly mobile.

The advanced course was quite different because we had a 13-week module air defense at the time. And so half the class went down before Christmas, half went after Christmas; and the 13 weeks at Fort Bliss were very interesting because you got into the Hercules missile system, Ajax, et cetera, 90 millimeter gun business, 120 millimeter gun business. So that was sort of interesting and different.

But now shooting bullets in the artillery, shooting bullets, the next round of gunnery in the advanced course, do the gunnery again. So I found that, I'd say the course was adequate but clearly an advanced course; you spent most of the time in the classroom, not on the range.

So you didn't learn anymore field craft in the advanced course. Still went to the field and shot a few missions in the field as a fire direction officer but not a lot. Most of it was gunnery and tactics and the like.

I look back on that as being adequate.

DR. KIRKLAND: Most of the map reading and RSOPing you have to learn in the battery I guess. [Auditor note: RSOPing is an acronym. “RSOP” in the field artillery refers to Reconnaissance, Selection, and Occupation of a Position.]

GEN. THURMAN: You did a little bit of RSOPing, but most of that had been relegated to the basic course. The advanced course was more tactics and supply matters, subject matter appropriate for a battery commander as opposed to taking the unit to the field.

The other side of the battery commander’s life, keeping track of mess-halls and supply procedures and that kind of stuff. I remember thinking that’s the first time I really got any leadership training, ethics training.

I don’t recall “leadership training” per se of any fundamental import in the basic course. Maybe there was some there, but I don’t recall it—as opposed to the infantry, which would have been heavy on that. The artillery was heavy on technical subjects, reconnaissance and survey and gunnery, et cetera.

DR. KIRKLAND: Then you got your chance to battery command, didn’t you, at Fort Bliss?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, I got a set of orders to Fort Bliss. Actually I’d sort of put in to go to graduate school but that didn’t turn out, and I wanted to go to the operations research course at Navy PG [Naval Post Graduate School] or someplace like that. But I didn’t make it, so that was fine. So I got orders to go to Fort Bliss, which was devastating because going to the air defense from field artillery was the least likely thing anybody would want to do.

So the orders there—even though it was an integrated branch—the orders there said you report to the S1 at Fort Bliss, Texas, with further assignment to the Honest John Test Battery in Orogrande, New Mexico, which is about 100 miles north of El Paso.

So I went in to see the S1, who is a major, and I said, “I’m not going to Orogrande, what else you got around?” He said, “Well that’s the job you’re supposed to

go do.” And I said, “Yeah, but I’ve already had almost two years of Honest John time.” I said, “I’ve learned all I need to know about Honest John time. But I’m here at Air Defense Land, and so why don’t I learn something about air defense?”

He said, “Well, you’re a captain and you don’t know anything about Hercules, and you don’t know anything about gun, anti-aircraft weapons. So the department heads don’t want you, wouldn’t want you for that.” I said, “Well don’t you have anything new around here?” He said, “Well as a matter of fact we do, we got a new weapons system coming on called HAWK. It’s just getting started.” He said, “Nobody knows anything about it.” I said, “Well sign me up since nobody knows any more than I do.”

So he said, “Well why don’t you go on back to BOQ and check tomorrow.” So I went back to see him the next day and he said, “Okay, we’ll put you on the HAWK, the teaching part of it”—which I look at as a major breakthrough.

If I’d have gone to Orogrande I would have been very much out of the mainstream of the enterprise because Honest John wasn’t going to last long. I mean, it had so many problems associated with it, wasn’t going to last long.

Secondly, you would have gotten no reputation out of that. But going in the HAWK business at the start of a new weapons system gave you an opportunity to grow with the weapons system. So I became the head of a teaching branch; not at the onset but after a while I became the head of a teaching branch. We taught from—first class was 4:40 in the morning and the last class got done at 11:00 at night.

I probably taught as much as 40 hours a week platform instruction.

DR. KIRKLAND: Plus running the branch?

GEN. THURMAN: Plus running the branch, and I was very good.

DR. KIRKLAND: What were you teaching?

GEN. THURMAN: I taught the battery control central, which is the nerve center. You could call it the ops center of the HAWK battery.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you teach all the checks and adjustments or operation of it?

GEN. THURMAN: Taught the operation of it and the operator skills. I didn't teach the maintenance of it. We had a warrant officer who taught the maintenance of it. But, for example, how to get it on the air, how to do the checks if you were a battery fire direction officer to run the thing, how to operate the console, and the theory behind the console.

In other words, when you pushed this button and you see what happens on the display, then I could tell you what went on in the system, systematically that went behind it, so you as an operator would know, U.S. captain or major or lieutenant colonel or lieutenant, you'd know what to expect the system to be telling you on the one hand, and what was going on so that you could make judgments about when to fire, what to fire, et cetera.

So it was a combination of tactics and techniques of operating the piece-parts of the system. Operator checks, yes, you were all the operator checks, but maintenance checks limited. Maintenance checks from the point of view of being like a battery commander, yes; but if you had to get in and actually tune up any particular set or repair it that wasn't my bag. But lay in the battery, putting it in the field, setting it up, getting it on the air, identification of friend or foe, running the displays, shooting the bullets, et cetera, all that was in my purview.

DR. KIRKLAND: Where did you learn that?

GEN. THURMAN: On the job.

DR. KIRKLAND: I guess you had systems, or did you have—

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. We had two systems in the park, and we'd taken one system out of its van and put it on a floor in a building, and the park was immediately

adjacent to it so you could do work in the building and then go out and work in the park and do work in the building and work in the park.

My colleague guy taught the continuous wave precision radar and the launchers, and I taught the battery control central and the pulse acquisition radar and the range only radar. And, then, because the battery control central assimilated both the launchers and the CW, continuous wave acquisition radar, then I had to know the whole system. But I didn't know it in the same detail as the guys next door.

DR. KIRKLAND: You had to keep these two outfits up and running, too.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: And they were pretty fragile I guess in those days?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we did maintenance from 11:00 at night to 4:00 in the morning. And we had a maintenance crew that did that. And we were trying to generate units to ship overseas. And so we were running people night and day through these things, and they were married up with the new equipment sets that would come in.

And then the battalion commander would arrive, and he'd go through the school, and they would draw their equipment and take it to the range and then ship overseas.

DR. KIRKLAND: You were building packages, then.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Just like we did Patriot. We did field the Patriot, the same, and General Way. So that was a fascinating experience for me because I got to learn about high-tech equipment. Got to learn about radars, how radars work. I didn't know anything about radars. I got to learn about radars and how launches work and really got into rocketry and got into the air defense game.

So I knew—it was quite a professional growth time for me. And because I ran one of the teaching branches, then I had all the problems of checking out people to work for

me so they could teach on the platform, and running the maintenance for this particular organization and the like, and then teaching itself.

So I had a tremendous time as a captain. It was a formative experience for me. It gave me, probably it changed my life in terms of public confidence, to speak in public.

DR. KIRKLAND: It just happened by doing it?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it was a little bit about design because Fort Bliss had some rules. One of the rules at Fort Bliss was, you could never stand behind a podium to give a class, as a rule. There's a guy named Mellnik [BG Stephen M. Mellnik], who was the assistant commandant at the time—an old soldier, feared, absolutely feared.

One of his rules was, if I catch you behind the podium you get relieved. So what you could do is, you could put some notes on the podium, but you had to memorize the class. You could put notes on the chalk-tray or put them on the floor or put them on a desk or whatever, but you couldn't stand behind a podium and read to your class. If you did that, you're dead meat.

So consequently you got to know your material very well. You got to get very—the reason I say confident when wrong is because I had, at the end of every one of these courses you had a critique sheet, obviously.

And my boss, who was a full colonel, called me up one day and said, “You got a bad report here.” As we looked at this, the captain said, “This is the most arrogant captain I've ever seen in my life. He's even confident when he's wrong.” And so I picked that up as part of my lexicon because I got reviewed by a peer. Now, all the advanced courses were coming through.

DR. KIRKLAND: You were getting them plus the packages?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. And so the boss said, “If I get another 50 like that I'm going to do something about it.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Another 50?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: That was the numerical score?

GEN. THURMAN: No. He said, “If I get another 50 of these reports—”

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, okay.

GEN. THURMAN: “—that you’re a horse’s ass and arrogant and all that, then I’m going to do something about it.” So that didn’t change my style. He was backing me up.

DR. KIRKLAND: What did he know to be able to run this operation? I guess he had all kinds of—

GEN. THURMAN: Nobody knew anything about HAWK. But he was an air defender, and he’d been around. He’d commanded an air defense battalion somewhere. And he’d been probably, as I recall his name was Lavoy, and Colonel Lavoy had been a brigade commander in the air defense somewhere out in NORAD, commanded some guns or Hercules or Nike Ajax or something. But I couldn’t tell you much about what his background is.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have tech reps or anything like that or somebody to help you learn?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. We had Raytheon tech reps. And we got on the equipment and operated it, figured out to—I mean, there were technical manuals about it. They were the embryonic manuals.

DR. KIRKLAND: Draft ones.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. And as time would go on then we'd find out there were errors in our teaching way because we had a feedback coming from overseas. The guy would say, "You said ABC and D but it's not ABC and D, it's AC and D. And so you need to change your instructions." And so it was a pretty good rapport between us as faculty and the operating group.

And the other thing the Department of the Army had tried to do here was, they'd tried to infuse a number of field artillery officers into the HAWK system because the HAWK system was going to be a mobile system.

Turns out Germany it wasn't, get put up on blocks like most things do in Germany. But it was designed to be a mobile system and would be had we gone to war in Germany. But they were trying to get off of the site emplacement game that was in the Hercules system and get into rapid mobility and the like, RSOPing like in the field artillery.

And so they wanted a few of us artillery guys who'd been in the business to seed our way through the HAWK systems. And quite a few field artillerymen did get posted in the air defense at that time in order to get the HAWK launched into being a mobile field, mobile system.

I also became the VIP briefer for HAWK because I probably knew more about the Integrated HAWK than any other officer on the post.

DR. KIRKLAND: How many officers were involved?

GEN. THURMAN: In my teaching shop I think I had something like 30 people of whom half were teaching officers and the other half were maintenance, enlisted maintenance guys.

DR. KIRKLAND: That was your team?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: And then there was a launcher team?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: And was there another team that was more inside the wiring and so forth? Maintenance?

GEN. THURMAN: No. Those guys were taught by a different shop, so we had about 60 people in total. And my immediate boss was a captain. He ran the overall shop. I had a Canadian working for me, a Marine working for me, had a bunch of rookie lieutenants. Two of them stand out.

A guy named Geroche who had been a Green Bay Packer football player, tore up his knee when he graduated from St. Norbert, and got drafted by the Green Bay Packers and tore up his knee in preseason camp. So he decided to come in the Army. He ended up working for me. Ended up going back to civilian life.

His wife called me on the phone one day and said, "We're miserable up here, I'm going to grad school, he's going to grad school trying to get his master's degree from St. Norbert's. He's also working in a pickle factory trying to earn enough money so he can get school." Said, "Can you get us back in the Army?" So I did. And they retired colonel, as a brigade commander. Quite a nice fellow, his wife.

And there was another guy named Steve Rosenberg. He'd graduated from some school up around Tulsa. He was a native of Tulsa, and he came to work for me, and he had a tic. His tic was, every time he would get under pressure he would lick his lips. And he would say a few words and then he'd try to think about what he's supposed to say and he'd lick his lips.

It became a very distracting tic. So I wouldn't grade him as capable of teaching a class. So finally I said, "Okay, you got one more chance 'Steveorino,' I'm going to give you a check out of here, so get your stuff together and we'll do it tomorrow morning, so start in the morning." He's giving this class. He got through about the first five minutes and he licked his lips. And when he did that I took a pointer and rapped on the table. Bam. I said, "Now every time you do that I'm going to hit the table with a pointer to

make sure you know what's happening, because nobody's telling you, you don't observe on your own."

So in about 10 minutes he was crying. Next year he was the instructor of the year. And then he left and went back to civilian life. He said to me, "I could have killed you that day." He said, "Thanks very much." We kept up with one another for quite a while.

DR. KIRKLAND: One of the things that's intriguing about you is this business about people see you as hard, and you see yourself as soft, supportive. You have to listen to a lot of people about that.

GEN. THURMAN: Let me give you a perception. I got into the Army by a guy going to bat for me, Vice Chief of Staff of the service. I tried to pay that back when I could by helping people as opposed to canning them.

I think my own evaluation of that is, you will find in the main that the way that you found out where you stood with me is when I quit talking to you, you knew that I didn't care for you. But if you were coachable and if you were capable of eliciting from you what it is you had to say about something, I was pretty good at doing that.

That became tortuous for some people. You know, they'd say, "Geez, I don't like to go through that drill because he gets at the secondary and tertiary level of detail about it and I don't want to."

A lot of people don't want to know what the undergirding information is about that and that's too bad about it. So they make sort of half-assed decisions. But the reputation is high because I worked long hours and caused other people to work long hours. But most people that worked around me, that know me pretty well, see the difference. It's the people that don't know me very well that get a lopsided view—but you can find out for yourself.

The episode at Fort Bliss comes the first time that I sort of recognize I've got some outside talent. A guy comes to me from RCA. One day I gave this big briefing in technical work on the HAWK and all that, and this guy comes up to me and gives me a card, he's the Vice President of RCA.

And he says to me, “How’d you like a job?” I said, “Doing what?” He said, “Well you’d be a sales guy for us.” I said, “I don’t know anything about your product.” He says, “You can sell this missile system, which you just have, you can sell anything we have. We’ll tell you how it works, and you can sell it.”

So I guess I became fairly confident that if I could grasp the concept of what was happening here then I could transfer it in a meaningful and positive manner that would cause other people to buy into it. I was a convincing arguer for what it was I was selling. So the RCA guy gave me this offer. I said, “I’ll think about that but I’m not sure, I’ll think about it.” And I didn’t think about it much, went back to work because I was working from 4:00 in the morning to 11:00 at night, so I didn’t think a lot about it.

But at least I was getting a feedback that I had some external marketability. And about that time I became fairly recognized as a hotshot, at least in the HAWK system, and then maybe air defense total. So, I was asked to come up and teach the command and staff tactics on the HAWK system and air defense in general.

DR. KIRKLAND: That put you in a different department.

GEN. THURMAN: And that took me out of the teaching branch that I was in. And I’d say this was nine months after I got in to the business to 10, and so I moved up and went to work. I was maybe down there a year in the hardware side. Then I was moved in a command and staff branch. I taught tactics and there was a VIP course for people that came in from Washington and other [areas] and I taught in that course, which had a high-priced syllabus for a one-week course.

And soon I discovered I was working for a drunk, a lieutenant colonel. And the more I took a look at that the more I knew I wasn’t going to do that. So about in November of 1961 I called my branch assignment officer who had been part of the mafia in the 11th Airborne Division.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you know that or was it just luck?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, no, I knew who it was. The guy's name was John Colt, Major Colt. And I said to John, "Listen, John, I'm working for a drunk down here, and I ain't working for a drunk. And I would like to volunteer to go on any assignment in the world, anywhere now." And he said, "You mean you really want to go out of there?" I said, "I really want to get out of here." I said, "I'm doing fine and I think my proficiency reports are perfectly fine, but I'm working for a no-good son of a bitch. And he's an alcoholic."

DR. KIRKLAND: Drunk on duty and everything else?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, he'd come in at 10:00 in the morning and he'd be reeking of alcohol. He was a drunk.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did he get a chance to write a report on you?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I had been there for three or four months, five months maybe, and so he wrote a report, and everything's fine.

But he was a drunk. And so the next day Colt called me back and said, "Maxwell Taylor has just gone to a place called Vietnam and they had decided to put in 50 intelligence advisors, and you have an intelligence background and would you like to be one those?" And I said, "Where is Vietnam?" It was 1961. "Oh, over there in Southeast Asia, you know, it's south of North Vietnam, south of China, get out your map and look at it." I said, "I don't care, I'll be glad to do that, when do I leave?" He said, "We'll cut the orders and you'll get them in three days."

So got them within a week and this guy said, "Boy this must be important work, you're getting jerked out of here to go immediately overseas." I said, "Yeah, I guess it must really be important; boy, I'm going to really miss being here, you know, really terrific job and all that." Son of a bitch never knew what happened.

And so I went to a military advisory school in Arlington Towers down here, now known as the River House Apartments or whatever, and we spent about six weeks there.

Went to Language School for about six weeks and found myself in Vietnam in April of 1962.

And we went over there on a C-124, and we landed at every island between here and Vietnam, landed at Tan Son Nhut, and I was sent up to I CORPS in Da Nang, which is up in the northern part of South Vietnam close to the border between North and South Vietnam at the time.

When I got there, there were a sum total of 50 Americans there, and later in the war there would be 50,000 Americans there. So I became the G2, deputy G2 Advisor for I CORPS. And a guy named Bryce Denno was the colonel in charge of that detachment up there, and he's a very senior infantryman.

And I worked for a guy who was an up-from-the-ranks Korean War vet, who was a major. And we worked on intelligence operations for the Vietnamese located up in that [area] and became part of an advisory group up there. I lived in Da Nang for a year and worked as a deputy G2 advisor.

When that G2 advisor wrote my efficiency report it was the worst efficiency report I'd ever had in my, then, nine years of military service. So I said to this guy, "I just want to tell you that is the worst efficiency report I've ever seen in my life." He said, "It is?" He said, "That's the best efficiency report I've ever seen." Within a month he was RIF'd back to the grade of E7 as part of the great RIF [Reduction in Force] that went on at that particular time.

So I spent a year there and—

DR. KIRKLAND: What did you do?

GEN. THURMAN: It was sort of like this. We divided up the work, and the Corps G2 had been trained by the French Suréte, and had 17 years' experience in the French Suréte. And we were trying to impress him on—so he knew a lot about counterintelligence and spying operations and that kind of stuff, you know, how to run a net.

But he didn't know anything about long-range patrols. He didn't know about aerial photography. He didn't know about intelligence preparation of the battlefield and

how you go about looking at the order of battle and that kind of stuff. That wasn't his bag. What he was into was how do you set up an intelligence net in the village?

So what this guy that wrote this ticket on me, he and I decided we would work on the combat intelligence work. While he worked on the HUMINT, the counterintelligence. So that became the division of the labor about that time.

So we were aiding the advisory detachment to assist the I CORPS Commander in developing a strategy for attacking the Vietcong in his area, et cetera.

And I remember General Rosson [GEN William B. Rosson], he was then a kind of three-star general at the time, and he came to I CORPS and had this great big wall map up here. And the general whose name was Tran Van Don, D-O-N, would later become the acting president of the country many years later in the late '70s.

Tran Van Don was giving him a briefing. And he outlined this briefing and Rosson looked at him and said, "You know, I was in this very same room 10 years ago and received this very same briefing from General Henri Navarre who is the French Commander here in Da Nang." They looked at him and said, "Good luck, General." And he left.

That will tell you, told the story that this guy's campaign plan wasn't going to be very much.

But here I was working on a corps staff and I didn't know anything about the operational art at that time. In other words, here's the case where I was trying to advise somebody in a level of experience in which I wasn't cognizant.

DR. KIRKLAND: Your G2 was probably a good deal older, wasn't he? This guy that had been trained by the French?

GEN. THURMAN: He was a captain but he was an older guy. But he didn't know anything about campaign plans either. All he knew about is how to run an intel net. So if you go back and look at that for a moment, you say, "Gee whiz, we were trying to help people out with the wrong quality of goods."

And the idea of sending a captain—I'd only had a year-and-a-half of intelligence experience and a six-weeks intelligence course at Oberammergau in my previous work,

as to how to develop what we would know now as an operational campaign—where we want to be in one year, two years, and what are the operational objectives about that.

I was out to lunch on it, never been schooled on it, hadn't been to Leavenworth and certainly hadn't been to the War College. And so subject terms of reference like we'd use like that in the normal everyday way in which we talked professionally to ourselves weren't in my lexicon in those days.

So here we were with an advisory effort that wasn't well-crafted to provide the competency of advisory work that we should have been advising to those people at that particular time.

Now this is early. This is now '62 before the war really gets fired up. I drove all over that neck of the woods in a jeep, never got shot at in anger. There were plenty of VC, plenty of incidents, an occasional train would get derailed and a convoy would get ambushed and that kind of stuff, but in the main the fight was going on further south.

I CORPS was a peculiar area. It was under the cognancy of an archbishop who was up in Hué, and Ngo Diem Dinh had a brother that was up there who was the archbishop. And so it was hegemony of the Diem clan or the Ngo clan, and it was an interesting country. It had the top four provinces in that area. But I did a lot of work for the Special Forces, did a lot of work for the CIA who were up there at that time. Did a lot of work for the intelligence people that I worked with.

So that was an interesting sojourn, and gave me some bona fides of having gone early to the combat zone.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you went—we know the circumstance that you went. You were a competent guy. This guy was your boss sounds like he was sort of on the marginal side.

GEN. THURMAN: The colonel, the major that wrote my ticket?

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah, was about to be bounced—

GEN. THURMAN: He was really marginal. Pretty soon the Colonel Denno wasn't dealing with him. He was cut out. He dealt with me. This guy was—

DR. KIRKLAND: Was Colonel Denno on the ball?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. You know, just, guy was, nothing against him. He was just an E7 that got promoted to grade of major because he was right place at the right time, he got picked up during the Korean War, got zapped up there and got relegated back to what his real competency was. Which he's a good intel sergeant, very good intel sergeant.

DR. KIRKLAND: You were talking about you weren't delivering the goods. Doesn't sound like a very good pick somewhere along the line.

GEN. THURMAN: No, I wasn't a good pick. He was even worse, and the idea that we were there to advise the Vietnamese on matters of intelligence—yes, on combat intelligence we could offer them advice, signals intelligence, combat intelligence. On HUMINT [human intelligence] there's no way we could offer them any advice. One, we didn't have any assets. Two, they did. Three, they knew the territory and we didn't. So the lesson in all that is you're going to send a team of people in to advise somebody else, they got to be the right ilk.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about your language? Was the six weeks enough to do you any good at all, or did you do everything in English?

GEN. THURMAN: Pleasantries. Vietnamese is a hard language. There's six syllable, six tonal languages in there, so the idea of getting much out of six weeks is, doesn't happen well.

(session ends)

(off and on the record)

(session begins)

GEN. THURMAN: He might be a guy you'd want to talk to. Ted Jenes [LTG Theodore G. Jenes, Jr.] was a Lieutenant General, Deputy Commander in FORSCOM. He's against it. People in Europe were against it. They didn't want to go through the wrench-around to make it happen, I mean start it up. A lot of people had the old saw that—gee whiz, people had to have an introduction to the area in which they're going to fight in order to fight—which is total bullshit.

I mean, you get acclimatized to the area. As a parachute officer, I think coming up as a parachute officer there is a mindset of flexibility that says, I don't care where the terrain is you want me to fight on, I will be able to analyze the terrain, fight successfully and win. Other people say, "Jesus, before we want to have people to come to Europe so they get to know the terrain and all. I say, if they're competent, they'll get to know the terrain very fast."

There were people that were unwilling to go through the in-change and out-change—

(End Tape 2, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 3

(Begin Tape 3, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: You can go but you got to come back and serve another two years when you get out because you owe us two more years. So I fretted a lot about that although I'd been to Vietnam earlier. And that's the reason I assured myself that I would go back to Vietnam after I graduated Leavenworth.

So I got caught up at Leavenworth on things tactical, I thought, and I was ready to go back and command a battalion in combat although the MILPERCEN guys didn't want to do that.

DR. KIRKLAND: To go back to the 457th—

GEN. THURMAN: Four nickel natural.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'm continually perplexed about that. I want to know what went on in the battery day to day when you first got there. There were 11 lieutenants and you had all these trainees and the captain didn't even come in until 9:00 and all of the lieutenants were graduates of the class of '53 somewhere, and so none of you had as much as a year of service at the outset. And who structured things, what did you do? Were there a bunch of committees or something for training or did each lieutenant take a certain—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we had an ATP or Army Training Program, which is sort of a given. And we were following that with the trainees, and that was set up by the battalion and run by the battalion. We were told to go out and do "X" amount of survey and "Y" amount of shooting and "Z" amount of RSOPing. So those things were fairly structured routines.

What was not spent a lot of time on, at least initially, was then turning that unit into what I would call a high performing shooting unit—at that juncture. Later that comes in because we keep a lot of these guys and we stabilize it with some NCOs. When we get ready to go to Europe—the training focus changes—see if I can put this in the right context—training focus changes when we go to Europe, from being a stateside unit with no particular mission, just be a unit.

DR. KIRKLAND: Just be a unit.

GEN. THURMAN: Pass an annual IG, pass an annual training test—both at the battery and the battalion level. Go to this myriad of schools that General Wayne Smith had put up to occupy our time—

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. Of course that sort of screwed things up because from a training management point of view—

GEN. THURMAN: A lot of people were gone.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: At school. But those things were, in fact, oriented in terms of military skills. I mean, you can't denigrate the schools, say yes go to it because it had military relevance. But it surely interrupted the continuum of training people to go do a particular mission.

Now when you don't have any mission except pass the ATT or pass the IG, it's quite different than what our perspective is today where you have a mission-essential task list. Or if you go to Germany, you're oriented on the Soviet menace that may be there. Or in the case of you need the 82nd, which we find today has got a strain that you can deploy a battalion on 18 hours' notice, or whatever. So those things are so different in what we know now than what we were doing in the mid-'50s.

The mid-'50s was the period in which you were recovering from the war in Korea in a peacetime army, that had no particular aim other than the ability to carry out those IG inspections and the training of recruits if you happened to get those. There wasn't any real NCO school at that time for people, although there was a noncommissioned officer school on post but it wasn't codified like it is today.

And so there was a lot of busywork going on. So who did the busywork? We all did that—the captain, the battery commander who was there the first go-around for a short period of time, shot his pistol every morning, came to duty. He'd discuss what was going to go on with the first sergeant. First sergeant got with the training lieutenant, one of the guys, wasn't me, was the training officer. And they'd publish a schedule for a week, and that was sort of a pretty relaxed operation.

DR. KIRKLAND: They'd assign you to take your survey team?

GEN. THURMAN: Take my survey team, go out practice survey. I'd go do that and then maybe once a month we'd go to the field with a battery and do it in the field.

DR. KIRKLAND: But then you'd go off to school and you'd go off to school again and you'd go off to—

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. That interrupted all the—

DR. KIRKLAND: So who would look after the survey—

GEN. THURMAN: Survey squad team—well, I had a survey sergeant and he looked after it while I was gone. Then we'd jump out of airplanes.

DR. KIRKLAND: I was wondering about that. Did you jump—

GEN. THURMAN: Made a lot of jumps.

DR. KIRKLAND: The cannon and the trucks and the radios and all that?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah. But not as many heavy drops as parachute jumps. We do a lot of parachute jumping. The notion in those days, you want to try to get everybody to do one-a-month parachute jump. Rarely were they done at night. From an equipment standpoint the mass of the jumps was done only with rifles, occasionally a general purpose bag. I'm contrasting that to my time in the 82nd as a DIVARTY Commander there when most of the jumps were at night.

All of them were equipment jumps, had some tactical problem at the end of it. Most of our jumps were not tactically oriented. They were what you'd call a pay jump.

DR. KIRKLAND: Could you jump the 105 howitzers?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. You could parachute those, heavy drop, but not—we didn't do that extensively.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was it frequent damage when you do that?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't recall us having—occasionally you'd have a major malfunction where you'd have a major damage to the howitzer but I don't recall that as being—it was an event when one does, or a major event, one ordered in.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, an event to drop the 105 even.

GEN. THURMAN: One, it was an event. And two, it was uncommon to have one order in. It was also uncommon to go out and parachute jump. Once a quarter maybe we'd have a heavy drop, as I recall it.

DR. KIRKLAND: They used to jump for the 75 howitzers, pack howitzers in Europe.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: I don't know whether the jump in Korea used those.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. The parachute jumps in Korea were 75s.

DR. KIRKLAND: I guess it was bigger airplanes were available?

GEN. THURMAN: Yep.

DR. KIRKLAND: I can see how that would work. I would think it would require a battery commander keeping his finger very much on the orchestrating his personnel who would lead training—

GEN. THURMAN: This guy was a very nice guy. There wasn't heavy focus on field performance. He was replaced later by a guy who—whether Lieutenant Fusell had had a battery in Korea I don't recall, but Stan was very much more tightly managed commander.

The other guy had been a World War II veteran, so he was comfortable about spending half the day out shooting. So the reins of control got tighter in the battery as the battery commander changed and as we flunked the battalion test.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who took you through the battery test, the captain or Lieutenant Fusell?

GEN. THURMAN: Lieutenant Fusell. And we did our own battery tests.

DR. KIRKLAND: No sweat.

GEN. THURMAN: No.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was that about a one-day operation or two-day operation?

GEN. THURMAN: As I recall it, it was a period of 24-hour operation because you had to do some night shooting.

DR. KIRKLAND: I begin to get the picture of how it might have been. You mentioned the very long training day starting about 5:00 in the morning but then troops were off early in the afternoon.

GEN. THURMAN: General Smith thought it would be nice because of the heat, the oppressive heat.

DR. KIRKLAND: But the lieutenants had to stay on duty because—

GEN. THURMAN: Lieutenants had to get there before reveille and LTs had to stick around in the afternoon and get ready for tomorrow, so it became a very long duty day for lieutenants, battery officers. But for the troops it worked out fine on the grounds that they only worked from 5:30 in the morning to 1:30 in the afternoon.

You say, what did they do the rest of the time? The answer is, they goofed off, tended to their personal business, had an enormous number of car wrecks on the highway between Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and Nashville, Tennessee; head-on collisions and that kind of stuff.

So you sort of look back on that; it wasn't the James Jones book of Schofield Barracks and all that, but it was; the tempo of life was certainly nothing like what we would find in Germany when we got there. Nor was it the tempo of life that I would come to know in the 82nd Airborne Division later when I reported there as DIVARTY Commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: Slower tempo.

GEN. THURMAN: Slower tempo.

DR. KIRKLAND: In the afternoons usually a battery doesn't have a bunch, not like an office building—

GEN. THURMAN: No. As a matter of fact—

DR. KIRKLAND: Where did you work?

GEN. THURMAN: We worked in the day room. The orderly room is only big enough for the first sergeant and the battery commander. And the exec had a desk as I recall it and the rest of us were operating out of our hip pocket and spent time in the dayroom if we were trying to do something constructive.

And we had a battalion classroom in the area if you had to go prepare something or teach a class, whatever it is. Go down and get your gear organized for the class function. But it was a constrained area, all wooden buildings. That's one reason Smith had wanted to get the day over with because the buildings were hotter than firecrackers. They were wooden construction left over from temporary buildings of WWII with very little amenities in it.

DR. KIRKLAND: I was trying to get a grip on with junior officers who were new and battery commander who was only partly there and the kind of mixture of very qualified and quickly qualified wartime NCOs, where the officers and NCOs that did the teaching for these AIT troops, where they learned it. And I guess that's when you learned was from each other and from manuals in the afternoon?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I recall General DePuy later in life—I'd worked for him. And one of the things he always said was, "You got to get doctrine written and put up on a shelf because captains and lieutenants when they're told to do something, go and get the manual and read it and perform it."

I recall going to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, getting a gunnery sack full of manuals. And so if you had to teach anything about gunnery, it was all in the manuals. If you had to

teach anything about care and maintenance of the howitzers, it's all in the manuals. If you had to teach anything about reconnaissance and survey, it's all in the manuals.

So doing that stuff is available and didn't have to be made up or manufactured. What you had to do was get your training program lined up, do the research, prepare the class, go out and practice it, teach the theory of it, and then go out and practice it on the ground.

So doing reconnaissance and survey work, in my book, was a piece of cake because all the reference manuals were perfectly appropriate for doing that. All you had to do was go out and do stick stuck and pull-tape and get your, in that case it was aiming circle work. And had smart kids. Had a guy, my computer as I recall it was a two-year college guy in mathematics, and so he knew how to run numbers as a piece of cake. And he didn't have any computers. It was all done on forms and calculations and looking up cosine factors and all that kind of stuff.

But the talent was there. And I guess what I would say to you is, the division had a large number of things you had to do. The division had to go at 25-mile march every month, but when you think about that—I'm talking about everybody, artilleryman, everybody else had to go do the 25-mile march. That's two days on your training schedule. Getting ready, going and doing it, recovering, let the people's feet soak out, you know, the next day. It's two days gone. Okay, if you got to do a parachute jump once a month, yeah that's two days gone.

But if you look at 20 days in the month, pretty soon you're eating up your time. And so the unit had perfectly good people in it. And it was not until we flunked the battalion test and got a new battalion commander who knew field artillery cold turkey, and he then knuckled us down for a couple weeks and went out and blew the hell out of the test, scored a very high score. And it shows you that the quality of people that were in the organization there—and I've recounted some people that made general out of the organization—was excellent.

It got to its peak performance in Germany where there became sort of what I'd call a definable mission. And those were the heydays of the famous USAREUR Commander whose admonition was, "An organization does well on those things the boss checks," and Bruce Clarke [GEN Bruce C. Clarke] was the 7th Army Commander and

USAREUR Commander, and operations in the field were stressed over there. And so the unit was immediately able to adapt itself to go do that.

So if you'd look back on it and say, well suppose you'd had to take that unit into combat. If you'd taken that unit into combat you had a coterie of noncommissioned officers who had served in combat in Korea. And all of the field-grade officers had served in combat in Korea.

So going to combat, I think, would have been a piece of cake. I mean, we might have had to sift out a couple of battalion commanders or S3s or whatever, but the raw material was available in the division artillery to go straighten that out. Fast.

DR. KIRKLAND: This was in Germany?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I'm saying—Fort Campbell. Fort Campbell, although we didn't spend an enormous amount of time in artillery matters in the field because there was no discernable mission at that time except pass the ATTs.

Looking at the group of people then that were in the unit at the time, an NCO nucleus that had been to combat in Korea, an officer at the field grade officer level who'd been to combat in Korea; could the unit have gone to combat and distinguished itself? I think yes because we had a terrific coterie of lieutenants.

And those people, and what happens over time is that group has been extraordinarily tight over a long period of service; 35 years of service and these people are still friends because they spent five years in this unit together.

But the competency that was in the unit was latent competency because there was nothing to demonstrate it on sort of in a mission-related job. And soon as it got to Germany the on-switch went on because now you had sort of a definable mission. You had to go up and do the GDP [General Defensive Positions] walks, you had to go to Grafenwoehr and shoot bullets and go to Hohenfels and do all that kind of stuff. Piece of cake.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. That sounds like the case. It's funny. It reminds me a little bit of what was going on in Vietnam where there was a disjuncture between the

older people and the people who were doing obligated service either as privates or lieutenants. And the younger ones, the draftees and the lieutenants, seemed to be very, very good but frequently there were field grade officers who had not plied their trade as artillerymen or infantrymen for a long time.

GEN. THURMAN: In our case, the field grade at the battalion level had earned its wings in Korea shooting bullets. Going back and looking, there were two classes of people in the division artillery at that time. This is Fort Campbell. There was a group of men who had served in World War II and Korea and were professional artillery officers who were never going to advance to high rank. I think all wars produce that group of people.

There was a sprinkling of principally captains who were in the division artillery who would go on to be lieutenant general rank. Two of the guys in the DIVARTY at the time come to mind easily are Charlie Hall [COL William Charles Hall], who is a West Point graduate of '46, fellow named Gordon Sumner [LTG Gordon Sumner, Jr.] who is an OCS graduate, and he'd become a lieutenant general.

There were a great number of lieutenants, a substantial number of lieutenants, who'd go on and become generals in the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: But your initial battalion commander was relieved though he had commanded the battalion in combat, your executive officer you described as essentially an nonentity—

GEN. THURMAN: Worthless.

DR. KIRKLAND: And the S3 couldn't function as an S3. Had he functioned as an S3 in combat?

GEN. THURMAN: No, not to my knowledge.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's a sort of a third group of guys.

GEN. THURMAN: Third group of guys were people who had gone to Korea and because of what I'd call the stalemate conditions in Korea had stayed on and because you could stay in Korea and get promoted—as I recall the rule in those days was if you'd done the job for 30 days you could get promoted like from lieutenant to captain, second lieutenant to first lieutenant, first lieutenant to captain in those days because it was decentralized promotion boards, not boards but decentralized promotion. And there was a lot of field promotion about that time. Getting promoted beyond that, of course, was a DA [Department of the Army] controlled operation.

But part of that was this rule base that said, it's the rule base that I learned more about in Vietnam which I didn't understand as a lieutenant. It wasn't applicable when I came out because I wasn't in Korea.

But it had to do with the business of going and serving a 12- or 13-month tour trying to attract people to stay on the combat tour, stay longer through promotion opportunity because that meant you didn't have to draft as many people and cycle as many people into Korea from the United States.

So personnelists were out there doing, maybe one of those things you're going to have to research or whatever the personnel policy associated with Korea. But I think that there were incentives both in the NCO corps and the junior officer corps to have people stay on.

Well, this gave you then a coterie of people that were OCS grads or mustangs up from the ranks in World War II who'd stayed on and got an opportunity to go back to Korea and make some rank, etcetera, who could do the day-to-day combat chores but weren't very good leaders when you came back to a garrison community and had to go do your thing, as we did, in our garrison community.

So we had sort of a, as you say, a tri-legged officer corps. A tri-legged stool there which had some really top-notch people who would go and be very high-ranking people and very distinguished artillery officers. We had a group of people who were going to leave the Army as lieutenant colonels after 20 years, 22 or 23 years, and never amounted to much after that. And then we had some really duds.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'm trying to chase the duds. There don't seem to be many of those around now.

GEN. THURMAN: Obviously not now.

DR. KIRKLAND: Of course there's been a lot of pruning.

GEN. THURMAN: You're talking about in our Army today?

DR. KIRKLAND: In our Army today and in our Army before the big cutback came, the Army of—

GEN. THURMAN: No. I think we got better at winnowing young people out. You go back and look at sort of personnel policy beginning, after the RIFs in the '70s, look at that time getting rid of the hump in Vietnam.

DR. KIRKLAND: It was a real bloodbath then.

GEN. THURMAN: You really got rid of a lot of people. So then you said you had to meet gates of service with troops and that kind of thing. So you began to put down strictures because young people who weren't with the troops or served poorly when they were with the troops until you get passed over. Thus I think the professionalism of the officer corps took a gigantic wrench up after the mid-to-late '70s when we got rid of the Vietnam group of officers who'd come out of grads OCS or West Point or whatever.

I think you got rid of two kinds of people in the '70s. One, you got rid of a group of distinguished officers who simply couldn't suffer the Army anymore because of what they saw as loss of values, loss of competency, loss of confidence in seniors. Lost some damned fine officers.

Then you lost officers who had gone to OCS, probably weren't really competent to be platoon leaders, and we saw the ill effects of that maybe in My Lai and places like

that—and who rapidly advanced because we were rapidly advancing officers, turn them around, go back to the second tour and really weren't going to make it in the long run.

So I think you got winnowed severely in the '70s, which left you with a nucleus of very competent people as we went in the '80s. We had the rejuvenation of the Army that took off in the '80s, and those that could keep up, prospered. Those that weren't able to manage were selected out through pass over.

DR. KIRKLAND: You never mentioned your first sergeant in the force, Charlie in the 457.

GEN. THURMAN: I can't even recall his name. Leroy Browning.

DR. KIRKLAND: He was your sergeant major.

GEN. THURMAN: Sergeant major.

DR. KIRKLAND: You said he took care of you for 30 days. What did that amount to? Did he do anything or just make you feel good?

GEN. THURMAN: No, he'd come down—Browning was a terrific guy, and maybe he so overshadowed the first sergeant, I can't even recall the first sergeant's name. He so overshadowed the—Harrington, by the way, was the first sergeant in the rocket unit.

DR. KIRKLAND: Honest John.

GEN. THURMAN: I know those were the two guys who counted. Browning was a short, wiry, quiet-speaking, authoritative Italian sergeant major. He ran, for example, the courts and boards game in the battalion. He was the guy that if you got stuck with a report of survey that you had to go do you'd better go see Leroy before you

got started; otherwise he'd turn that son of a bitch back on you in a heartbeat because you hadn't done it right.

So he knew the administration of a battalion probably as well as any sergeant major of a battalion I've ever seen. That came easy to him. So Leroy when he'd come down and see you in a motor pool or come down and see you in a barracks area whatever it is, he'd sort of tip you off as to what you were doing right or what you were doing wrong.

It was a mentoring process from him that I look back on. And, again, I'd just say to you that in the main mentoring that goes on now versus what went on in those days is just a totally different kind of whole process.

Mentoring from Stan Fusel, who's a friend of mine, wasn't what we would expect a battery commander to provide to a young officer now. It's totally different. It's a survival ordeal in those days. There wasn't any animosity about that.

I'm just saying the tactics, techniques and procedures that you try to ingrain into people now with our battery commanders, and the like and the fact that we insist on battery commanders now being captains, which gives you an experiential base. In the main, most of our battery commanders are graduates of the advanced course.

And so we've applied a discipline to ourselves which would be called training period followed by a practicum, followed by an assessment, which then would assert whether or not you were going to get additional command experience or not.

So you're right; I didn't recall the first sergeant name. I can't tell you who it was.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did Sergeant Major Browning's interest in you continue beyond 30 days, and would he be coming down and talking to you from time to time?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. But he was sort of saying, "If I detect something wrong with you I'll tell you to make sure you don't get caught short here." He was sort of looking after me proposition the first 30 days, but Browning was not hesitant to tell you anything anytime.

He was a very gutsy sergeant major who knew what was right and wrong and did his very best to turn the battalion into something that it wasn't with that battalion. That

bigger battalion commander it turned out later that when we got rid of the battalion commander, he was thriving on the work there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did the XO get changed anywhere along the line do you remember?

GEN. THURMAN: Only when we went to Europe as I recall. I left the battalion after about a year, went up to the DIVARTY staff, so battalion XO—name is floating around in my head but I don't recall his name right now. Battalion commander was there and then departed and—

DR. KIRKLAND: Did he leave the DIVARTY altogether or did he get—

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, I think he went up to the division.

DR. KIRKLAND: You mentioned there were two groups of NCOs—one group who was pretty well-qualified, pre-Korea people; and then others who hung around Korea and got promoted rapidly there and who were good in combat but had a lot to learn about the Army as a whole.

Was there a winnowing process, reductions, firings and so forth, or development or were both going on at once? And if so, who did it? Who kind of kept these guys—who checked up on the NCOs? Because obviously the lieutenants didn't know that much. That's why I was wondering about the first sergeant because you'd already told me about the battery commanders—one who was scrambling and the other was preoccupied with other things.

GEN. THURMAN: There were a group of sergeants. The group of sergeants that I would call extremely well-qualified who later would stay with the unit, go to Germany with the unit and the like. I'd say that group—again, there was no really organized development work as we know it today with an NCOES operation.

DR. KIRKLAND: I know there wasn't that.

GEN. THURMAN: And so the care and feeding of those guys was done by the battalion sergeant major. The first sergeants were looking after that. But the development program was nonexistent. I mean, it was more a, "You're the reconnaissance and survey op noncommissioned officer," or "You're the fire direction noncommissioned officer," or "You're the chief of firing battery," or whatever—"Go do the job." And then if you don't do it well, then there might be a reduction. But most of the reductions that I recall were ones in less of an incompetence and more of a if you had some malfeasance of off-post or on-post activity.

The NCOs in that first battery are relatively a blur to me. You know, you often hear about people being taken under wing by their first sergeant or their platoon sergeant, whatever. I believe that this mish-mash of training that we did and us being gone half the time in these schools or part-time in these schools and not being focused on field-training exclusively sort of gave you a less-than-the-average guy would remember his first unit assignment with some notable exceptions.

When I get to the DIVARTY staff and when I get into the Honest John business then there becomes some very distinguished noncommissioned sergeants and officers who are carrying a tremendous amount of freight and go to Germany with us. That group becomes a very tight shot group because it is gone from Campbell into the getting ready to go overseas, goes overseas, takes over all this gear, takes it to the field, becomes very much oriented on field duty.

And so I'd say to you that in the main, the lieutenants were an aggressive bunch of lieutenants all of whom were well-educated, either ROTC or West Pointers. And who knew their business, had to learn it as lieutenants but knew their business. And they were essentially running the batteries in those days. Several of the lieutenants got a chance to be battery commanders, but not many.

So, you asked who was taking care of the duds. The duds showed themselves up because they were either screwing around or getting drunk or not doing a very good job in accountability or property or whatever it may be and less a problem in field duty. You

follow me? In other words, the measurements were more measurements associated with administrative malfeasance than field or technical malfeasance.

And you see the people that had come from Korea that had been advanced rapidly over there were okay on the field work and not so good at administrative garrison-like activities about that. So they were found out about that and found wanting. And so you lost NCOs that got reduced in rank.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you by any chance keep copies of unit orders pertaining to you or efficiency reports, anything like that?

GEN. THURMAN: Probably.

DR. KIRKLAND: Do you have files of those?

GEN. THURMAN: Probably.

DR. KIRKLAND: Would you let me make copies?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, if I can find them.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay.

GEN. THURMAN: They're in my house somewhere in my unpacked books. I'll look around and see. In unpacked boxes.

DR. KIRKLAND: In connection with this business about people making mistakes on the administrative things, and so forth, I was wondering, and I guess probably you've answered it, what it was that people worried about most, where was the heat coming from, from on high? You mentioned that there wasn't much field activity except to pass the ATTs, but there must have been enormous heat when a battalion failed an ATT.

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah. The heat came from a very aggressive division commander and a very aggressive division staff on matters today that would be considered “painting rocks” if I could use that cliché. Wayne Smith had a SOP out for everything. One of the SOPs had to do with—you remember in those days helicopters were a novelty, but the division commander had one.

And there was an SOP out on how officers or noncommissioned officers, senior officer present, would report to the arriving commanding general in his helicopter. And so if he swirled into your area in his helicopter, you were expected to go out and report with the day’s training schedule and how many people were training, where all the absentees were, because he had concocted this training schedule program so that you worked from 5:30 in the morning to 1:30 in the afternoon, so everybody should be there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Nobody on dental appointments or getting a haircut, going to JAG—

GEN. THURMAN: Nobody on dental, over at the hospital, all that stuff. Better not be at the bank. So you better have a roster that had a—so you see everything was misconstrued or tilted toward administrative accountability functions as opposed to training content.

DR. KIRKLAND: Didn’t care what you were doing as long as everybody was there.

GEN. THURMAN: I guess he cared, but I mean the emphasis was so much on the other that you lost sight of the—obviously you were trying to train and do right because you wanted to shoot bullets right and pass the battery and battalion tests and all that. But his focus was on this administrative folderol.

The payday activity was a division parade. And so what you did on payday was you had a division parade every man jack among us was out for the division parade, and the last battalion that passed in review was the straggler battalion, which meant his MPs

rushed around the post during the division parade, roused up anybody who was in cook's whites or any of that type, on crutches or whatever the hell it was. They were policed up by the MPs and thrown into this straggler battalion.

DR. KIRKLAND: Ad hoc battalion.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, the last battalion that passed in review. That meant they had to stand out there the longest, march the furthest, and then you had your full field pack-on and you went back to the battery area and you laid out your gear in a full field inspection. And then after that you got paid.

But it didn't take me long to figure out that the job for payday was to be Pay Officer because you didn't have to put up with that bullshit. So you go get your money at the finance and then you'd go back and count out the money. And of course those were the days that everybody said, "If you don't pay the troops face to face then, obviously, you don't command them. The troops won't have respect for you and they will disobey your orders."

I mean you've heard all that folderol that came down later when you tried to get check at the bank. Everybody said, no we can't pay, we have to pay troops because otherwise troops won't know who the boss is. Well, that's absolutely poppycock. But in those days it was pay them across the pay table and you went down, I went down, to get the money and you had a couple guys as armed guards and—the lessons of all that come back later in my life to tell me some things I ought to be doing as a DIVARTY Commander. But the application of his ideas got twisted.

Picking up paper on the range. You had a range police operation so you had to send people out on the range on a routine basis, and he would fly into a place where he'd find paper. You'd see it from the helicopter, and he'd police up pieces of paper.

And I recall him coming in one day. We always had a division commanders meeting once a week with the ADC and the division artillery commander and the principal staff officers, and I was the aide at that time. And I recall him handing this wad, took a whole bag of paper and turned it over in front of the DIVARTY Commander.

Here's a guy that was, been brigadier general for four or five years, and humiliated him with this wad of shit that he'd policed up on the range.

DR. KIRKLAND: It was in his zone.

GEN. THURMAN: It was in his zone of responsibility, and had some DIVARTY markings on it. You know, it was a school-boyish approach to the command of the division. And so the respect and admiration for this guy was not high. Fortuitously, he did not go to Germany with us. He went on to a different posting and we got a different commander and he came in and did not so well either. But you sort of look back in those days and say, how did this coterie of young officers sort of the . . .

(End Tape 3, Side A)

(Tape 3, Side B, begins with in-progress discussions on Falklands War followed by a continuation of this interview)

GEN. THURMAN: (in progress) That to me is looking at the problem for some reason not to do it when in fact the reason to do it is for the competency of the inherent unit that people, whether it's a platoon, a company or a battalion. I believe that battalions ought to be maneuverable elements from one division to another. They can be moved overseas to do a job, be attached around.

Matter of fact, that's why we designed them that way. And then to get some notion that, no, I can't accept a new battalion because then they don't know what to do and geez it'll be awhile before they learn the GDP positions they got to go on and I just say, doesn't wash with my view.

Even in combat when we reconstitute a battalion, the battalion may be given training in new reserves and all that kind of stuff, but it doesn't know the new terrain it may go in day after tomorrow. So, and the whole thing is just fraught with leftovers which I think don't serve us very well.

I think maybe Vietnam got a lot of people in the wrong idea. I remember as a corps artillery group executive officer disassembling a battalion that had been sent to Vietnam under the, quote, "infusion program," unquote. I think one of the things you ought to research is, who gave those orders? Was that done by the Department of the Army? Was that done by Westmoreland? Who gave that kind of order out?

Here's a battalion that had trained together, soldiered together in California, said goodbye to its families together, came to Vietnam and we had the audacity, the unmitigated audacity to take a unit and disassemble it so it wouldn't all rotate out at one time. Now that to me is just terrible personnel policy.

DR. KIRKLAND: Sort of cross-move people back and forth.

GEN. THURMAN: What they said was, want you to take out half the chief of sections, half the chief of smokes, half the gunners, half the officers, and move them to

some other unit so the unit won't all destruct a year from now when this tour is over. So we actually disassembled a unit that had been trained to operate together. And on orders from higher authority we were told to wreck the unit from all of its interpersonal relationships.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is this one of the battalions under your roof?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Think about that. Who invented that? Was that the chief of staff of the Army that said it? Did Lyndon Johnson say do that? I mean, who in the hell invented that?

DR. KIRKLAND: It could very well have happened in a local level.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it wasn't inside our group.

DR. KIRKLAND: But it might have been field force.

GEN. THURMAN: No. It wouldn't have been field force because old MACV [Military Assistance Command Vietnam] controlled all the personnel assignments about that. So I just can't imagine how they get out—

DR. KIRKLAND: The thinking—everybody over there who was in command was screaming about the turnover and upset about what happens when we lose certain June or—there was always some sort of month when the unit lost a very high proportion of its people.

GEN. THURMAN: I think that may have been outgrowth of some decision that said because the people in the unit only have a life of 12 or 13 months that you'd have to constitute a new unit of the United States and they'd have to go over and fly over and take it over and let the other unit dissolve. Well you say, I got a lot of people left in that unit who have more service but the whole notion is to destroy the inherent goodness of

the unit that had been built by officers in charge of human element of a unit. That's just crazy.

DR. KIRKLAND: It was crazy. How did the unit—did you see it through?

GEN. THURMAN: I can't recall. I know it had a terrible time in gunnery. In fact they dropped a battalion load of artillery on the USARV helicopter pad in the vicinity of Long Binh, managed to knock out 12 helicopters that belonged to us. So for one thing their accuracy was very good. I mean, it hit the airfield. But Bruce Palmer [GEN Bruce Palmer, Jr.] wasn't very happy with that.

So that tells you that—I tell you what I think. I really believe this intuitively and have no evidence to back it up. I believe that—and this may sound like a slam—I believe that the David Marlowes [Auditor's note: Dr. David Marlowe was the Chief of the Department of Military Psychiatry, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, and led the COHORT research effort] of the Army of the end of World War II are responsible for all that going on and are responsible for the notion of not seeing an action through to completion and for the short tour policy both in Korea and Vietnam.

DR. KIRKLAND: I think you're right.

GEN. THURMAN: Let me tell you why I believe that. I believe that they were asked, how do we stop the riots after World War II, VJ Day, VE Day? And they invented a point program that permitted the people who'd been in the Army the longest and seen the most combat to get out the soonest. And so that stopped the riots at the time.

And personnelists, thereafter, thought it would be a good idea to have a rotation program in Korea and a rotation program in Vietnam so that we lost the notion that you went to serve until it was over.

And how that got started I don't know, but my intuition tells me that it flows from the tail-end of World War II when we were looking for a demobilization policy. And then we went to the notion that we will have an individual replacement system game now. How far back the individual replacements—I guess they worked in—

DR. KIRKLAND: Back to 1918.

GEN. THURMAN: —the famous war, in World War II, but I think that did us in.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah, the whole idea of human beings as interchangeable spare parts comes out of the industrial tailors idea that people—

GEN. THURMAN: I think that's quite different in the military. I think it's a team effort. And, oh by the way, isn't it interesting that industry is trying to look at how to build teams in their workplace.

DR. KIRKLAND: They are. They are starting to do that.

GEN. THURMAN: Yet we think we're the best at building teams, and then we have policies that tear teams up. Can you explain that? In a theoretical stance, how do you explain that? What's your degree in, your Ph.D.?

DR. KIRKLAND: History.

GEN. THURMAN: Can you explain to me from a sociological standpoint how you organize, train, deploy and fight as a team and then you have a calculated policy to destroy the team in the progress of continued fighting?

DR. KIRKLAND: It's an expediency thing. It doesn't have theory.

GEN. THURMAN: It's crazy.

DR. KIRKLAND: People groping for ways of solving problems and coming up with solutions that solve components of the problem but create, exacerbate the major part of the problem.

GEN. THURMAN: I think Vuono [Auditor's note: Gen. Carl Vuono served as the Army Chief of Staff from 1987 to 1991] took a major step forward in the Persian Gulf when he levied units to build 100 tank crews, 100 artillery crews and 100 Bradley crews and had them on standby ready to go in as replacements, as crews. So 11-man squad, 4-man tank crew, 7-man artillery crew or whatever it turned out to be.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. That was a step forward. You have to watch out for the first sergeant though.

GEN. THURMAN: Sure. But I'm saying the notion was right. Now, how they formulated the crews I don't know because I wasn't there, but that's an interesting thing to pursue.

DR. KIRKLAND: It is, and we saw some teams, clusters of people go into the 7th Division. Of course it had continued attrition and needed to be—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I guess what I'm saying to you about that is, one of the things you ought to look at is Vuono thought what he was doing, which is get the crews right. Was he suborned by subordinate leaders?

DR. KIRKLAND: I'm not sure whether he was or not.

GEN. THURMAN: We ought to find that out. In other words, I think one of the trips that you've got to do in this volume, if this is what your intent is, is that you also want to show that guys like Vuono made a move to get at small unit replacement, in this case the squad level.

Did his agents below him faithfully carry out the intent, the commander's intent? Or did they fuck up and send out, get the hoods together and send them over there, or were they responsible actions by the various subordinates that said I'm going to give them the very best crews I got because they'll have to go shoot and there will be human life at stake. If you did the latter, then we're beginning to make progress. If they did the former it says that the AGs [Auditor's note: Adjutant General branch staff are those individuals who operate the Army's personnel programs] got into it again.

DR. KIRKLAND: One of the problems we ran into in the 7th Division was as the companies got smaller and smaller from guys getting hurt, being asses themselves one way or another, first sergeants would cross level and try to keep each squad, they're supposed to be nine but there weren't enough to go around, and try to make each one have seven instead of some have five and some have nine and some have eight.

So there's just a whole array of pressures out there, expediency related pressures to suborn the idea of unit integrity. And it's a very tough fight. I think Vuono did a right thing. I don't know what's going to happen. There's so many elements of your story which are parables to support the integrity of teams, usefulness of the integrity of teams, that I think this is an important theme.

I think the fact that it's told through your eyes and ears and experience and struggles, arguments, will give it a lot more vitality and vividness than if it were just told in an abstract sort of way.

I was wondering, in the 11th Division, what kind of relationships there were between officers and NCOs. You mentioned how close the officers got with each other. Was there also a closeness between officers and NCOs?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, very much so. By the time that the division fired, got rid of its riffraff under General Hugh Harris, and then the stabilization of the cadre having been stabilized coming to Europe and getting rid of the sluggoids, the NCOs and the officers became very tightly interwoven because, in the main, battery commanders might come and go a little bit on the grounds of professional development to get a guy a battery for 18 months or whatever. But, in the main, the NCOs were stable in the unit.

And so there's very little shifting around of the NCOs. The first sergeant was the first sergeant for the whole tour over there, three years. And the sergeants major—you may say that's stultifying and all that. I'm saying, no, it said they stayed with the division and there was still enough upward mobility, although I grant that that was a period of downsizing of the Army at that particular time in the mid-, late-'60s.

But the officers knew the NCOs very well. I mean, the group of officers we had in my rocket battery had been together as a group in a 155 battery for two years before they ever became the rocket merchants and then became rocket merchants for two years. But they all knew one another, and you knew who you could count on and depend upon.

I just happen to remember the name of one of the guys who was a chief mechanic, a guy named Fosnot, and Fosnot could make anything run in the field. So everybody counted on Fosnot. And Fosnot was that way when he was in the howitzer battery and in our battery happened to be working for me in my platoon. He was a gem at making things run. And so our maintenance was always terrific.

And it was easy. I mean, it really was easy. We had a first sergeant named Harrington, and Harrington was easy. And Sabatier was my platoon leader. Raphael Sabatier was a guy—said Raphael Sabatier, “We're going to depart tomorrow morning 6:30 in the morning,” and there wasn't any slack about that. I mean, everybody knew exactly what we were going to do, go to the field and go do it.

So, a tremendous up and down vertical bonding went on there. The fact that it was a new weapon system creates a little halo effect because you're trying to learn something new, but you're learning it together.

And so his knowledge didn't transcend mine, and mine didn't transcend his. We were all learning together about that. And so it was quite a healthy relationship. And we knew when somebody was liable to get tanked up and where to go to get him, and we knew the wives and all that kind of stuff. It was a very open relationship centered on combat readiness.

We had a technical proficiency inspection readiness problem as well. We had to pass four outside entities, which gave you a focal point for doing something not only with your division and its hierarchy but the nuclear weapons people as well. Tremendous

dependency on NCOs for both technical competence and tactical skills because we operated at night all over. . . [unintelligible]

So it just went well. It was easy.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was it quiet?

GEN. THURMAN: Easy—what do you mean, quiet?

DR. KIRKLAND: A lot of yelling around the battery?

GEN. THURMAN: Nah, pretty quiet. A street formation in the morning at reveille or at the morning work call was never noisy. I don't recall ever—

It's very interesting you raise that because I recall going down and standing behind a formation one morning when a first sergeant in the 82nd Airborne Division, when I was division artillery commander, was cursing the troops. He's cursing the troops. And after it was all over and done with and the troops left, I went over to him and I said, "Report to your battery commander, I want to see you in my office this afternoon about 5:30."

I never saw good people except during the duty day, and the bad people after 5:00.

So I called him in, and I said, "You know, I've heard some very foul language around. But I see you're a first sergeant and you are standing in front of a troop formation. And that was over and beyond the pale. I mean, you're calling people by foul names and all that kind of stuff."

And I said, "So you're relieved. You need a break. You're going to move to my headquarters here. I mean, I own a battalion up to my headquarters. You're going to be my G2 sergeant. And when you get yourself squared away, come in and talk to me about going down and being a first sergeant again. But you don't deserve to be a first sergeant anymore. That is really gross behavior."

And he was just absolutely unmercifully foul-mouthed, eating people up and all that kind of stuff in front of their peer group and all that. I didn't hear any of that after we got it settled down. Very professional cadre of people.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's what's happening in the 7th Division, too, like you said.

GEN. THURMAN: When you know people; one is, you know what their individual qualities are. You know who you can count on. You make allowances for who you may have to shift responsibilities. There's a camaraderie about it. There's also camaraderie between the NCOs because no one knows very well what they're able to do, what they don't.

And the troops have been there for a great period of time, they're very competent. A driver knows how to drive and he's got his license up to date. And so you don't have to screw around with that and with the turmoil of people coming in. Half the people don't have licenses. So this way everybody's got a driver's license and you never run the risk of putting a guy in driving a vehicle that hasn't got a license to drive a vehicle.

And this happens all the time in the unit starting over. You got guys driving who are killing people, running over people, having accidents because you haven't got the unit settled down.

DR. KIRKLAND: Always boiling.

GEN. THURMAN: So the 11th became a unique organization that had a period of crap and corruption in there that had to get weeded out; but once that got done it became a unique organization, been together five years. I mean, you really knew who the people were in an organization that had been there five years. Happily that was two years in the states and three overseas.

And a lot of people would claim you get stale doing that. My view is you get efficient.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's what happened in the 7th. When you started your operation in Panama around Christmastime a lot of the 7th Division units had people stood down on block leave. But there were a few people left, and the privates got those units ready to load out, put stuff on the pallets and strapped it down, and they'd done it before and they knew how to do it, and they had a sense that "this is my mission." And the sergeants and lieutenants and captains came rushing back, found everything ready. All they had to do was pick up their gear and go.

GEN. THURMAN: Put their camouflage on.

DR. KIRKLAND: So the experience that you had with the 11th and which you tried to institutionalize—

GEN. THURMAN: It would have worked if Shy Meyer [GEN Edward C. Meyer] had stayed the Chief of Staff for another two years. But, in the main, what happened is the trial period ran over Shy's departure. And it was not in General Wickham's [Auditor's note: General John Wickham, Jr. was the Army Chief of Staff from 1983 to 1987] viewfinder when he was the Chief. So he wasn't as hot on it as Meyer would have been. If Meyer had been there we'd have gotten it fully institutionalized.

But, ultimately, it has to be the Chief of Staff of the Army that institutionalizes it. No other subordinate can do that because he has to tell his subordinate 4-star Commanders, "This is the way it is. We tried it out 15 different ways, and now the decision time is here, and this is the way I am going to do it."

In a bureaucracy the size of the U.S. military, institutionalization becomes a crucial factor. And that institutionalization can come from only one of us, the Chief of Staff. Of that magnitude, where you're wrenching. This is a major wrench—supply policy and how many people you promote to the grade of corporal and sergeant. And, you know, that's down the line. But when you make a major institutional wrench like COHORT [Cohesion, Operational Readiness and Training], there's only one officer in the Army can make that happen and it's Chief of Staff.

DR. KIRKLAND: How long was it that you were supervising recruiting, eight years altogether?

GEN. THURMAN: Direct operation two years, direct supervision two years, and four years of attended supervision. Makes it happen.

DR. KIRKLAND: That sort of gets the program set. That was really important I think.

GEN. THURMAN: For me to tell the PA&E of the Army for four straight years, don't ever bring me a shortage of money in the personnel account for quality people. And, as principal resource allocator, which I was as the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, once you tell the guy there, he goes and does it. So pretty soon it's cooking.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's worked, too. It has really changed the nature of the Army.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet it has.

DR. KIRKLAND: I think that's the most important thing that will keep us from going back to where we were in 1949.

GEN. THURMAN: I think people understand that, but still you have to have a cognizant authority to pay attention to it. It cannot be left to—the quality of people in the Army cannot be left to a major general. It is so crucial that it is a four-star general's business to assure the quality of the Army is right. Therefore, he has to spend time, maybe not a lot but enough, to assure himself that it is high quality.

DR. KIRKLAND: So many things kind of slip through the crack.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it has to do with some people are interested in it. Some people aren't. Some people are historians and other people are personnel people. The fact that a historian gets interested in personnel you know, it's unusual. But talking about the details of personnel policy. The point I'm making is people have different bags. And their interests are different.

John Wickham had a very interesting bag. His bag was joint operations. He had been a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the Director of the Joint Staff. Then he had been the CINC UNC [Commander in Chief, United Nations Command]. Then he became the Chief of Staff. One of his primary interests was in the advancement of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He took it as a given that the personnel was taking care of itself. I'm talking about the accession game and all that. Not that they didn't have an interest in people or get interested in people, but whether or not it was 95 percent high school diploma grads or 55 percent high school diploma grads wasn't on his screen.

Now joint inter-operations between the Air Force and the Army was. So he and his colleague, then Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Charlie Gabriel [GEN Charles A. Gabriel], spent a considerable amount of time sorting out Army/Air Force issues. So a lot has to do with the interest of the leader as to what gets pushed on his watch.

There's no doubt if you look at Carl Vuono's dictum, if he got up to speak once or 1,000 times he had a stock phrase that he pushed which is, he wants a "trained-and-ready Army." He didn't say that once; he said that 10,000 times.

Now what a lot of people didn't know, though, is he met every month with the recruiting chief because he wanted to make sure the people side was straight because he had an abiding interest in making that happen. When he left as the chief of staff, the next chief of staff didn't pay any attention to it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Starting to slide?

GEN. THURMAN: Wasn't interesting to him.

DR. KIRKLAND: But I mean, what's going on back at the ranch?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it went along fine because we were downsizing, it went along fine the first year. Second year '93 slipped a little bit, so he got more interested in it. But meanwhile General Peay, now the Vice Chief, has picked it up as a monthly briefing. It's not on the horizon of the other guy. Makes the assumptions going with.

DR. KIRKLAND: You can only have so many things on your horizon.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. So something like the quality of people or the COHORT system or individual versus unit replacement, small unit or whatever unit replacement you like, is—I would say there are only three four-star generals besides me who were interested in that. One was Donn Starry [GEN Donn A. Starry].

DR. KIRKLAND: I didn't know he was interested.

GEN. THURMAN: Shy Meyer. And I think you'll find if you'll read there is a book produced by the Potomac Foundation, which is run by Dr. Joe Braddock of BDM fame. They just produced a book, and the lead article that's in there is by Starry.

And I just glanced at it, but I think the article talks about small unit rotation. That's essentially what it's about. I didn't read it in detail. But Starry was interested in it, Shy was interested in it and Vuono was interested in it. On the fringe, Cavazos [GEN Richard E. Cavazos].

Now two of those guys were chiefs, and the other chiefs weren't in those periods of time. And Shy tried to get it going, and Carl [Vuono] didn't try to get it going but he was faced with fighting a war right in the middle of his tour. And he did it very well, but he used one of the principles, which was put the small unit replacement squads together in case he had large casualties out of it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Should we get together again?

GEN. THURMAN: Sure.

(Off and on the record)

DR. KIRKLAND: Got a whole bunch of questions about things we talked about last time.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you were talking about your qualifications to be the subject of a biography and your credibility with other people, your knowledge of what went on in the forest and so on, you mentioned you'd never been a battalion staff officer. But, then, at other times you said you were a battalion survey officer and battalion liaison officer to a battalion.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. The point about that is that in today's Army the pattern of advancement for selection to be a battalion commander generally includes service at the grade of major.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay, as an S3.

GEN. THURMAN: Or senior captain on a battalion staff, either in the S3 position or at the executive officer position. My case was, my battalion staff duty took place as a lieutenant. And being, let's say, the battalion survey reconnaissance and survey officer certainly doesn't measure up in the eyes of board members, let's say, today that XO's job would be or a battalion S3's job. So that's to clarify what I intended there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Of course you had to take vigorous action in order to get a command without having had that background.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. My assignment officer told me when I got ready to leave Leavenworth—I was a lieutenant colonel at Leavenworth. I'd served my entire

majority at West Point and Leavenworth, three years at West Point and about six months at Leavenworth before I got promoted. So my assignment officer came out to assign me to Vietnam. His disclaimer was, you haven't—"While your record is a good record, you haven't met the gates to have a command in Vietnam"—which I had asked to be posted to Vietnam.

And I said, "What are those gates?" He said, "Well you haven't been a battery commander in your branch like field artillery in a cannon artillery unit." I said, "Yeah, that's right, I haven't done that." He said, "You haven't been a battalion XO or S3." I said, "That's right, I haven't done that." He said, "You haven't been a fire support officer at the division level." I said, "Yeah, you're right; I haven't done that." And he said, "You haven't commanded a battalion." He said, "Those are the four criteria that General Westmoreland or the MACV Commander has laid down as a requirement."

DR. KIRKLAND: All four or some of them?

GEN. THURMAN: One of the four. You had to be one of the four. And he said, "You don't measure up." I said, "Fine and dandy. Just order me to Vietnam and we'll see what happens. I'll take care of it myself."

I guess my view is that having been in the 11th Airborne Division for a period of almost five years and knowing the division as I knew it and understanding the role of field artillery in support of the ground-gaining arms, it wasn't a problem in my view about understanding what my mission was to support the infantry. Of course at that time the primary tanks weren't in the game there, so I was essentially a light artilleryman and I understood the nature of supporting the infantry.

I'd been a battalion liaison officer with the infantry, and I'd been in a division artillery battalion for quite a bit of time. And I'd been in the division artillery staff for several years, and I'd been a Honest John guy which would be equated to being a GS artilleryman. So I knew all the rigmarole about supporting infantry. So that didn't bother me, but apparently General Westmoreland had a good and valid reason for whatever he did. And so I had to go and fight for it on my own.

DR. KIRKLAND: Seems to me—

GEN. THURMAN: It's interesting a guy would end up running the personnel business for the Army who essentially never measured up to what the desk officers in MILPERCEN would like you to believe.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah. That is interesting, and I was wondering how and when your reputation started to emerge. Apparently it was pretty early because it seems to me in those days the job of general's aide was competitive. Each battalion would send up a good guy—

GEN. THURMAN: Being the general's aide in the 11th Airborne Division Artillery, I think, is relatively inconsequential. They went around as quote, "spiffy looking" lieutenants, and I guess I was a "spiffy looking" lieutenant, and I knew what my business was as a lieutenant. But I wouldn't hold that up as any big candle.

I think a major break—you look back on your life and look at major breaks and a major break in my life occurred at West Point. I was being assigned there as a faculty member. I really had trouble—the first six months of that time was a learning period.

DR. KIRKLAND: You hadn't been through it.

GEN. THURMAN: I was not a graduate, and I hadn't been through it, and so I had to learn the distinctive difference between un-shined shoes and improperly shined shoes which I thought to be sort of a bullshit operation, but I played the game.

And then I fell under the supervision of the then-Commandant of Cadets who was Michael Davison [GEN Michael S. Davison]. And Davison, I believe looking back on it, although I didn't think so much at the time, he gave me a job that I didn't want. And that job was to be a Cadet Activities Officer. And he did me a favor by giving me that job but I didn't realize it, which was it was a job that had the opportunity to be all you can be with very little supervision, where you could, in fact, exert your initiative.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was it a job nobody much wanted?

GEN. THURMAN: Nobody wanted that job, and it's a dog job. And as a matter of fact it robbed you of your weekends. I mean, your work really started at 3:30 every afternoon when the cadets got out of class. You had to do work like every other staff officer would. And I would look at that as being divisional staff work—you look back on it because it was operating at a place where there were brigadier generals and three star generals. The superintendent and the brigadier general who is the commandant of the cadets. And I was a major, so I was a principal staff officer.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you also have a company you were—

GEN. THURMAN: I had the company for one year, and then he put me in that particular job and he called me up one day and said you're going to be the Cadet Activities Officer. I moaned and groaned and all that kind of stuff.

It turned out that I learned a lot. I learned how to operate independently—inside of a structure, obviously, but independently in a job which benefitted cadets. So if you look at it in a different role you can say you pulled your staff officer tour at a division level, but what you didn't do is you weren't with troops in the way in which you were with troops in a division.

In other words, you had cadets; and of course cadets are quite different from that, and highly structured environment. But mine was highly structured but gave it an enormous opportunity for initiative.

DR. KIRKLAND: Nobody wanted to do what you were doing.

GEN. THURMAN: And nobody particularly wanted to do what I was doing, so it was, on the one hand, a tremendous learning curve. I mean, I got to know how to do things in a civilian environment that later would pay dividends, for example, in the recruiting business. And I also had to obviously live within the regulations and the rules

of United States Military Academy and in doing that to make sure I didn't besmirch the reputation of the U.S. Military Academy, and the value system that went along with it.

But I fretted about that a lot because now it's 1965, '64 and '65 and '66, and my colleagues are back overseas. It was at that time that Schwarzkopf (GEN H. Norman Schwarzkopf) and I were up at West Point. And we're both the same grade, and, sort of an interesting vignette, he went to his boss and said,

(End Tape 3, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 4

(Begin Tape 4, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN:—how not to treat people—it’s a negative learning process in many regards. So the atmosphere that— . . . Smith, as I mentioned before, he went in the bank and told them to close the bank. Smith attached the post to the division. When he came in at headquarters Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and the 11th Airborne Division.

So he turned that around and said, Headquarters 11th Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, and he attached the post to the division, which gave you some notion then that the division was not going to fly off and go do some contingency operation as we’d have it today. Follow me?

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. I see what you mean. But it also put the mission before the support.

GEN. THURMAN: He put the division before the support, but it didn’t give you the notion that we were a tenant, and therefore we could go fly away and do everything. The fact is, we were so embroiled in post life that post life took priority over divisional work, in my view.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, I see.

GEN. THURMAN: I’m looking down there as a lieutenant. So I don’t see the big picture as others might see it. It had all the trappings. And I don’t know anything about the money, how much money we had to spend in those days. But it had all the trappings of—

DR. KIRKLAND: A frontier post.

GEN. THURMAN: —garrison duty as opposed to mission duty, which we'd all come to learn more about as we grew up.

DR. KIRKLAND: One final question I wanted to ask you about that era. It sounds to me like drinking and gambling were not your favorite things to do, but they were a very important part of the social expectations of airborne officers in the division artillery.

GEN. THURMAN: Drinking was very much a social expectation. The prop blast was a centerpiece of the activity, and I could recall getting stoned cold drunk at the prop blast when I was prop blaster.

DR. KIRKLAND: That happened once, sort of initiation?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. And I can recall later when we were getting ready to go to Germany—we have a new division artillery commander, brigadier general, fellow by the name of Richard Harrison who still lives. And we had a new DIVARTY executive officer, Colonel James Taylor.

And I can recall taking Taylor home drunk because that was the social obligation, and I can recall his wife—Art Lombardi and I took him home. Art was captain and I was lieutenant, and I can recall taking him home. His wife just became outrageous, furious with us bringing her husband home drunk. That was the social expectation was everybody had to get smashed at the prop blast.

So, there was a lot of drinking. Gambling was a preoccupation with a group of field grade and company grade officers who had come in from the Korean experience, World War II experience. And I didn't have anything to do with it, so I never got any tick marks on my efficiency report that said I was antisocial or anything, but that just wasn't my bag, I wasn't doing that.

I'd say many of the officers shunned that. But there were a lot that were down there. I mean, this guy who I remarked about before who was buying up checks was smart enough to know how to make money. He gambled, but he didn't gamble as much

as he was smart about how to pick up loose money because \$222.22 in those days plus \$100 jump pay wasn't a lot.

And he knew that a lieutenant or a bright captain who was picking up full colonel's chits would trade two for one on the check, and yet he'd cash the check later and make a hell of a lot of money on it. So that just went on, and that was part of the airborne hard drinking, hard fighting, carousing.

Then we'd go out and kill people. We killed so many people in the division that Highway 41A ran between Clarksville, Tennessee, and Hopkinsville, Kentucky; and Highway 41A was a dual-lane highway with a grass median in between. And the west lane, southbound lane lay on the post, and the eastbound northbound lane lay off the post. The boundary went down the median.

And on one of these days, payday, Smith, in an attempt to squeeze the unlicensed vehicle game at that time—because you couldn't drive your vehicle on the post if it didn't have a post license—but you could get a state license at that time without insurance but you couldn't get a post tag without insurance. So a lot of cars parked in parking lots off-post.

So he contrived with the Tennessee and Kentucky police to shut down the northbound lane so that you had both southbound and northbound traffic on the southern bound leg on post. And he arrested and impounded hundreds of cars from the troopers.

DR. KIRKLAND: Because it was illegal for them to drive without having a post tag.

GEN. THURMAN: So they didn't know the median—they figured it out as soon as they got arrested, but they didn't understand that the southbound lane was on-post. So you had both south- and northbound traffic going on that southbound lane for this particular shutdown, and he arrested hundreds of people and threw hundreds of cars into the post dog pound there because they didn't have post tags on because people didn't have insurance on it.

But we were killing people in head-on collisions and killed five people one day, five nurses. A big, gigantic problem in the local press was head-on collision between

some drunk airborne soldier and five nurses on the road to Nashville. So it was a hard-drinking outfit. You're right. Had a social mores of intoxication.

DR. KIRKLAND: But a moderate drinker couldn't survive without being ostracized.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were you starting to get good punches on your tickets that early? There used to be sort of an ethic that second lieutenant should have modest evaluations.

GEN. THURMAN: I think I got reasonable efficiency reports. I would later make—the only below the zone promotion I got was from captain to major. So I must have had reasonable tickets as a lieutenant.

DR. KIRKLAND: In spite of that one you got in Vietnam from that—

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, from the dud.

DR. KIRKLAND: Must have been considered for your promotion.

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: That sort of ties up the loose ends that I wanted to ask about. You mentioned, in addition to West Point being a kind of turning point, your grabbing an assignment in the Air Defense School as another one that was sort of building your confidence in your ability to present to the public. And that was further ratified by this guy from RCA offering you a job.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. Did two things for me at Fort Bliss. One, instructor duty, which gave me the confidence. You give me any material you got, and in short order I can get up before the public and make a sale for you. And the second is, it broadened my understanding of matters military by getting me immersed in a different subject matter in the military, which was air defense. And I didn't know anything about air defense, so I learned something.

And this was a new missile system, and it had radars and rockets and Army mechanisms and all that kind of stuff which I really wasn't familiar with. In a cannon artillery unit or even an Honest John unit, rocketry was rather simple, warhead was rather simple, weren't in much of a radar game except kind of battery radar. And so I learned a lot, stood me in good stead from a technical standpoint.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you know that it was a very dangerous thing not to have a battery command on your ticket?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. In those days, at the time that I went to Germany my brother was a captain. He was a captain for seven years.

DR. KIRKLAND: He was a lieutenant a lot shorter time than you were though, wasn't he?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. Now, I became a lieutenant for five years. So that stretch-out after the Korean War sort of got you lost in the perspectives of whether or not you would run out of time. In other words, if you know that you're going to be up for a board—I mean, every officer in the U.S. Army today, and since 1980 probably, could tell you, I got this amount of time for that amount of time, I got to get three things to get crammed into it. Follow me?

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: When I came along, five years as a lieutenant? I was looking around at people getting promoted to captain, seven more years to get promoted to captain? Plenty of time to do a lot of things. So in September of 1959 I'm now six years, I get promoted to captain. So my time horizon looking down-range to get promoted to major is another seven years.

DR. KIRKLAND: Another seven years. You got plenty of time.

GEN. THURMAN: I had a lot of time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Actually you had three years and three months or something.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. So now I finished the advanced course and I'm a captain. I go down and reject the business of going to the Honest John game at Orogrande. I got plenty of time. So going into the Hawk game was perfectly okay because I knew I'd be in a teaching time, and then I figured I'd be given a—

DR. KIRKLAND: You'd get a command.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I had a lot of time. I'd probably pick up a HAWK battery and go into what was called a HAWK Overseas package and get put into one of the HAWK units. That was my intention. Then I ran into the drunk, and I said, "Send me anywhere in the world." So when this guy came up and said, "We'll send you on a short tour"—he could have said I'm sending you to Korea. He said, "I'm going to send you on a short tour because we need somebody in Vietnam."

Then I looked at that as only one more year, so I would have been back from my overseas tour in '63 with only three and a half years' service as a captain. Plenty of time to get a battery. Plenty of time.

Now what happened then is, the board picked me up for an accelerated promotion to major.

DR. KIRKLAND: Irrespective of no battery.

GEN. THURMAN: Irrespective of no battery. They didn't give a damn about being a battery commander, boards didn't. So then you look around, and you say, I'm at West Point. I mean, somebody says, you're going to West Point and you're on the promotion list. So I'm out of time. There's no time to get a battery.

DR. KIRKLAND: I see how you were.

GEN. THURMAN: So then it's a matter of saying, well, I go to West Point and I'll spend my time up there, and then I'll go down to a division or whatever and get to be an S3 or a battalion exec, and I'll be back in mainstream. And I go to Leavenworth. Meanwhile, the time for promotion is getting compressed because we're now in the middle of the Vietnam War.

DR. KIRKLAND: Expansion, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: So then I look around and say, you know I'm out of that, and this guy wants to make me the deputy senior advisor of the regional force, popular force, and I have to stiff that. I need to get back to troops, but I want to go to troops in combat. I know if I don't go to troops in combat, I'm really hurting.

Well, I didn't know how long the war was going to last. I could have gone and been a battalion commander in CONUS for Germany or someplace and still gone to Vietnam as a battalion commander or whatever. But I wanted to go to Vietnam right out of Leavenworth because I had been away from troops since 1959, and this is '67. So I'm eight years away from troops. I know I got to go back to the troops. I got to go to troops; I want to go to troops in combat.

So then this turkey says, "You can't do that, you got to go be a senior advisor and there is a senior advisor course. Have it your way."

DR. KIRKLAND: Just give me a plane ticket.

GEN. THURMAN: Not going to do that. I'll do something else. Going to do something else. So to go back to your point, did I realize being a battery commander was a big problem, I'd say yeah. But I mean it was one of those things where there's always plenty of time.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you came out on the accelerated list, was that a big surprise by then?

GEN. THURMAN: Not to me.

DR. KIRKLAND: You knew you were doing well?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I mean, only when you don't come out on the list it's a big surprise. Everybody thinks they're doing better than they are. So the list came out and I was on it and I said, that's what I expected. When I didn't come out on the list from lieutenant colonel to colonel, that was a big surprise.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about from major to lieutenant colonel?

GEN. THURMAN: Time was so short that I was never in the secondary zone there. I was always in the primary. They kept squeezing the zone. So I never was in the secondary. I'm able to use that later on and remind people that I never was a secondary zone promotee to colonel, and I was a lackluster lout.

DR. KIRKLAND: But if you'd had a decent battery commander you'd had a—

GEN. THURMAN: If I'd had a decent battery commander or if I'd been a battery commander it might have been all right.

DR. KIRKLAND: I kind of interrupted you while you were talking about being chief of student activities on the staff of the commandant of cadets.

GEN. THURMAN: Cadet activities, yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: You said that gave you an opportunity to do things and that sort of expanded your horizons. Can you think of any of the things that happened that you did?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. Let me give you an example about that. General Michael Davison said to me when I took the job, when he ordered me into the job, when I took it. He said, “Your job is to provide activity for the cadets and keep them gainfully occupied from 3:30 on Friday afternoon until 6:30 on Sunday night as long as it’s not immoral or illegal.”

Now, he had, we had a blue book that had in it 50-plus cadet activities, everything from cadet chapel choir to the glee club to the fencing team, a whole gamut of activities, parachute activities, debating activities. A whole variety of activities.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have to supervise this whole bunch?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. So you see, and at that time the cadets’ ability to depart the military academy was slim, indeed, unless he was a member of one of these cadet activities. So on the one hand, you became an escape mechanism for the cadet. And on the other hand, they had legitimate interests to pursue and you were trying to assist them in pursuing those interests.

And as anybody who is around young people, several thousand of them, you have an enormous talent pool in that group of young men in those days. It was an expanding corps. It was growing in those days because we were expanding up to the 4,000 group.

So you look at the corps athletic squads and then you look at the cadet activities groups, and between the two of them were the people that wanted to excel either in a

team sport or an individual activity that had to get either on a corps squad or get into one of my activities in order to in some way fulfill their desired goals to express themselves in some manner other than academic affairs.

DR. KIRKLAND: Football team, soccer team at all under you too?

GEN. THURMAN: No. Football teams under corps support. Soccer team's under corps squad. So there were basketball, football, baseball, track, soccer, tennis—those things were corps squad.

DR. KIRKLAND: Intercollegiate?

GEN. THURMAN: Intercollegiate. C-O-R-P-S squad. Those are the intercollegiate activities, better said. It's intercollegiate activities.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is there another officer who had—you mentioned colonel, the director of athletics?

GEN. THURMAN: The Director of Athletics runs all that stuff. He was a full colonel at that time. Ray Murphy.

DR. KIRKLAND: He was one of the staff officers under the commandant like you were, or was he—

GEN. THURMAN: No. He was under the superintendent. He reported to the superintendent, and he was a full colonel. And of course he had big fiduciary responsibilities because he was handling all the money from gate receipts, ticket management, and all that kind of stuff. I was on the staff of the United States Corps Cadets. If you look at the West Point, it's structured as the Superintendent of the United States Military Academy, and underneath that are four agencies really—the post, the

director of athletics, the dean who handles all the academic affairs, and the commandant of cadets who handles all the other affairs.

And I'm on the staff of the Commandant of Cadets, who was Michael Davison. And the Superintendent at this time is James Lampert, L-A-M-P-E-R-T, who was the Corps of Engineers. Michael Davison had been a combat command commander in World War II, later would be the USAREUR Commander. Lampert was lieutenant general, Michael Davison was a brigadier.

So Davison says, you have license to do things for the corps according to the rules and regulations about which we administer around here. And the S1, the Personnel Officer of the Corps of Cadets at that time was then Major Bill Richardson who would later be a four-star general. And we had a very distinguished staff of guys who were running the U.S. Corps of Cadets.

But mine was this peculiar job, and so underneath my activities I had the Debate Council, I had the Dramatic Club, Dance Committee or whatever. Dramatic Club, Dance Committee, run the Hops Committee, you know all that kind of stuff. And then I had a bunch of sporting activities. I had the sailing team underneath me, I had the fencing team underneath me, I had the skydiving team underneath me. I had the rugby team underneath me.

Then I was responsible for all those guys doing their things, and I had an officer who would be responsible for that but I had jurisdiction and money ala the Director of Athletics had money. And he had coaches reporting to me, and I had coaches reporting to me, but the coaches were officers who were doing this on a part-time basis.

So, for example, the coach of the rugby team was the British Liaison Officer who was there. His name happened to be Major Peter Field. He'd later become a colonel commanding the parachute regiment at Aldershot in Great Britain. But Peter was the rugby team.

I'll give you three vignettes to explain what I would call the entrepreneurial opportunity that I was given at the Military Academy. I didn't understand it really like that. I look back on it and understand it better than I did. But Davison said, go run that stuff, so I ran it.

In the case of the rugby team, Peter Field came to me and said the national rugby championships would be held at South Bend, Indiana, and he'd like to participate because our team was clearly capable of winning.

DR. KIRKLAND: The tournament at South Bend?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, big time stuff at South Bend. I said, "Okay, it's going to cost a lot of money to go out there." He said, "I've called the Golden Knights and they've agreed to lend us their aircraft."

DR. KIRKLAND: That's the skydiving team?

GEN. THURMAN: That's the skydiving team of the U.S. Army from Fort Bragg, North Carolina. And I said, "Terrific." So I got all that arranged. He arranged and I arranged it, and I said, "I'd better give you an insurance policy." He said, "Oh, everything will be all right." I said, "No, no, we'll give you an insurance policy."

I had to have the cadets back at 6:30 on Sunday night. I said, "I'll give you a signed blank check, and if you have to put these guys on an airplanes or anything to get them back out of there why you sign the check and the check will be good for tickets." I said "I'll also give you leave blanks."

DR. KIRKLAND: In case the kids can't get back.

GEN. THURMAN: No, no. Because if you put them on leave, they can come at half-fare and I can save money doing that. So I said, "But you got to keep me advised of how you're doing in the tournament." So he called me up on Saturday noon and said, "We won our first two rugby matches, so we're moving on up the ladder and if everything goes right we'll play two more this afternoon and if that happens we'll be in the semifinals."

So I got a call on Saturday night. He said, "We're in the semifinals because we won two more, won four matches today." I said, "What time is the Sunday match?" He

said “One in the morning and one in the afternoon.” I said, “That is going to get us cramped trying to get back at 6:30 Sunday night.” He said, “Yeah, but he said we’re running hard and we can maybe win the national championships.” I said, “Call me at noon when you get done.”

So he called at noon and said, ‘Well we won, we’re in the finals.’ I said, “What time is the finals?” He said, “3:00.” Holy mackerel, I said, “That really made deep trouble here.” So I’m a major, he’s a major, supposed to be back at 6:30. Well, I know I can go to the superintendent because he told me, don’t do anything illegal or whatever and obey the rules. But he would have applauded the fact that we were going to be in the national championships, the finals. If we won, they’d really be very pleased about that.

So I said, “Okay, don’t default, you go ahead.”

DR. KIRKLAND: So you took the responsibility of all these guys being back late.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. And I didn’t check with anybody. I didn’t call the dean and I didn’t tell them jack shit because I learned early in life on that job, don’t ever ask questions.

DR. KIRKLAND: That somebody might say “no” to.

GEN. THURMAN: Where they can say no to it. This pays off even when I’m the CINC in Panama. So he says, “Oh, by the way, there are tornado warnings here.” I said, “Well that means the Golden Knights airplane won’t fly because it does not have a radar on board and they won’t fly that aircraft.”

So I said, “You will have to use the leave blanks I told you and go to Chicago, get on the airplanes, and you call me from Chicago and I will round up the cadets from the several airports which—put them on any airplane you can get them on at LaGuardia, JFK, or Newark and I’ll police them up.” So I said, “I’ll run an ops center in my office all night, and we’ll get them back.”

So he called me up at about 5:00 in the afternoon and said, “We didn’t win. We lost in the last two minutes 19 to 17 or whatever a rugby score is.” I said, “Okay, what’s going on?” He said, “I got three guys with broken limbs—one guy with a broken arm, one guy with a broken leg, one guy with a broken collarbone, and they are all in the Notre Dame infirmary.”

I said, ‘Well, the Golden Knights have crapped out on the airplane coming back on base with the tornados; go to Chicago. Put Al Raymond, who’s the number two guy, make him in charge of the cadets going to Chicago. And then you stay with the guys in South Bend until we see what their medical condition is and I will make arrangements to have the medevac aircraft come in there and pick them up, bring them back to West Point when you tell me they can be picked up.’”

So Raymond goes and we run this all-night jitney service down into New York’s three airports and get all these cadets back. So Al Raymond comes in about 4:00 in the morning and says, “Can I get a stay-back for the cadets so they don’t have to meet the 7:30 class?” I said, “Hell, no, you can’t get a stay-back. I mean, I’m already way exceeding my authority by not having the cadets there at 6:30, I can’t give you a stay-back.” So I said, “The cadets have to go to class.”

So first class is 7:30 in the morning. About 8:00 the Dean shows up to see the Commandant because the cadets are passing out in class, asleep in class. So the Commandant calls me up to his office and says, “What the hell is going on?” I told him this long story. He said, “Well, we came out number two in the nation, right?” I said, “Yeah.”

He said, “Well, you should have called me and I could have probably arranged for the dean to give them a stay-back or whatever it is. It’s not very good bringing them back at 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning.” I said, “I had to get them back in time for class. I didn’t think it was my authority to be giving them an excuse.” The dean, “That’s right, it was not your authority. They’re sleeping in class, that’s highly irregular.”

The dean was a guy named Genera, and Genera later turns out to be a good friend of mine, but he gave me an ass-chewing in there, and the Commandant gave me an ass-chewing about that.

And there was a little tension between the Commandant and the Dean about all that, but the Commandant was sticking up for me. I look back on that. I'm a major, I'm in there, got 40 cadets doing this. And, essentially I'm the Lone Ranger but the Commandant's sticking up for me.

So Peter Field—we finally get the cadets back in, I get a medevac plane in there and pick up these three guys. Peter Field comes in and I said, “Hey, listen, you get your very best bib and tucker on as a British officer and I want you to report to the Superintendent and tell the Superintendent how well these guys performed because,” I said, “I'm taking a lot of flak on this thing.”

So he goes up and reports to the Superintendent and he gives, “Jolly good guys, tremendous guys,” he says. “By the way, they were beaten by a group of people from Southern California.” He said, “They were lawyers and ex-graduates of UCLA and Southern California, all this kind of stuff.” He said, “So they were beaten by a group of people five years older than they were, all professional people, and all that kind of stuff.”

The Supe laid off. Break, break. Stream of letters begins to appear at West Point, telegrams appeared at West Point. Tremendous group of young men, the nation's finest, it was a distinct honor and a privilege to meet them on a field of combat.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is from the guys that beat them.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Said, “We can understand why the American Army is populated by such high-quality people and that were able to go this.” So I smell a rat now. So I go get Al Raymond who's my U.S. Army guy. I said, “Al, what the hell went on between South Bend and Chicago?”

“Oh,” he said, “the Southern California team asked us if we'd like to ride their buses since we were going to have to catch these planes out of there. So they had a couple of buses going to South Bend and he said three or four kegs of beer on each one of these buses.” He said, “Of course all the cadets got tanked up on the bus.”

So the point I'm making about that is, the guy that didn't have any initiative would take the easy way out. One, don't go to start with. Two, the weather's bad, come home.

DR. KIRKLAND: Come home now and default.

GEN. THURMAN: But I knew that one of the things is to get inside the commander's head.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. The intent.

GEN. THURMAN: And the Commander, in this case Davison, was a benevolent although authoritative commander. He was also benevolent when it came to taking care of cadets. And he knew that this was important to the cadets. So he would have wanted me to do that. I never asked him about that, because I was inside of his head, or at least I thought I was.

Okay, break-break. Davison departs. But, I go up to see Davison one day and I say, "The cadets want to have a bash in the officers' club in the cadet mess. And they want to have a buffet after the football games." He said, "Great idea." So I get with my mess hall guys and I say, "Look, I want to run a buffet over here for cadets and their dates and parents." Terrible place to eat up there. You couldn't go off-post and all that kind of stuff.

So this turned out to be a pretty good deal, and 20 minutes after the ball game fed the plebes. And then at 5:30 in the afternoon we had an open house buffet, bring dates in, bring mothers in, bring fathers in, pay a buck, have a great meal, get a chance to see the mess hall. And the cadets felt good about that.

So on a Monday morning I'm walking across from my BOQ, which is next to the officers mess up there, and I intersect the Superintendent who's walking from his quarters over to his office. I salute to General Lampert and said, "Good morning, General Lampert," and he said, "Good morning, Max." He knows who I am because I'm running this big activity game, and I'm well-known on the campus for running this.

He said, "I need to ask you a question." "Yes, sir." "Did I see women in the mess hall Saturday afternoon?" I said, "You certainly did, sir. Every Saturday afternoon we run a buffet after the football game, 20 minutes after the game, feed the plebes without dates,

and then 5:30 we'd open a buffet up, charge people." I said, "We fed 1,800 people in there, charged them a buck, we made \$1,800 for the mess."

Lampert was about my size, cold white hair. He looked at me and said, "Major, next time you change a tradition at the Military Academy, would you kindly let me in on it?" I said, "All the way, sir. Yes, sir." So I went straight to my office and walked straight up to Davison's office and said, "If you don't get a buzzer in the next five minutes you better get over and see the Superintendent because he has taken umbrage at the fact that we're feeding women in the mess hall."

About that time the buzzer rang, and Davison walked over to the Superintendent's office, and everything was copacetic. I mean, after he saw me. But there was tension between Davison and the Superintendent because Davison had been there when Lampert had arrived, so Davison was king of the hill. And Lampert sort of was a little bit miffed about that, you know, strength. Davison was a very strong-minded man as evidenced by the fact that he rises to be a four-star general, and you don't get to be one unless you're fairly strong-minded and willing to take things under your toe.

But Davison hadn't even cleared that with him. So the Superintendent felt a little nonplussed that this tradition was being broken by this major. Obviously Davison was endorsing what I was doing and I'd cleared it with him, but this is one of those things where Davison clearly backed me up. So that then gave me greater license to do more stuff.

So when Davison left we got a much more milder-mannered Commandant, and the Superintendent stayed the same, and therefore the Superintendent began to put the squeeze on the Commandant a little bit. But nonetheless I had a great deal of authority and operated with same.

And I said to the cadets one day, "We're going to have a ring dance here and you pass out rings. Why don't we have wine in the mess hall and the cadets will toast the colors and toast the Military Academy and all that?" The cadets said, "Wine in the mess hall, we've never had wine in the mess hall." I said, "You haven't?" The Commandant said, "We're going to have wine in the mess hall. There's going to be a Dining-Out; that's what we're going to have; and present the rings and we're going to have wine on the tables."

He said, “I’d better go clear that with the Superintendent.” So he cleared that with the Superintendent.

So I brought that in to that. I was on the board of governors of the West Point Army Mess who was losing money, officers’ mess. And got cadets admitted as first class men so they could take guests over to the officers’ club and suddenly made money. So he gave me the opportunity to be an adventuresome major. And I don’t know whether I recounted that story with Ray Murphy, but the fencing team on the last go-around—

DR. KIRKLAND: I read that in your other out-brief. That’s very exciting.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. But that got me a job—

DR. KIRKLAND: As a battalion commander, yeah.

GEN. THURMAN: In Vietnam. So you see, West Point, while I chafed at not getting back to troops and getting back to Vietnam because we didn’t know how long the war would go on, West Point turns out to give me the lever to overcome the fact I hadn’t been a battery commander because I impress a guy at West Point who counts later. I didn’t know he would, and he knows I’m going to be a good battalion commander. He don’t give a damn what the record says about whether or not I’ve had four other jobs or not. He says, “I want that guy to be a battalion commander because I know what that guy can do.” He’s seen me operate.

So looking back on that, running these 50 clubs and all of them going everywhere, breakfast and doing things all over America and trying to represent it and run these professors who are out directing these activities.

DR. KIRKLAND: They were all volunteers in their spare time.

GEN. THURMAN: They were all volunteers. Yes, trying to support them, gave me—I look back now and see it’s a confidence-builder at Fort Bliss, Texas. Off to an early stage of war in Vietnam as a captain. Then back at West Point and being given a

substantial, on a job nobody would apply for, but a job that as a major gave me enormous exposure, visibility, authority, responsibility. I look back at that. People say, “What kind of job was that?” I said, “I had the number four job at West Point. The Superintendent had the number one job, the Commandant had number two, the Director of Athletics had number three, and I had the number four job as a major at West Point.”

And learning staff procedures. You had to deal with the transportation facilities of America. I dealt with people all over America. Trying to get these things arranged, laid on and all that kind of stuff.

I look back on that now and see that was a formative piece of experience.

The other thing it did, it solidified my opportunity to get a job in combat to command a battalion. It could have turned out that if I hadn't built up those bona fides that way then, in a different way, I'd be the deputy senior advisor of the regional force, popular forces. So it was a very salutary experience, had the right guy, Colonel Michael Davison. Been the wrong guy there or a different guy—

Then the second guy, if I'd worked for the second guy first it would have been a different proposition because he was less adventuresome. By the time I get to the second Superintendent, who's a guy named Bennett, Bennett finds out who I am—I don't know exactly how he'd get my reputation but Bennett gives me two specific tasks to do, one sort of humorous when he gives me the class of 1915 and tells me to go out and satisfy their desire to give a gift to the Military Academy. And the second is, he gives me the Up With the People Group.

Do you recall back in the '60s there was a group of young people sponsored by the Gillette Company called Up With People, Up With America? It was a youthful organization. They sang. There was a big youth group that sang and had great music.

DR. KIRKLAND: A national thing?

GEN. THURMAN: They traveled all over America, and they wanted to come to West Point. They were actually a proselytizing organization. We didn't know that at the time, but turns out they were.

DR. KIRKLAND: For religion?

GEN. THURMAN: Yep. But Don Bennett [GEN. Donald V. Bennett] is now the Superintendent. Then I had my famous fencing escapade with Don Bennett, and he backs me up. So I'm getting backing from very senior people. So it makes me very comfortable to work as a young officer with very senior people.

I look at generals of that time, one and three-star generals who were my immediate superiors, and I'm comfortable working with those guys. They seemed to respect the kind of work I do, so it gives me an enormous comfort index that many other people didn't have enough to.

You know, one of the things that, if you tried to do a laydown about strategic leadership, or how you develop strategic leaders, we haven't come to any of that yet, but one of the ways in which you develop leaders is you give them the opportunity to work with leaders who are already ensconced as leaders. Either as their executive officers, aides de camp, or their immediate assistants. They get a chance to vicariously observe and participate in high level decision making. They take on information about that which gives them the capability to operate at that level that other people don't have.

DR. KIRKLAND: They learn what the processes are.

GEN. THURMAN: They learn the considerations, the process, thought opportunities about that and it substantially broadens a person to be able to have an opportunity to do that. I had such a job like that as a major. I mean it's a dog running job. Nobody would solicit it but it turns out that the job was a very broadening opportunity for a sort of narrow gauged guy at that particular time.

DR. KIRKLAND: You made it so. I wonder if all the activity staff officers made it that way?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't know how you'd get that. It is sort of outrageous for a captain to call up his assignment office and say move me out today.

DR. KIRKLAND: It is sort of outrageous for you to go to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and say I don't want to be in the Ordnance Corps. That's what I meant when I said that I don't know how you got away with it.

GEN. THURMAN: I don't either.

DR. KIRKLAND: But I think it's wonderful that you did.

GEN. THURMAN: No, I don't know either. I am not sure how you get away with it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Partly it's the confidence I think that you said even if you were wrong assert position with authority.

GEN. THURMAN: I worked as a kid in high school. I worked 120 hours every two weeks, a payday.

DR. KIRKLAND: 60 hours per week; that's in high school?

GEN. THURMAN: Uh-huh

DR. KIRKLAND: That is the dairy company?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I think there is something about working and running something. And I ran something as a 16-year-old kid, 18-year-old kid—I ran something. I think that gives you a certain amount of confidence that you can do that. Now whether you can go out and be an entrepreneur and set up your own business, I think that is a different level. But inside of a structure which that company, this dairy manufacturing operation was a structured environment, and inside of that I thrived and earned respect and ran a team of people even as a high schooler and all through college. So working was

not hard for me. So then when you put me in a structured environment like the military, although I am not wise about everything in the military, carrying out the functions inside the military seemed to me to be pretty easy to do. So if you told me to go out and set up a business outside, it might be more difficult for me to do it. But inside this overarching structure, carrying out responsibilities, exerting initiative seems to me to be perfectly plausible to go do that. Why some do and why some don't, I don't know.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is one of the things that does seem to be special about you is that you are willing to use what is coming out of the inside of your head and sort of integrate it with what is going on in the environment and come up with a new solution that makes eminently good sense. Such as sending the rugby team to the nationals.

GEN. THURMAN: I don't know that I was a very smart integrator in those days. I think in my own view I look at the association with DePuy later as a lieutenant colonel as the time in which I begin to excel in integration, synthesis. I think that is the long suit.

(End Tape 4, Side A)

(Begin Tape 4, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: I think the last time we left off, we left off about the time I went out to command a battalion, right?

Dr. KIRKLAND: We have not done anything about that yet.

GEN. THURMAN: The DePuy story is a story in asking for a job with him and being denied a job for which I am not qualified again, because I do not have an advance degree. I am never qualified for the job I am getting. But, finally, I get the job. And then, within a month, I am off on a sort of a detached project for him. And then I get one of these mentoring deals, cause I am working with the Secretary of the Army for eight hours a week. Spending a whole day or four hours or two hours three days a week; spending eight hours a week with the Secretary of the Army over a period of three months is an uncommon event for a lieutenant colonel unless you're his executive officer. And even then, it may not be substantive. But now I am in the substantive business with the Secretary of the Army. His name is Stanley Resor for whom I have enormous respect and affection. And the interaction between DePuy and Resor and me made me a different person in terms of understanding the secondary and tertiary effects of things and the inter-relationship of things in the Army or in national security affairs. So doing that for four months for Resor and then doing that for another year and a half for DePuy before I get promoted to colonel makes me a different guy. I mean it really makes me a different guy as far as the Army is concerned.

(Break in dialogue)

GEN. THURMAN: ...so he gives me the famous mission is clean them up. So we get running convoys all the middle of the night. We get sixteen out of eighteen up. So he looks good the next morning on the deal. A couple of week pass, we're now in about the second or third month of my tenure as the Executive Officer. I said to the

Group Commander, "I want to take a couple of days holiday. Two days off." He said, "Where are you going?" I said that I am going over to the 25th Infantry Division and get myself a battalion. Now my brother was the DIVARTY Commander of the 25th Infantry Division. But he could see daylight that he was getting ready to leave. His tour was about up. So I went over to the 25th Infantry Division at Cu Chi and interviewed with the Chief of Staff of the division and the Division Commander. They agreed that they would have me as a battalion commander. Now I had begun to fulfill the responsibilities now as outlined by the MAC-V Commander that I was at least back with troops and back in the artillery and was an executive officer. Once in theater, you could sort of ameliorate those four things they levied on MILPERCEN. So I came back and said to Colonel Norris that I had been accepted by the division commander. And I told him that I'd extend and stay whatever time it took to take the battalion—which would be after my brother left because they obviously could not have nepotism in the show like that. So I don't know about a week or ten days or two weeks later, Norris said to me one day, "I am going to Long Binh. I am going to take a day of R&R." So he went to Long Binh and came back the next day and he said, "You are going to take command of the 35th Artillery," which was the local battalion away back. The 2/35th was a 155 self-propelled. Of course, I'd come up in the airborne and was a 105 guy and the 25th Division had...

GEN. THURMAN: (Interview in progress)... 105s so I was very conversant with 105s. So I said, "Well, the commander of the 2nd and 35th doesn't know he's leaving because he's on R&R in Hawaii." He said, "When he comes back you're going to be the commander, and he's going to Long Binh and—"

DR. KIRKLAND: Is he being fired?

GEN. THURMAN: No. He hadn't been fired. Just Norris apparently—it's called a bird in the hand is worth 14 in the bush in terms of he knew me now. And so he knew I was going to leave and go get a battalion and therefore he would rather me to be a battalion commander than take somebody he never saw before. And so he'd gone to Long

Binh and made arrangements with the Two Field Force Artillery Commander to move out Al Gendron. Al Gendron was the battalion commander. And so he did.

DR. KIRKLAND: Al had done his six months or whatever, whatever you're allowed to do?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. And so I took over the battalion and this is about a month before Tet. And so I was the battalion commander, and it was a very unusual battalion. I only massed the battalion. Artilleryman looks at how many times do you mass the battalion, and I massed it twice in seven months because the three batteries were farmed out. One was farmed out to the Australians, one was farmed out to the 9th Division, and the third one was farmed out to Long Binh to protect the northern approaches to Long Binh.

They maneuvered all that time but, in the main, one was located south down towards the 9th Division south of Saigon, My Tho, Can Tho, areas down in there; and one was north of Saigon, operated with 101st, 25th sometimes; and one was essentially assigned to the Australians.

So my job was, one, I was the battalion commander located in Xuan Loc, so I had the domain around supporting the ARVN division that was there and also located there was the 175 battery. And I had that battery, and me, one of my batteries in and out. So the long-range fires were cooking up north. I supported the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

So I got a variety of opportunities to see a variety of commanders who operated in and out of the area east of Saigon, a little bit north of Saigon and south of it. Battery commanders were essentially autonomous, and I had to go out and see to them and see that we had ammunition and all that kind of stuff.

But in the main, I had to redispense those batteries to support the guys that they were supporting. And so I had to keep up with the Australians, what they were doing and their battle plan. I had to keep up with the 101st what they were doing.

That's where I met Dave Grange [MG David L. Grange] for the first time. He was a battalion commander in the 101st. General Fred Davison was down in the Delta; 9th Division, Fulton [LTG William B. Fulton], Emerson [GEN Henry E. Emerson] and those

guys were down in the Delta. So I got an opportunity to observe a lot of people that worked in the battle plan.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did the Australians have a brigade?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did they have their own direct support battalion?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, they did.

DR. KIRKLAND: So your battery would be reinforcing it?

GEN. THURMAN: I was reinforcing everybody.

DR. KIRKLAND: Would the reinforced outfit assume responsibility for rations and ammunition and intelligence?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I did it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Really. My God. You must have had trucks going everywhere.

GEN. THURMAN: Had ammo going everywhere, trucks going everywhere, diesel going everywhere, maintenance going everywhere.

DR. KIRKLAND: Secured all those convoys. You had a helicopter?

GEN. THURMAN: No. It got assigned to me from Two Field Force Artillery every day. Came that close to getting killed in it one day when the tail rotor fell off after I got out of it. It took off to go back home and the tail rotor fell off, and it killed the

warrant officer driving that airplane. The next day one came in just like it, OH-6 came in just like it, sort of that bubble thing that has the upper boom in the back.

So I told the guy, "Shut the engine down and you and I are going to inspect this airplane." Warrant officer, so he said, "What do you mean we're going to inspect it? I've pre-flighted it before." I said, "Yeah, get out and shut it down."

So I said, "Now the last one that flew in here killed a guy yesterday." So I said, "We're going to inspect this one real close here." So I'd go around, and I looked down in the boom and I said, "And what are these cracks doing in here in the boom, metal fatigue?" He said "There aren't supposed to be any cracks."

I said, "You didn't inspect this very well." Called up the Two Field Force Aviation Officer. "You get down here now. Find out whether your guys know what the hell they're looking for here, because I'm not getting in this one and have the boom come off this while I'm in it."

But I had a helicopter every day, flew all over the jungle.

Had two sergeant majors in that outfit. First sergeant major I fired because we got attacked one day, and I looked around for the sergeant major who's normally helping me out on the perimeter, and he wasn't around. And he was shackled up downtown in Xuan Loc. And when the mortar attack began, the ground assault began, why he didn't show up for duty. So I cashiered him. I went after him by the way myself.

DR. KIRKLAND: Found him in the shack?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. And the second guy was a guy named Theriac. And Theriac was a bachelor like I was. He was just a wonderful guy, great big burly guy, and Theriac and I became very great friends. Later, he's the guy stays overseas all the time, stays with troops. I tried to get him to become the sergeant major of the 2nd Division when my brother commanded the 2nd Division. He wouldn't take him. He was the DIVARTY Sergeant Major but he wouldn't take him. The division sergeant major, didn't want him to be too far away from the troops. He and I were great pals, great buds, so we kept that stuff going.

We had a great group of battery commanders—Shane Pennywell was a black officer who later went on to be the PMS down at Prairie View A&M and then stayed at Prairie View A&M and became the assistant to the president. He's still down there. He's doing a terrific job.

A guy named Gunther was a battery commander, and he worked with people down at the Delta. And he was a terrific big guy, German guy, speaks fluent German, is German. And he later worked for me in TRADOC as my German Liaison Officer. And third guy, I'm having a blow-down on his name right now, but worked for me later at Fort Sill when I was TRADOC commander. He was at Fort Sill, working in the combat developments. They were all three excellent battery commanders. And their job obviously was to get along with the people they supported. And we did. And it's contrary to mud puddles. And what was the other item?

DR. KIRKLAND: It's your ass if you kill your own men.

GEN. THURMAN: Kill your own men. Their view was it's your ass if you don't do what the supporting artillery guy wants you to do in support of his troops. You better be ready to shoot a lot of bullets. Gunther had a case down in the Delta where they fired some outrageous number of rounds, like 3,000 rounds in a 24-hour day period, 155 howitzer, just blew the hydraulics out of them and all kinds of stuff. And just a terrific action down there. He kept the guns going and finally he was firing so much he called one out and let it cool down and cycle it back in. Excellent group of battery commanders.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about your headquarters battery commander?

GEN. THURMAN: I can't even tell you what his name was. Dispersed operation.

DR. KIRKLAND: You had a local defense responsibility apparently.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Without any artillery necessarily to back it up?

GEN. THURMAN: Didn't have any short-range artillery. I had 175s. They're not very good for low-order stuff. I made all the guys go into a killer junior mode, which I had known some 105 units that got into that. But 155s didn't really get into that. But the killer junior games, so I gave every one of my section chiefs a card that had the lowest fuse setting on it, lowest quadrant you could set on it, and every time you pulled into position you had to fire that thing in the nearest tree line around you to make sure anybody was looking at your position knew that you had blown them away.

DR. KIRKLAND: Several rounds around the perimeter?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, I mean really close-in stuff. You get a base plate coming in off of a 155 which it will come back on you. You have to watch what you're doing. But I'd fire 155 at ranges of maybe 300 meters straight on with a fuse cut to nothing so you'd get an airburst at 300 meters outside position. Well there's enough brisance in the round to send a base plate back into your position area. So you had to know what you were doing about that. But that gave great confidence to the troopers in that.

So I felt good about being a battalion commander over there. And being a 155 guy then gave me a new weapon. Now I've been a 105 guy and then a 155 guy and HAWK guy, Honest John guy. So I felt better, more confident as an artillery officer by virtue of being given a different weapon to learn something about it, because I didn't really know much about a 155, especially an SP outfit.

DR. KIRKLAND: M109s?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I recall the inspector general, I had one of the first IGs ever to come into Vietnam.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, that's all you need.

GEN. THURMAN: It was after Tet. They decided they'd bring an IG team in. So the IG team came in and said, "We're going to have to flunk your battalion on the IG." I said, for what? He said, "Well, you have not maintained your nuclear capability." All 155 unit is supposed to be nuclear capable. I said, "You're right, I haven't."

I said, "Furthermore, I have no intention of doing that." He said, "Well, you'll need to send some of your people to school in Korea." I said, "Write that up big. I mean really write that up, and let's go up and talk to the group commander."

And the next thing I knew the IG comes back in and says, "Oh, by the way, we're going to have to flunk, deadline some of your five-tons." I said, "You are?" I said, "What's wrong with them?" He said, "Well you got welded steering arm brackets on the hydraulic steering things." I said, "Is that right?" He said, "Yeah, the steering arm brackets been cracked and they been re-welded, and they got 10 tons worth of ammunition; they're 5-ton trucks but they're grossly overloaded."

I said, "You go ahead and write that up and I'll take that gig." He said, "Well, we're going to deadline them." I said, "You can go ahead and deadline them."

I'd tell the guy, "Get going, drive the damned vehicles, don't give me any shit here, go out and do your dirty work."

So it was great sport. Now I missed being a DS artillery guy because I thought I knew something about DS artillery, direct support artillery, having been a guy who had been in a division for five years. And I missed that. And I'd felt badly about that, but the opportunity came, I had a certain amount of loyalty to Colonel Norris and he wanted me to do that, and my first loyalty was to him because I was part of his organization. So I couldn't walk away from it.

He's still living. He lives here in Washington somewhere, or Virginia. He and Denno both, so two guys I hadn't done, and my commanders in Vietnam are both here in town.

DR. KIRKLAND: Tell me more about that ground attack on your headquarters position, mortar attack.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we had sporadic mortar attacks come in. My ear was calculated to hear mortars.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's what a calibration was?

GEN. THURMAN: You hear all kinds of background noises, 175 round, but there's a distinctive pop of a mortar when it leaves the tube. And I knew they were firing anywhere from 1,500 to 2,500 meters out. And that would give the 82 millimeter mortars, and I knew that would give you enough time to leave my hootch if I didn't put on any shoes.

I always slept in my shorts so I could get to the bunker by the time the rounds landed. So they would hose us down on occasion, and then on several occasions they had a ground. I was there on one ground attack. And maybe a company of local VC that were trying to see whether or not we'd be able to respond to them. So we had a good perimeter defense and—

DR. KIRKLAND: What all was inside your perimeter besides your headquarters battery?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we had a headquarters battery in there, and we had a perimeter that included positions for either a 105 or a 155 battery. The 175s were located in a different compound. And the headquarters of the 54th Artillery group was in yet another compound, so there were several compounds in this provincial capital. And essentially it was the battalion headquarters, service battery headquarter that is.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have any artillery that could fire in support of you?

GEN. THURMAN: Only on occasion. We did have, on occasion we would have some Dusters in there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah. So you were dependent on your own small arms essentially to defend—

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, machine guns, small arms.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did you organize that? Did you organize it, or did the headquarters battery command organize it?

GEN. THURMAN: The Exec organized it. He's in charge of the perimeter. I was on the road all the time. My unit wasn't there. My view was, I had the responsibility for two things. One, this may seem a little crass here, but my duty was two-fold.

One, was to frequently, as if I were a direct support artillery officer, visit the unit to which I had my batteries attached to find out, one, what their plans were so that I would be able to support them and, two, were they getting the requisite support from my group, my batteries.

And my second responsibility was to the battery commander to enable him to get the necessary resources to do his job with, whether it was ammo or parts or people or stroking him and telling him he was doing a good job, or whatever. So I spent all my time on the road.

So I gave the exec the mission of running the business associated with headquarters compound, the supply and maintenance game from the headquarters standpoint. And my exec became a lieutenant general. So he must have done all right—Ed Soyster [LTG Harry Edward Soyster]. And the S3—now the S3 had a function not of coordinating the batteries out there but he had a function of coordinating the artillery support that was in the Xuan Loc area.

DR. KIRKLAND: Which is constantly changing.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, the 175s sort of stayed there, but the other batteries rotated through there was 105 or 155s. They came through. And sometimes there'd be a

battery there and sometimes not. But he would be responsible for the Xuan Loc counter—better said, the H&I firings, harassing and interdiction fires and the like.

So we had a very decentralized operation. The exec was essentially in charge of the headquarters compound including its security and perimeter along with the sergeant major. But it was really more he and the headquarters commandant ran that, and the sergeant major and I were on the road all the time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Didn't your battery commanders change while you were there? You were there for eight months, weren't you?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I was there for eight months, but the principal commanders are the two I identified, and I'll think of the third guy shortly. Yeah. I had an influx of headquarters service battery guys, and I don't remember their names because they were remotely interested in what I was doing. The principal guys were Gunther, Shane Pennywell, and the third guy's blow-down.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about your lieutenants? Did you get to know them much, or were they the battery commanders' problem?

GEN. THURMAN: Not much interaction with the lieutenants.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have any liaison officers permanently resident with the reinforced units?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. But I can't tell you what their names were. I had a liaison officer. What I'd do was I'd assign the liaison officer with the battery commander.

Might get around to one battery commander at a time. Distances, what they were, but I'd try to get to one or two a day.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's important. Another thing that's important, I'm astonished that you said the reinforced units did not provide logistical support. You had

to do it, which meant the trucks must have been strung out. You must have been going all the time and you must have got into a lot of trouble because that was not a happy time to be running trucks around that particular part of the world.

GEN. THURMAN: It was, stuff is on the move. In other words, the chow came from the locals, but all the repair parts, mechanics and that kind of stuff we had to move it all around. So it was a very decentralized operation in order to get the business done.

DR. KIRKLAND: Understand.

GEN. THURMAN: And the best way to do that was to reinforce the battery commanders who were all very able guys, and then get out and try to help them every way we could. So it's not as if the reinforcing guys didn't help them out; the reinforced guys didn't help them out and they certainly did on food. But all the parts. I mean, we were normally with light units, and they didn't have our kind of parts, and tracks and all that kind of stuff. So you couldn't depend upon them for maintenance support. We had to do our own.

DR. KIRKLAND: Probably weren't more than three or four battalions in Vietnam.

GEN. THURMAN: There was one in the—the howitzer batteries were located in the 11th ACR, and there was a 155 outfit in the 27th group and one in ours. That was it. 155. Now of course all the eight-inch, 175s were SP as well.

DR. KIRKLAND: There are a lot of parts specific to the 109.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: You probably flew those around sometimes if they were small enough to carry in your helicopter?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we made it. I mean, my helicopter, I didn't carry any parts. It carried me around in it and a sergeant major, and that's about it. That's all you could handle. But if we had some we'd order up the Huey and move it around or a Chinook if we had to move it around in a Chinook. If we didn't, we moved it around by truck.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have any problems with that? Did you get trucks mined or ambushed?

GEN. THURMAN: No, don't recall. I recall losing, I believe, only two guys to hostile action. That's what I recall. You're talking about killed, not wounded.

DR. KIRKLAND: Attacks on the fire bases?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's hard to know where to begin to ask questions of the kinds of decisions you had to make. I'll start with, you worked for Colonel Norris, whom you knew.

GEN. THURMAN: Um-hum, and he left you alone as long's you're doing—he didn't interfere with running the battalion. And again, looking at it, it was quite autonomous, which suited my style nicely. It wasn't a question of Colonel Norris checking with me four times a day or telling me what to do. He didn't do that. His 3 might call up and ask me some questions or whatever, but essentially I was out doing what I was supposed to be doing to support the people I was told to support.

Now he would tell me who to support, like we're going to move from supporting the 9th Division to supporting the 101st to go to the 193rd or whatever it was. But in the main those were the kind of mission-type orders. And over to you, Charlie. And you go

figure it out and tell him where you're going to move and report back. So it was a very autonomous operation.

So that fitted me well.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was there much point in having groups headquarters under those circumstances other than give people jobs?

GEN. THURMAN: Groups were, looking back on it, groups were there because groups had come with—you get three or four battalions, you get a group. Rules of force structure. But because of the decentralized nature of artillery support like in the (fumma?) group, and because it was farmed out, a group didn't function like a group would in Germany where a group actually is in the business of controlling fires on a day-to-day basis or acting as an alternative headquarters for a DIVARTY which is supporting it. None of that happened in my jurisdiction.

DR. KIRKLAND: The crash program to bring the guns up when you were group exec was a useful kind of support for the groups because apparently you made extraordinary efforts to get the parts that they needed.

GEN. THURMAN: Means battery battalion commanders didn't do their duty.

DR. KIRKLAND: They could have done it.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. They could have done the same damned thing I did, which is go to heroic means to get it done, because the guy wanted to get it done. The other thing I did when I was a group executive officer, I hired a bright, young lieutenant who came from the gunnery department of Fort Sill, Oklahoma. And he was my gunnery assurance guy for the group.

He went out and made sure all the groups knew what they were doing, all the battalions and batteries knew what they were doing about fire direction. His name is

Brickman, Jim Brickman, and he's now a brigadier general. He was a lieutenant then. He's doing quite well. He's 18th Airborne Corps Artillery commander.

But hired the guy when he came through the pool, because he'd come straight from Fort Sill as a guy who had been out in the gunnery game running it on a day-to-day basis, teaching it on a day-to-day basis, I jerked him out of the system and said, "Once you get my gunnery assurance program going right then I will send you down and you can be a battery exec," which he did.

But I got him started on it. That's the kind of thing you could do at the group level that would aid and abet the guys at the bottom of the pile. But, in the main, it was a decentralized operation.

The other thing I did, I mentioned this before, we got a fourth battalion in there, 155.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. Were you in the group then?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I was the group exec. I was the guy who issued the order to cross-level it, which was probably the worst thing, the worst thing I've ever done under orders in my life, but I didn't understand it then, to break up a perfectly good outfit that had come trained together, worked together, fired together, shot together, bade goodbye to their families together, for the purpose of us breaking it up when it got to Europe. And I've been meaning to go research that. That's worthy of writing an article.

DR. KIRKLAND: That is, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: So that's one of my projects to go check the archives and have somebody show me why Westmoreland directed that to be done, if he did.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah. Where did the order come from?

GEN. THURMAN: Or whether that was USARV, you know U.S. Army Vietnam order. Who did that? Because that was really stupid.

DR. KIRKLAND: Actually it screwed up the other three battalions.

GEN. THURMAN: Screwed up the other three battalions and screwed up that battalion, and it made it easy on personnel managers back in the States.

DR. KIRKLAND: Never can learn that their job is to serve.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, they never learned that cohesion is important. They talk about it, but they won't make it happen. A bureaucracy the size of the Army has an ongoing institutionalization process that the longer it is entrenched the more it got handed down by Elihu Root. Therefore it's immutable. And you got to root out stuff like that. And that came down.

Now whether the MILPERCEN did that and ordered that done to some personnel toad in Saigon who knuckled onto it, or whether the Chief of Staff of the Army made that decision, Howard A. Johnston or somebody else made that decision, and then we all went out and did that—I don't know how in the hell that got done. But it's one of those things I have to research; otherwise, it's going to stick in my craw.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, if I can help, I'd be glad to.

GEN. THURMAN: I need to go to Hal Nelson [BG Harold Nelson] and get a little research done about him. Punch files and see how you can get into their documentaries over there in the Historical branch.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's certainly the place to get it done. If it doesn't work, let me know. I feel like I'd like to ask some more questions about Vietnam, but I don't have them. I think they'll probably come up later.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, a couple of observations about it. One is, except for an occasional guy like this sergeant major who went off and got shackled up and he didn't

calculate that as part of being—he didn't do that willfully on the night they were going to attack, I don't think.

But nonetheless, with exception of something like that, that was the exception. I didn't have any of this fragging stuff and, to my knowledge, I don't remember a single guy getting hauled up on dope pushing or smoking pot or whatever. Now this is the year '67, '68, November '67. I don't remember, I don't know any of that stuff. That's beyond my pale.

So my experience in Vietnam was a sheltered experience. That is to say, I wasn't with an infantry unit. And so guys who were doing search and destroy operations and that kind of stuff, I wasn't directly associated with that. So I was supporting units who were out doing that. Let's see if I can put this in the right context.

If you go down and look at the Delta where I'd go down and check my battery down there, they might be out doing an operation like that. But because I didn't live it on a day-to-day basis with that organization, I didn't get this morose feeling that the strategy was all bad because I wasn't intimately connected with the strategy in that region long enough to get a sense of its futility.

I mean, I would go in and do business with the DIVARTY Commander in the 9th ID or whoever we were doing business with. So I guess I really didn't get the sense of futility that many of my colleagues might have gotten at the same time. So, on balance, I came back from that as a guy that felt like he'd gone and done his business, felt reasonably well about it.

So I know there's a lot of frustration from a lot of people in my age group. I'm not sure either they had it at the time. It may be upon reflection that they thought they had more problems with the strategy, et cetera, the non-strategy, as opposed to what they were doing at that particular moment.

But then again, I'm saying to you that although my guys were firing a tremendous number of rounds, I didn't suffer the casualties that they suffered, and I wasn't in a division on a day-to-day basis to hear the daily orders and go through the daily travail that a direct support artillery guy might have gone through had he been assigned to it.

So I got a little bit different view about the war. In other words, I wasn't a disgruntled guy coming back. I thought I'd done what I was supposed to do and what I'd set out to do. I'd set out to command troops and I had. So I felt good about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you talk to soldiers in the batteries?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: What kind of sense did you get?

GEN. THURMAN: I got the sense that they were dynamite kids doing what they were asked to do and were perfectly good people. I mean, there wasn't a discipline problem. I don't recall them courts-marshalling anybody for that purpose, for being disgruntled or whatever. It was very high-quality young people that were working for us. They may not have all been highly educated or anything like that, but their quality of service was outstanding.

In other words, I never got this malaise or downtrodden or downbeat or whatever it may be that other people might have gotten. But again, I say I was sort of in a unique kind of unit.

DR. KIRKLAND: I never got it either. I thought, oh my God, I must have been unbelievably naive. I wouldn't know what a guy who was stoned looked like because I'd never seen one. And I was in the infantry division and then the 24th Corps Artillery out near Phu Bai. But I don't know if there was much of that going on in '67, '68.

GEN. THURMAN: I didn't see it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you do civic action out of your headquarters by any chance in a local area?

GEN. THURMAN: Did some MEDCAPs [Medical Civic Action Program], that kind of stuff. I lived in a provincial capital. So I mean my civic action, see it's not like having a big unit to go do that. I had some medical stuff I did, but that was about it.

DR. KIRKLAND: You were in a big population area.

GEN. THURMAN: Relatively. It wasn't like being in a little village. It was a pretty good-sized town.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you court-martial some people?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't recall court-martialing anyone.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about the sergeant major?

GEN. THURMAN: No. Fired him and issued him a zippo on his efficiency report.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have pretty much 90 percent or 80 percent personnel strength most of the time?

GEN. THURMAN: Far as I can recall it was 100 percent, good strength. Never had a problem about the people.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about spare parts?

GEN. THURMAN: I never had a problem with that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was that because you got on people or because the system was working?

GEN. THURMAN: The system worked. I was reasonably close to Long Binh. That's where all the parts came in. So if I had a problem I'd send somebody to Long Binh and get the part. So it was a full function on my part from Long Binh. It was easy to get to and that's where the center of parts were. And if I had a howitzer that needed fixing, I towed it in there—if I couldn't fix it myself or my people couldn't fix it. But I don't recall ever being severely constrained by parts or mechanics or by general numbers of people.

DR. KIRKLAND: And ammunition? Did you have enough when you needed it?

GEN. THURMAN: Always had enough. The unit was never deprived of the resources that it needed, either people or capital goods or repair parts.

DR. KIRKLAND: Fortification materials, too, I guess were—

GEN. THURMAN: Had a rule. You couldn't sleep until you dug yourself in and covered it with a piece of corrugated, the piping you used, culvert material. And you covered the culvert material with three sandbags. You couldn't sleep until you did that. That's a house rule. Didn't lose anybody with mortars either, to incoming mortars.

DR. KIRKLAND: While you were there, did you come out on the War College list? Is that—

GEN. THURMAN: No. In fact I came back and I was posted to DCSPER work in the ROTC game, and that was in November of '68, and the War College list didn't come out until the following February or January. So, no, I didn't have any idea whether I'd be on the War College list. It would have been very presumptuous because I just got out of Leavenworth.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah, I know, but you did have very close—

GEN. THURMAN: I got out of Leavenworth in '67, went to Vietnam at the end of '67, November, after my six weeks of Language School, to be a ruff puff. And went straight to DCSPER. Then in November of '68 I got selected and went to the War College in '69, graduated in '70. So I had about seven months duty on the Army staff as a DCSPER Toad.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's where a lot of things got started?

GEN. THURMAN: I was in ROTC. ROTC again was sort of back in the backwoods. It was a big problem. They were blowing up the campuses all over America.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who was the general in charge of ROTC, had the staff action? Brigadier general wasn't there sort of in charge of the ROTC operation?

GEN. THURMAN: There was, the guy that was in charge of DCSPER training was Willard Pearson, and he had ROTC under his cognizance. Later Lieutenant General Pearson.

DR. KIRKLAND: What were you doing in the ROTC cell?

GEN. THURMAN: Staff toad. There was a colonel named Cronan that ran it. And I was the number two guy in the shop. And all we did was routine—well, not so routine in those days because they were busy blowing up the campus. People wanted to throw them off campus, and we were trying to keep it together and run the advisory committee from the various presidents that were—

The guy from Ohio State was one on that committee at the time, President of Ohio State, President of Georgia, the college up there at Dahlonega, Georgia Military. What's that thing up there at Dahlonega, Grange and others went to school?

DR. KIRKLAND: Military school?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. It's North of Georgia State College [Auditor note: now called University of North Georgia]. That's what it is. And, but it's a military sort of heavily involved in military, ROTC program. But, and I reported to Westmoreland once a week on what was getting blown up on what campus. Howard's getting blown up here, Ripon State is getting blown up here, University of Wisconsin Madison's getting blown up there, and Harvard's getting blown up here, and the SDS is taking us apart someplace—it was a big Donnybrook all the time in the ROTC game.

Meanwhile take care of ordinary, routine, staff actions associated with ROTC. So I was just an average staff officer. Got my first smell of how to run a paper in the Pentagon.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's what I was thinking. That's where you learned to run papers.

GEN. THURMAN: Run papers.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's how you sold yourself to the Queen's crowd, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Later on. Right. To Billy Rich and off to the War College and the War College was exciting. We had Bobby Schweitzer in there, Glen Otis, bunch of guys in my class. We had a very good War College. Everybody had been to Vietnam.

(End Tape 4, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 5A

(Begin Tape 5A, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: —Vietnam and took them out, put them on. Six of them went out. We talked to a public forum on the campus. They got very exciting work. I wasn't in that, but that was in my class is when it got started. It still goes today.

DR. KIRKLAND: It was composed of students who were there.

GEN. THURMAN: They were.

DR. KIRKLAND: They give presentations or answer questions or—

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. They'd give a presentation and they'd be subject for ridicule and questioning. Plus they appeared on stage. Assuming the War College is run just like it is today, the curriculum's a little bit different today, but you had the seminar groups. I'd made a rule that I would never ask a question in the big sleep room when I went in and lectured, so I stuck to that rule all year long, never asked a question.

And when it came time—I was a seminar leader the last go-around, national strategy seminar. And George Hardesty was a colonel at the time, stayed on the faculty up there. I knew George and so when the first speaker came up he was the Under Secretary of State, the Honorable Hugh Alexis Ball or somebody like that [Auditors' note: George W. Ball was known for his opposition to escalation of the Vietnam War, who was the Under Secretary of State at the time].

And Hardesty was managing the questions. It was a big deck up there as they do today and the light comes up on the podium when you punch the button and tells you who's asking questions. So he looks up and says, "Okay, illuminate your lights." Of course I wasn't able to illuminate mine. He said, "The first questioner is Colonel

Thurman,” because he knew I’d been playing this game all the time. Of course I didn’t have a question. I had no idea what question.

So I said to him, “Mr. Secretary, you stated in your lecture to us that it would be better off if the U.S. military could carry out objectives and get it done and get this war terminated and all that kind of stuff.” I said, “You’re in the State Department, so my question to you is, how do you keep us out of wars like that?” He’s walking back. He said, “Say that, again?”

I didn’t know what the hell. I tried it over again. I said, “Your job is to settle things by negotiation, keep us out of wars. What is your way to get us out of Vietnam as opposed to us fighting over there interminably?” He’d been critical of us, and so I tried to turn the table. Of course everybody looked around and says, first time we’ve ever seen this guy not asleep.

So I almost sneaked through without ever asking a question. So I got to know a lot of people in the class. It was a good class. I was in the BOQ up there, which was five of us in the BOQ. And I got thrown out by the major general in charge, the Commandant came in, said “I like your house better than the house I’m living in,” so threw us all out.

I recall sitting there on a Saturday morning, and he came in with his wife, unannounced, and I was there in my shorts reading my books. The rest of the guys had gone back to Washington, roadrunners. I said, “Can I help you, General?” He said, “Yeah, I came in to survey the house.” So I took him all through the house.

So the next Tuesday I got a call from the Billeting Office, told me to evacuate the building. Of course I was in school. Said, “Evacuate your quarters because the Commandant is going to refurbish it and move in.” And so I went over to the Billeting Office later in the day and said, “I’ll tell you what, I am not going to go and look for an apartment, and we’re not going to pack up anything.”

“I’m a student here, and I’m going to class. And I moved up here before school started. And I have no intention of doing anything like that. Now if you want to move me out of that building, you go find me an apartment, you rent it, and you get my gear, my clothes, you pack it up, you move it over, and you unpack it and hang up the clothes, hang the pictures up. When you get that done, I’ll be happy to move into it, because I’m a full-time student here. I haven’t got time for that.”

So they did that. And he could have saved a lot of grief if he'd come in and done that in sort of a gentlemanly fashion. But it was interesting that he and his wife never invited the five of us ever to come into that house. So you can understand I have enormous amount of respect for that guy.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who is it? Remember his name?

GEN. THURMAN: No. He later left that job and went back down to the Delta and became a Three Field Force Commander down in the Delta area, major general's billet. He was a confidant of General Westmoreland's. And he went back down. Since then all the Commandants have lived in the house and they all—I think Stofft [MG William A. Stofft] has put a plaque up there. This is the Thurman Room or whatever the hell it is, because . . . have you ever been in that house?

DR. KIRKLAND: No.

GEN. THURMAN: It's a pretty big house. Has some great rooms in it. Stone. And spent about \$40,000 rehabbing it. It wasn't really fit to live in when we were in there as bachelors. But they fixed that up nicely and it's been very nice. Jack Merritt's [GEN Jack N. Merritt] lived in it, all kinds of guys lived in it, so it's a very nice house.

And they had five bedrooms upstairs and each one of us took one of those bedrooms. My furniture became the sitting room and the dining room furniture. Then we had some government furniture in there. But it was sort of a curiosity getting thrown out of the BOQ as you enter school by the Commandant. One of those things makes you feel prideful about your commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, you know it's funny. It's so predictable and in character with the Army that used to be.

GEN. THURMAN: He could have done that during the summer. You follow me?

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, absolutely, also been gentlemanly about it and also he could have invited you over and—

GEN. THURMAN: Sort of screw you, Jack.

DR. KIRKLAND: I got mine, to hell with you. But it's not taking care of your troops, sort of like the battery commander who did not get you to school on time.

GEN. THURMAN: Wasn't interested. He wasn't interested.

DR. KIRKLAND: You said you got to know a lot of interesting people. I kind of gather that you took some pains to be sure you didn't get too well-known yourself at any particular depth. That was a very insightful . . . I read this in an out-brief. Sounds like a very wise and prudent move. You said people who would have to make judgments about you in the future were there as your classmates, possibly. Am I following your drift?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I think anytime you assemble 200 people that you can get a bunch of spring-butts. And so I think I was a formative guy in a seminar room. We rotated seminars a number of times. But to get up and take on the instructor and all that wasn't my game in the great sleep room where all 200 people gathered. Because it wasn't a question of having people judge me. It was a question of, I don't need the aggrandizement. It wasn't shy and reticence on my part. It's the fact I don't need to do that for the purpose of getting some notoriety here in the classroom. I'd rather work my way in through it in a smaller group where something counts, in other words.

But I could have counted you ten guys that would get up every day in the lecture and ask questions. It's not my style. My style is try to be deadly in the seminar room and my own view about that was to try to be a formative guy in the seminar. So that's where I spent my time working.

But I wasn't out to impress anybody because I didn't need to. Most War Colleges, about half the people who are there don't need to be there.

DR. KIRKLAND: They'll never do jobs that will need what they learned there? Is that because they're the wrong people or because they just don't need 200?

GEN. THURMAN: They don't need 200.

DR. KIRKLAND: Might there be a building mobilization cushion, cushion maybe—

GEN. THURMAN: I found if it's not a half, it's a quarter of the people weren't going anywhere after they got there. They'd get promoted to grade of colonel, and after that they were done. Now if you wanted to just keep on going you know, the energizer colonel and drive on forward another five years of service. But doing jobs which I'd call nondescript, then they were given an aggrandizement as opposed to a further preparation for duties at a higher level. They just aren't going anywhere, at least in my class they weren't.

Now in my particular class, I was trained for the next job I would have, although I didn't know it at the time. And it got into the fact that I ran the seminar. There were 12 or 14 seminar groups, and I ran one for the last segment, and the last segment had as its proposition to put together an Army program, including fiduciary aspects of it. Turns out then I would go and run the Army program for the next three years. So I was trained, which the Army War College would want to be the place where you don't get any training.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: Follow me? They're going to give you intellectual capacity to take care of world events in the future, and in this case serendipitously but with malice aforethought they trained me for my next job. Which if they had to do over again they'd

make sure I didn't get trained for the next job, because they have a screwy view of the future.

But in this case it worked nicely because I worked right into a job that I applied those same skills doing a piece of work for the Secretary of the Army and for the Chief of Staff for the next three years. I was running the Army book. So it paid off in my case big time, fully equipped with knowing all that.

So I had to come from the Army staff. I had a good sense about what an Army staff did on the one hand. And to matters associated with how the Army program is built, that served my purposes nicely when I got to Washington.

DR. KIRKLAND: But there were only a few of you who learned that, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, everybody participated in the seminar. But I was a group leader.

DR. KIRKLAND: But there were only 14 people in the seminar.

GEN. THURMAN: Yep. No, everybody participated in that, and there were 14 groups. Every seminar which presented an Army program or a DOD program and an Army program. So everybody did that. But I was the only guy that went from there to run the Army program.

Every student had the same curriculum. We had some electives, relatively few electives, and they had washed out the graduate program there so you couldn't go to Shippensburg or GW or whatever. I never got aggrandizement as a graduate carryover, again which stunted my growth. But had I had one of those I'd been better off.

DR. KIRKLAND: You might have amounted to something.

GEN. THURMAN: Might have amounted to something.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you became DCSPER [Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel], did you find out why 200 people are sent to the War College?

GEN. THURMAN: It was a quota. You put 200 up there because it was sized for 200.

DR. KIRKLAND: If you put 100 it could be downsized, but that would probably send in 200 now, right? With a smaller Army?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: You might say something about it being a critical mass also. Or it just might be—

GEN. THURMAN: I think the intent is right. The intent says, we're going to select people who we believe will have promissory notes for future service for the Army. But as soon as you say that there are going to be 200 or 188 to be exact, there are going to be 188 the board will select 188.

The board won't select 100 and report back to the Department of the Army, "Oh, by the way, we couldn't find 88 more that are worth a damn." So if you give them a quota to fill, the boards will fill the quota. Simple as that.

DR. KIRKLAND: So there isn't any reason for doing it, but—

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, I guess somebody counted jobs one time, but they haven't been counted lately; and they certainly haven't been counted since the downsizing. So now it is looked upon as a reward system.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. I've heard of that.

GEN. THURMAN: You wouldn't run a business that way. If you did, you would go back and say, what's my value I get out of this investment? I'm paying this guy \$60,000 a year to go to school for a year, plus all the infrastructure it takes to support him, given what he's going to do ahead of time.

Now you say, "Gee, why didn't you challenge that as the DCSPER." I said, "Well, because it's a reward system." So if I went in there and said, "Let's cut the War College graduates in half," then half of the people that think they're going to go to the War College because they think they have high aspiration for future service would get cut off at the knees and you'd pretty soon say, "Well there's an elitist group to that, you didn't provide for late bloomers, and oh, by the way, you cut off part of the reward structure in the service." And all the answers would be, "Yeah, that's right."

So you pay a price for having 200 people go through when 100 probably would be just as good because you can look around at them and see them in class and know that their intellectual capacity isn't worth a damn. They got there not about what's going to happen, because we don't write efficiency reports very well about what's going to happen. But you get there because the guy has been the good soldier schmuck in the main.

So going through a selection process about what it is you can be good for in the future is very difficult for the Army to do that. Promotion boards have a tough time doing it.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's true. So maybe it's better to train a bigger number than you need.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. So you train them up, but when you get there you look at them and say, "I wonder how he got here? What's he going to do when he gets out of here?" So you shrug your shoulders and say, "That's the system." I'm not against the system; I'm just saying the system has frailties.

It's like promoting people to brigadier general. It's a big hurdle. And going in you know only half of them are going to get promoted to major general. So half of them don't cut it going in. So that's part of the neck down procedures that you got. You build a

bigger base that says some people weren't good brigadier generals but are damned good colonels. They'll never be good brigadiers. You think they will because you've been ordered to promote to fill a vacancy, but they're not going to amount to a hill of beans, peace or war.

DR. KIRKLAND: Duncan Ard once told me that the promotion system was organized to try to be sure that the ones that were selected were not any worse than the ones who were not, because there were so many good ones, so many good colonels in each year group.

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah. If you're given orders for 30, there are 100 that you could promote.

DR. KIRKLAND: With no sweat.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. But I would say to you, you can probably; if you probably debriefed a board president, you would probably find there's unanimity on the first ten, absolute unanimity. It may not be in the same order, one, two.... ten. But the first ten everybody will say, when you look at the votes the top ten are the top ten. Then when you get down below that then you begin to push and shove around because people view people differently. But the top ten are clearly the top ten.

A guy told me who was on the board that I was selected to brigadier general, that was the big board in the '60s, top 19 officers were on everybody's list. They were not in the same order but all in the top 19. So by that time, if you only had 19 to promote you'd know who they are. But now when you get down to the last third of it, there are probably another twice or three times that many that could be just like the last third. So now you're really trying to discriminate to make your quotas because there's 50 people to get 20 billets.

That speaks well for the Army. It says there are plenty of good people in it today.

DR. KIRKLAND: Shall we quit for a while?

GEN. THURMAN: Are you achieving what it is you're looking to achieve here?

DR. KIRKLAND: I am.

GEN. THURMAN: The more I think about it, the less likely I am to be a candidate for anything. The more I think about it, the more, my view is you're interested in the personnel business, and I think that's probably an interesting story, personnel. I think I'm less interesting. I think I have insights to tell about the personnel business.

But there are other people that have other insights that I think make it a story. It's about the Army's search for itself, the people. About people. The Army's search for itself with respect to people. But I'm not a very interesting subject for a biography because my exploits were relatively simplistic, until you get to the grade of major general, in terms of people-stuff. There are no heroic exploits about doing that, being a hero in some other line of work. My general view is, as a biography, it won't sell much.

If you write a learned piece of work on the story of the Army's people function, I think it's an interesting story. It's got a limited audience. But I think if you look at periods of service like in Vietnam or whatever, there's really not a story there. [Auditor note: Following text deleted per direction of GEN Thurman.]

[REDACTED]

But I think the Army starting with VOLAR [Volunteer Army]—the Army starting in the terrible tragedy of Vietnam in fragging and doping and smoking and all that kind of stuff, starting in that timeframe and looking at the personnel system to today, the personnel to today, not the system; the personnel and the system to today, I think that is a story. I don't think anybody has come anywhere close to it yet.

DR. KIRKLAND: I agree with you. I think that that—

GEN. THURMAN: How did we get the way we got in Vietnam? How did that come about? What are the inherent actions or failure to act that got us in that position in Vietnam? That's one. I'm trying to outline a story line here. If I was an author, this is what I'd write.

Second thing is, how did we begin to correct that? What were the series of actions to begin to correct that?

Third, what was the mistake of VOLAR? What was the impact of going from draft to VOLAR and the mistakes thereabout?

Fourth is, what role did OE [organizational effectiveness] play?

Fifth, what about the disaster of 1979 recruiting failure? How did we get it? What was going on there? Was VOLAR an event in its own right. Then you had Bernie Rogers [GEN Bernard W. Rogers] as the DCSPER, and you had the beginning of OE. Then you had the debacle of '79, when Bernie is now the Chief of Staff trying to figure out what to do about that, and before Shy [GEN Edward Charles "Shy" Meyer] gets there. Shy suffers through that and then puts me out there. And then you have the renaissance of the quality of people. Then you have a training renaissance antecedents in '75. But it doesn't come to fruition because Gorman [GeEN Paul F. Gorman] is running ahead of the people. I don't know how well you know Paul or not.

DR. KIRKLAND: I don't know him.

GEN. THURMAN: Paul had introduced self-paced training at a time the Recruiting Service was delivering Cat 4 people.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah. He was running ahead of—

GEN. THURMAN: You follow me? Theoretically he was running ahead of the supply of people who could benefit from it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: Turmoil. Then you have the rejuvenation or what I'd say the rejuvenation of the doctrinal sense in there and its effect on people because now it begins to put missions come down as to what it is you're supposed to be doing that people then rally around that and they get the best out of the people they got. You follow me?

I mean, when the doctrine came out in the '70s there weren't any people. I mean the people were bereft of skill on the one hand, they were stupid on the other, and then giving them all this training doctrine to go practice—I mean, they were given standards which they simply couldn't achieve. That's the story, and nobody's done that story. That's an exciting story about the confluence.

If you drew that out on a timeline and looked at, sort of put the date time groups on a course of 20 years, I think you got a terrific story. Nobody's done that story. Boy, it is a significant—it's made us the finest Army in the world.

I told Bernie Rogers the other day that I'm going to come by after Christmas and I want to interview him on how did he fight in the OE game. Let me tell you the connection about that, historically the connection.

I believe that the OE process which he began, and I think he got that out of his association with captains of industry, specifically Galvin [Auditor's note: Robert W. Galvin, CEO of Motorola from 1959 to 1986] in Motorola. I don't know if you know this but he and Galvin grew up together in the same cornfield in Kansas.

DR. KIRKLAND: I didn't know that.

GEN. THURMAN: And Galvin went off to be the CEO of Motorola, and they kept up their relationship all during their adult life. But when he introduced that as the DCSPER and forced that down everybody's throat, and nobody liked it—

DR. KIRKLAND: Nobody did.

GEN. THURMAN: —it forever changed us. You know what he gave us? This is Thurman's hypothesis. It gave us the after-action critique or after-action, the AAR [After Action Review].

DR. KIRKLAND: That's where it came from?

GEN. THURMAN: I am convinced. I haven't got the connection tied down yet, but I am convinced that the OE process where you sort of had to take your clothes off in front of your peers and your boss, and the boss had to do it in front of his subordinates broke down the barrier in rank so that for the good of the unit we could tell one another the truth about the unit.

And when the commander came in and we had to get a little OE session within the first 30 days after he'd gotten there and the commanders and the subordinate commanders said, geez, we've got problems here, we need to go to solve that, and let's make a commitment to go do that; that gave people the courage then to embark upon the OE process called the after action review in a different format. But gave you the capability to have the sergeant stand up and tell the battalion commander where he screwed up, either one of them screwed up after a tactical exercise was run.

No other army yet has been able to do that. It's beginning in the French Army because young Mike Kirby over here is at the War College used to be the OC [Officer Commanding] at the CMTC [Combat Maneuver Training Center] at Hohenfels, and they had a French unit come through and they did that. Frenchmen were aghast that some lieutenant colonel would ask some sergeant in the French army, what did you do—in French because Kirby speaks French.

But when the division commander heard it for the first time, he said, "I like that."

DR. KIRKLAND: So Kirby started it in the French army? A transplant.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. But my point is, see I can't tell you anything about the bad Army of Vietnam. Follow me? I can't tell you a thing about the bad Army in Germany. Now if my brother were here, he would tell you about the race riots in

Germany and all that kind of stuff that he was embroiled in, in the middle of one in downtown Mannheim and all that kind of stuff. I can't tell you anything about it, don't know anything about it. I wasn't in that Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: I was in the head shed Army. Follow me?

DR. KIRKLAND: You can't be in all of them all the time.

GEN. THURMAN: I was in the head shed Army. But the story in my view is, the story is the metamorphosis—the story is, how did you get in that jam in Vietnam.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. That's one story. The other one is—

GEN. THURMAN: How did you get out of it at the same time that you accomplished the miracle of moving from a draft to a volunteer army. Then, how did you get high quality people, and how did you turn them on through training, and they were able to accomplish the doctrine that you'd envisioned they would in field of battle in no time flat without going through a battle learning curve?

See, in most cases units go into battle and they go through a battle learning curve.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. They screw it up at first.

GEN. THURMAN: Not in Desert Storm. Went straight in there and took them apart.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, they had some learning time—

GEN. THURMAN: The learning time was done in NTCs [National Training Centers]. That's where the learning curve went up. So the more I think about, sort of

saying, so far as I am, I'm not sure I bring out the points that are useful at getting at what I think your bent is if I look at the—I keep going back to your letter 1, letter 2, still concentrates on the personnel side in that I think the story line is sort of what I led you through. Okay?

DR. KIRKLAND: It might/should go that way.

GEN. THURMAN: What's your next date? December of '92, huh? Okay. 9th is okay. What day is this? Tuesday? Do it on 7th, 8th, 9th. Can't do it on the 6th, 10th. 7th?

DR. KIRKLAND: Is it a good time?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is it a good place?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: Do you want to do it at home?

GEN. THURMAN: No. Okey doke.

DR. KIRKLAND: See you then.

GEN. THURMAN: Roger that. Have a good trip.

DR. KIRKLAND: Thank you, sir.

(Interview Break)

DR. KIRKLAND: The 5th of the 42nd came in the last two weeks of April '68. You already were in command of the battalion by then.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, I was.

DR. KIRKLAND: Maybe that's not the right outfit then.

GEN. THURMAN: Doesn't sound right.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's a 155 towed outfit and then, the advanced party came on the 13th of April, main body on the 25th and equipment on the 30th and you trained at Fort Bragg.

GEN. THURMAN: No, not yet.

DR. KIRKLAND: Came in maybe November?

GEN. THURMAN: The outfit came in sometime like October, November, something like that. I was in command of the battalion during the Tet Offensive, which took place in January of '68.

DR. KIRKLAND: You took over the middle of the month, middle of January?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't recall the date.

DR. KIRKLAND: Shortly before the Tet Offensive or a good while before?

GEN. THURMAN: December or January, somewhere in there. I don't recall the dates of that. That battalion had already come in. And it had come in from California, and the post out there, either came in from Irwin or there's another one out there which is

a National Guard post whose name escapes me at the moment. I can probably find that out here quick. It's either Roberts or Hunter Liggett.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was it a National Guard outfit?

GEN. THURMAN: No, it had been created from scratch, far as I know. Its antecedents I couldn't tell you.

DR. KIRKLAND: I wanted to ask you some more about the IG inspection of the 2nd of the 35th, 155. The crew at Fort Bliss described it as passed quite satisfactorily.

GEN. THURMAN: That's in the record? (laughs) Well, no, the thing that's sort of comical about it, from my perspective, is the idea of carrying out an IG inspection in the middle of a war struck me as a lieutenant colonel who didn't know any better, as being a little bit farcical.

Unless there had been some serious malfeasance, I could see that if you'd had some serious malfeasance going along why I don't want to throw an IG on top of you to find out whether or not you ought to get relieved or not, that would be one thing. But to go through the mechanics of an inspector general, which in those days was oriented on maintenance and—what I would call—the classical inspector general routine of good order and discipline of the troops and are they getting fed right, and is the morale right, and all that kind of stuff.

Maybe if there had been some serious breach of etiquette somewhere down the line where you weren't able to shoot bullets straight or you'd had a morale problem going along, I could see an IG. But I got the notion this IG was to meet somebody's goal of saying we are administering IGs in the theater.

Whether we got targeted because theoretically all 155 units had the capability to shoot nuclear weapons, and obviously we didn't have any nuclear weapons in South Vietnam to my knowledge, or the idea that we were going to maintain standards of proficiency in shooting nuclear weapons, which was the furthest thing from laying down

harassing and interdiction fires against the Vietcong or NVA or whoever, during the Tet Offensive. That whole notion was a strange one to me.

You go through the motions as somebody sends down an inspection team, and you go through the motions and you do what you're asked to do. In the two cases I cited, just two of the findings were, one, they were going to deadline half of my five-ton ammo trucks, which instead of having five tons of ammo had ten tons of ammo on them because of welded steering arm brackets. Welding steering arm brackets, in my book, was a notion that you had a very functional maintenance chief. The warrant officer knew what his business was. He was trying to keep the stuff rolling.

In the case of trying to maintain nuclear weapons proficiency.... Incidentally, we weren't going to get any new steering arms brackets anytime soon, so when the IG left all the vehicles rolled right along doing what they were supposed to do.

Yeah, maybe it was a safety hazard and we should have been more discerning about that, but I didn't spend a whole lot of time chasing steering arm brackets.

DR. KIRKLAND: And none of them failed.

GEN. THURMAN: I don't recall them failing. They may have, but I don't recall them failing. We didn't have any terrible accidents as a result thereof. It's one of those calculated risks you run in wartime situation to keep the ammo fed to the troops.

On the other hand, the one about the maintaining nuclear weapons proficiency, which would have meant that you had both an FDC proficiency to make fire direction center proficiency to continue as well as a notion of the people that had to do the assembly work. Well, there wasn't any school to maintain those proficiencies in theater, and the only place you could go and do it were, they said we could go to Korea to do it.

DR. KIRKLAND: A lot of 155 battalions in Korea.

GEN. THURMAN: I just said, thanks a lot, really appreciate that, drive along, do—it could do good work, excel in every way, and I forgot it. It's one of those things. One of those humorous things I look back on as saying in those days they didn't have

anything else to inspect about. So they went around looking for things like that. Now maybe that made us way back to Washington somehow or another and maybe somebody made a big decision at the four-star level that said, “Geez, I don’t think we’re going to do that.”

Or if they did, they didn’t send me any quotas to go to Korea. The troops would have loved to go to Korea. Give them an R&R [Rest and Recreation] from Vietnam to Korea in order to get to go to nuke school. You’ve got to be kidding me. So, it’s a laughner. And so one of those things that sort of says “what’s the lesson out of that?” for leadership in the future and that is to say that “we don’t have to worry about that anymore because we’ve taken the nukes away from the Army”—which is a great deal. Having screwed around with nuclear weapons in Germany with the Honest John and the possibility of having them required to train for them or with them, with 155 units later on. I’m glad the Army is not saddled with that responsibility any further. It was a victory for the demise of the Cold War.

DR. KIRKLAND: It was a very tense business, wasn’t it?

GEN. THURMAN: It wasn’t like I didn’t know something about it. I mean I had spent 20 months on the Honest John business and so I knew a lot about nuclear weapons—assembly and passing technical proficiency inspections and all that kind of business. And the idea that we were going to use any was as farfetched as you could get. And, you say, “Well, gee whiz, maybe the Chinese would have gotten it.” Well, the Chinese can be taken on by some other method but not by 155 shooting nukes in South Vietnam. That’s a preposterous notion.

DR. KIRKLAND: That would have been an extraordinary thing and I wondered if it stuck so you went to talk to Colonel Morris. What was the outcome?

GEN. THURMAN: Forget it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did the IG team come from the States or from ...

GEN THURMAN: I don't know where the IG came from, it may have been the USARV IG team, first up around the Artillery 2 Field Force. Where it came from, I can't tell you. They could have been an MACV [Military Assistance Command Vietnam] team.

DR. KIRKLAND: I didn't ask you about NCOs. '67-'68. There probably still were a few professional NCOs around, at least some sergeant majors?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh year, we had some dynamite NCOs. I had one sergeant major who crapped out on me and he was shackled up with a local and we took care of his career. On the other hand, the next guy who came in was a terrific sergeant major who later became a division artillery sergeant major. A guy named Charlie Thuriak, now retired in Fort Sill, Oklahoma. But those, the NCOs were terrific and I just looked at what I would call the ability to keep the guns in action on a distributive basis. The one thing is to have your guns sort of centrally managed, centrally located. Another one is having everything decentralized, miles apart. The difficulty which meant improvisation—one case down in the south of Saigon, we were firing a tremendous number of rounds down there. Ended up blowing hydraulic lines, guys were repairing hydraulic lines on the spot, poured water on the hydraulic lines to get through them because we leaked so much hydraulic fluid. So the improvisation was correct. And the maintenance people were terrific. Gun crew guys were terrific and very receptive to doing what you asked them to do.

I had some rules out, for example, I mentioned killer junior, which we invoked. I picked it up from 105 outfits—the business of digging in with culvert materials—steel culvert materials overheaded with three layers of sandbags before you went to sleep at night or daytime for that matter.

I was in Vietnam at that period including the Tet offensive when the malaise that later came on U.S. military forces was not present—particularly in the unit I was in. Nor did I know anything about that. It's just foreign to my knowledge base at that time.

I'm not denigrating that it happened later. And I really believe the personnel—I go back again and say again—I think the personnel policies were awry and contributed significantly to the demise of the American Army in Vietnam through one, a 12-13month tour, on the one hand, as opposed to the duration, and secondly, with the constant disruption of the units with replacements.

(End Tape 5A, Side A)

(Begin Tape 5A, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: ...the Brigade Commanders was the wrong policy. I didn't know DePuy at this time. General Bill DePuy. Later on, I got to know him. DePuy contrasted for me the life of a battalion commander, which he turned out to be in WWII and the life of a battalion commander or anybody commander in Vietnam. It goes something like this: when he entered the continent of Europe it was to go until it was over. So, consequently, he learned more about how to fight the Germans every day he was there. They lost lives early in the campaign, they didn't repeat that and lose those same kinds of lives later in the campaign as they went across the hard line of Europe.

I'm confident, in my own mind, that this turmoil of changing commanders took its toll on American troops because the fighting skills of the commanders; you learned, you sharpened the skills, honed the skills and then you applied those skills and then your first tour is up.

And then carrying those on for a longer period of time so that you didn't make those mistakes you made in the first 30 days again for the next two years, I think that attributed to one, low morale and esprit that later generated in the late '70s, or late 60s, in Vietnam and could have been ameliorated by longer tours by the battalion commanders, battalion S3, operations level, and the brigade level.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you were DCSPER, at any time or your subsequent experience, did you get a feel for what the rationale for the limited command tour was?

GEN. THURMAN: No, I didn't. That would be subject of a separate review.

DR. KIRKLAND: Apparently, that was going on in Korea also during the Korean War. David ... describes one of his battalion commanders being finance corps officer who was assigned to command an infantry battalion as a career improvement. And he was a disaster.

GEN. THURMAN: I think the whole notion of trying to rotate it around, in order to serve some sort of interest level of professional officers, is a mistaken philosophy. What you're trying to do is serve the lowest ranking soldier. And, therefore, it is the experience that counts of the combat sharpened leader, whether he starts as a captain, moves up to be a battalion S3, comes up to be a battalion exec or battalion commander, he lives to do all that. I think that this notion of saying we're going to rotate people into these billets is a misbegotten policy. I think what it takes is ... the young soldier who could be ordered to his death or led to his death because of improvisation by not combat skilled leaders.

I don't indict every leader, now, don't misunderstand that. I'm just saying I'm mindful of the Mary Kay precept. Mary Kay told me when I was chief of recruiting that 15 percent of the people excel without further ado, 70 percent of the people have to be inspired to be all that they can be, and 15 percent of the people can't be all they can be. And therefore you should get rid of them.

The argument of saying stick with it until it's over is meritorious because one, it focuses on getting the job done and getting it over. You see, if you think you have an inexhaustible till of people then you can string it out.

If, on the other hand, you say, "I've got to fight this thing and get it fixed and get it over with, and the people I have will are gonna stay with it to the end," you may have to keep adding more people to replace casualties, may have to make the force larger, we're bringing in more force. But, I will tell you, you don't go through the learning curve every time that you change your commander, put in a new commander. There's a learning curve, no doubt there's a learning curve about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Now in the Desert Storm operation, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Vuono, had to come up with a recommendation that I know about to the Secretary of Defense, had to do with how long would we stay in Saudi Arabia where we were launching the attack and whether or not forces would be rotated out there. And the answer was, they would not be. So I think that was clearly the right kind of decision.

And I think that people like Carl and Norm Schwarzkopf and others who are in the younger ranks in Vietnam, like I was, learned over there that the duration is better than this shuffle of people and shuffle of competency that happens when you got these rotation policies that are six- or eight-month battalion command tours.

DR. KIRKLAND: Of course with a war like Vietnam at some point lasting 10 years you have to come to grips with the fact that people wear out or people reach their fear bottle fills up.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, their fear bottle may, and I think that is a problem. What might be sort of a notion to take a look at would be, one, did you have a strategy? And then, is your personnel policy tailored to meet the attainment of the strategy, or is then the personnel policy tailored to aggrandize either the professional officer corps or the professional noncommissioned officer corps?

Now if you go back and look at some of DePuy's writings he wrote a rather lengthy article that said we didn't have a strategy in Vietnam. Wrote that in *Army Magazine* a couple years ago. And so maybe if you don't have a strategy then it hangs on for 10 years. But that's another problem, is how long does this thing go on? I mean, you have a 10-year fight.

One of the things that can happen in a 10-year fight where you're not achieving the ends you desired, where you don't have a clear objective about what it is you're trying to do, is that pretty soon you get in a rut. And you have stultified thinking by your commanders and all that. But, again, I think that's a function of the strategy associated with what it is you intended to do.

And I am persuaded that, one, we didn't have a strategy in Vietnam that you could record very well. And, two, the personnel policy was not necessarily tailored to support the non-strategy. The personnel policy was tailored for a totally different purpose, which was to rotate people through there and let everybody serve 13 months or so and then get out.

That brought in the draft, brought in more OCS graduates and all that kind of business which we had to dip in the bottom of the barrel as the outcomes at My Lai

would foresee. And we had too rich of a draft deferment system, kept the good people from getting drafted.

So from a historical point of view, one of the things we ought to do is we ought to knuckle down—why did we go do what we did? We know why we came out of Germany on a point system after WWII. There were riots. Victorious Americans troops rioting to get home, because the war was over.

So the behavioral scientists gave us a point system to make things “equal.” There’s no such thing as equal war. War is a dirty, filthy, grimy killing business, and it’s not equal. And so the idea that you can somehow equate three months in the foxhole with six months in some rear area thing, particularly in today’s operation where the whole battlefield is subject to let’s say tactical ballistic missiles or whatever—

So the behaviorists, I think, unfortunately, gave us a paradigm at the conclusion of the war that tried to make combat equal, but that’s the point system, try to make service equal. Thus, the point system that got you out of the service. So then four or five years later we’re fighting in Korea, and we say, “Gee whiz, we got to have a point system or we got to have equality.” Combat isn’t equal. It’s not an equal opportunity operation.

And so, therefore, when you look at equating equality and points and rotating people and the like as opposed to getting the operation over with, we find that beginning in Korea and later in Vietnam we’re into attrition warfare, which is unsatisfactory warfare. And it’s to be avoided at all costs.

Somalia tells you, once again, that’s not the way to do it is go out and do an occasional strike. That’s not a very good idea.

So I guess we were talking about the quality of leadership. I think there are plenty of people that were high quality leaders, I just think the personnel policy was wrong. Didn’t take advantage of their learning curve and then ultimately their ability to take care of their troops while accomplishing the mission.

DR. KIRKLAND: There was another personnel policy mentioned in the group, in your battalion operation at Fort Bliss, called infusion.

GEN. THURMAN: That was the policy of ripping the battalion apart that had come in holistically and then we “infused” the new battalion with troops.

DR. KIRKLAND: I wondered if that was what that term meant.

GEN. THURMAN: That’s right. Now you said that battalion got there in?

DR. KIRKLAND: Between the 15th and 30th of April.

GEN. THURMAN: ‘68.

DR. KIRKLAND: ‘68.

GEN. THURMAN: And of course I left in ‘68 November. That may have been the battalion, but maybe I had to cough up troops to get infused in there. But the battalion I recall came from California. That’s what I recall. But that could have been 5th of the 42nd.

DR. KIRKLAND: 5th of the 42nd. That doesn’t ring any bells.

GEN. THURMAN: Might be it, because then I, maybe I wasn’t the XO but I had to furnish people to go infuse that battalion. That could very well be.

DR. KIRKLAND: Maybe you’d written the letters before you became commander of the battalion.

GEN. THURMAN: When did the advance party get there?

DR. KIRKLAND: 15th of April.

GEN. THURMAN: This needs chasing.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'll look again. Seemed like this was a fit. It was the only one we—

GEN. THURMAN: Did we talk about infusion with that particular battalion?

DR. KIRKLAND: No, talks about infusion in general, lost one officer and three enlisted men in the period between 1st of May and end of July.

GEN. THURMAN: The point is made—whether it's that battalion or some other battalion, the point is—I may have mistaken my role in that thing but the point is there was a policy to try to stretch out the rotation patterns since that unit had all come in at one time.

So the unit would not decay and go away on the anniversary of its arrival based upon the 12- or 13-month tour. And the trick then was to send in NCOs, send in officers, take out NCOs, take out officers, take out a little troops, put in other little troops, crazy policy. Destroyed whatever that battalion had coming in.

You might look in the after-action reports and find out later on whether that's the battalion that dumped the rounds on the USARV aviation pad. If it is, that's the battalion that did it because that was an exciting morning. Fired three 200 out and dumped a load of rounds on the USAR-V aviation pad. Bruce Palmer [GEN Bruce Palmer, Jr.] was the USAR-V Commander, and he didn't like that.

DR. KIRKLAND: I wanted to ask you, in connection with this general business of command tour rotation, you had a couple of group commanders, Colonel Norris and Colonel Powell. I wondered if they were artillerymen there. Were they thoroughgoing artillerymen?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yes. Both are.

DR. KIRKLAND: And just a note, that helicopter that had the cracks in the tail boom, when the aviation officer came down did they receive a deadline on the helicopter?

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. They brought in a lowboy, and low-boyed it out and dead-lined a lot of helicopters that day. That genre of helicopters, because they had, I don't know how many they finally got—

DR. KIRKLAND: Plastic tail boom?

GEN. THURMAN: No. It's a metal, a light aluminum metal tail boom that came out of the top of the egg, sort of were in an egg-shaped front end. OH-6 I believe is the number. And they had a long, thin tail boom in the rear, and I'd say that tail boom was probably six or eight inches in diameter. And they deadlined a few that day. Metal fatigue. Tremendous amount of vibration going on so it just had metal fatigue.

DR. KIRKLAND: You described the ground attacks on headquarters battery compound as sort of a routine thing.

GEN. THURMAN: Occasional, yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: And mortar attacks frequent?

GEN. THURMAN: Occasional.

DR. KIRKLAND: What were the responses of the troops to those? I know you were on the road all the time, the XO would probably know this better, but was there—it's pretty stressy business. Stressful.

GEN. THURMAN: Nah. It wasn't near as stressful as troops in the field had it. We had a little headquarters compound, and they would probe it and attack it. As a matter

of fact, after I left they had a substantial attack on that. And my XO had become the S3, Ed Soyster, and later Lieutenant General Soyster, he got severely wounded in one of those ground attacks.

But, while I was there I would say there were several, there were mortar attacks, probes to see whether or not you had some defenses; if they could have knocked it off they would have. But, the fact is, we had reasonable ground self-defense capability with the small arms we had. And occasionally we'd have dusters logger overnight. And occasionally there would be a 105 or the 155s might be in position in there. That was rare, but sometimes we had that in there. Transient artillery.

So I wouldn't make any more out of it than it was. We had some troops always reacted with alacrity. The only time we had problems, when the sergeant major crapped out. And I'd say we had less direct hostile action than most places did.

DR. KIRKLAND: Troops handled it with comparative aplomb?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Troops were well-rehearsed and had a counter-attack force and sweep out to 3,000 meters, and we had patrols out all the time. We were living close to an ARVN division headquarters so we'd get some support from the ARVN [Army of Vietnam] division headquarters. When the ARVN division was out on some big operation, that's normally when we'd get some probing attack.

So it was routine. Nothing exciting. Not like the Ia Drang Valley.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were your battery commanders, it's unlikely they would have been a second tour of Vietnam. You said they were good. I was wondering how they got that way, how they—did you have any feel for what their backgrounds were?

GEN. THURMAN: No. They showed up and Gunther, I think, had a previous tour as a Special Forces officer. And Gene Marlowe is the other guy. I'd been trying to dredge up his name, Gene Marlowe. Marlowe ended up being a full colonel in the Army and doing superior work, got in the acquisition business.

Gunther was a guy over in Germany, ended up being my liaison officer in Germany when I was TRADOC Commander. Jay Pennywell ended up being a full colonel in the Army, PMS at Prairie View A&M. And those were the three pillars of the fighting battery commanders. And all three of them came with whatever their training had been, were put in the jobs and performed magnificently, and all three of them ended up being full colonels in the Army, which I consider to be a successful career in the United States Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: So I think that I was blessed with competent, three pros. They had to operate decentrally. That is to say, they had to get along with—Marlowe with the Australians, Gunther with the 9th Division and with the 193rd I think down there. Jay Pennywell particularly with the 101st and with the ARVN north of Saigon, north of Long Binh, northeast of Xuan Loc. So they were all good men, very fine officers. All of them commanded battalions. All of them did quite well.

Strong. You know, competent, didn't have to tell them more than once, and they did it. Very mature guys. Knew how to shoot bullets, which is what an artillery officer ought to do.

DR. KIRKLAND: I have a couple ORLLs [Operational Reports Lessons Learned]. Would you like to have them or look at them?

GEN. THURMAN: Sure.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'll eventually get the others. These are two from when you were in command time. Leave them with you.

GEN. THURMAN: That's a long time. It's interesting. Carlson was not a guy. He took over from Hartmut Gunther there. He's a very good officer. This guy, Al Carson. Interesting. I haven't seen any of that stuff in so long I wouldn't know anything about it.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's interesting, a lot of the things you talked about last week are mentioned in here, such things—as the killer junior, sounds like there were a lot of problems with the 548. [Auditor note: M548 is a tracked cargo carrier; it has many variant models.]

GEN. THURMAN: You bet, still are. Gunther was down there with the 9th Infantry in Vung Tao and all that, Nui Dat. I haven't looked at any of this, so recall is what recall is. See, this is Marlowe's outfit. He's with the Royal Australian Field Regiment. B was Pennywell. Always moving around everywhere from Cu Chi to—

DR KIRKLAND: By boat or by road, whatever, all that movement—

GEN. THURMAN: It was interesting. Did you catch that one about boat?

DR KIRKLAND: There's one you mentioned here. Battery B, LCM [Land Craft Mechanized].

GEN. THURMAN: Let me tell you about that one. That's a funny story. One of the things I learned when I was a bully was always be at the point of where it could go wrong. David Grange was the lieutenant colonel commanding that battalion for the 101st, and he said we're going to cross the Dong Hoi River here.

We got some LCMs, I want to take some APCs up there and we're going to take the 155s across this river. I said, we're going in these LCMs across the river with 155s, LCMs, is that what you told me? Yeah, that's it.

So I got up there and this was the first time we'd ever done any of this stuff. So this is a 155 battalion in the amphibious assault. So I was on the first LCM. We had some APCs go across ahead of us that belonged to a CAV unit.

There was a very high bank, very steep bank, and I was on the first howitzer that went across the river. And the engineers had been over there improving—I can remember this just like it's yesterday—it was in the middle of the night. And the engineers had put

down some PSP [Perforated Steel Planking] and the howitzer crashed through the bank as it came through.

And the only thing that I knew was, this howitzer was going to the bottom of the Dong Hoi River. And I said to the boatsman who was driving this thing, you keep full steam on the backend of this LCM pressing the howitzer against the shore. Then I went up myself and got half a dozen APCs are across, put them into a train and got that howitzer up that bank. And then we did some work on fixing the bank so we wouldn't have to do that all the time.

I look back on that, and on that particular night it was not a problem. And the reason it wasn't a problem, because I'd been in the Honest John business. The Honest John business was a heavy equipment industry. Big weights, big trucks, M62 wreckers, extra-long wheelbase 5-ton trucks, pole trailers, the launcher itself weighed 60,000 pounds. Piece of cake.

So handling heavy equipment I thought was easy, so putting that train together to get that stuff out of there was not a problem. I often thought about that later on that it would have been easy for me not to been there that night. I could have been in one of my other batteries doing work. But that was the crucial event of the day and the commander always wants to be at the crucial event of the day. I don't care whether it's an infantryman, artilleryman or armor guy, whatever else. That sort of triggers that memory about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: That triggers another memory. You told me once that when you were in the Honest John platoon one day you took the platoon into a field and felt the ground frozen, hard, was thawing, it thawed and every vehicle sank to its axle.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: How'd you get them out?

GEN. THURMAN: I had four M62 wreckers hooked up in train and in using wench blocks to get yourself more purchase on the gears and all that kind of stuff. So we

spent the night. It's good experience for a lieutenant. Lieutenants ought to do that kind of stuff, just get all mucked up in the mud and have to dig out. That was what we ought to do.

Well, that's interesting stuff to read all that stuff. Tet Counter-Offensive.

DR. KIRKLAND: The months following it.

GEN. THURMAN: This sort of gets to the end, 1 November '68.

DR. KIRKLAND: The period ends about a month earlier, so this is, you probably have one more month of command.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, another guy comes. See, here's where we turn. Jim Brickman took over from Pennywell, and I mentioned Brickman had been my fire direction guy.

DR. KIRKLAND: He spent two months as an exec and then the battery?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. And Ken Gruner turned out to be a fine officer. I think he retired as a colonel in the Army. Got a few silver stars for the troops.

Yeah, interesting thumbing through that, hadn't read all that. Here we go. The battalion underwent the USAR-V. See, that's where it came from—annual general inspection.

Okay? I'd like to read those.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'll leave those with you. Last week we left off with a discussion of the War College. I only have one follow-up question on that. You said your goal was to be formative in the seminar sessions where it really counted. And I wondered what you meant by formative. And what about the seminar sessions really counted? What was it about them? Do you produce a product at the end of each seminar segment?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, seminar segments sessions were where the more fulsome discussion of whatever the course curriculum was at the time took place. And the way I looked at it is, if you could be persuasive to your classmates in a seminar, be respectful of them on the one hand because each of them brought something to the table.

But if in the end game your ability to summarize what went on, ability to synthesize what went on, ability to persuade people in that small group—I thought that was the most effective way to participate in the learning process. But asking questions in the big sleep room was something that was not appealing to me and is, in general, not appealing to me today.

I like student interaction when I give a talk, like at the War College, and I gave talks at the War College for 20 years. But as a guy sitting in an audience, it's not my bag to get up and sort of show what I know to some visiting dignitary and pursue some thought train. It's just not my talent, not my style.

DR. KIRKLAND: From the War College you went to doing the Army program.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it's a little bit more involved than that. I got a job being the PA&E [Program Analysis and Evaluation] shop, run by General Bill DePuy at that time. I went to work with a civilian named Don Haverman . Don was an officer crewman—can't remember whether a navigator, bombardier, what—on a B17. He graduated from two schools in his life, actually three schools—he graduated from high school and from whatever skills school he had as an officer in the Air Force in WWII, and he graduated from ICAF [Industrial College of the Armed Forces]. Don Haverman was the head of the programming shop in then the office of the AVCS, Assistant Vice Chief of Staff of the Army whose leader was Bill DePuy. So I was put in this shop called the AVCS, called the program shop.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was the AVCS—that's not a permanent thing.

GEN. THURMAN: Not now but it was then, and it had a weapons systems shop, had a personnel shop, a programming shop, so it had several shops in it. I was in the program shop. And Don was the programmer, civilian. He knew every financial system in the Army and in OSD. He was a whiz bang at that stuff. So I went to work at his knee.

Now my immediate boss was a colonel...so I went to work in the shop, lieutenant colonel (P) or a colonel running my little section of the waterworks there. After several months, not too long, I had come from being a seminar chief in the last period of the seminar, which is the national security week at the War College where your seminar has to put on, build a POM [Program Objective Memorandum], build a national strategy, build all the undergirding parts of the POM about that. So that's what I'd done at the War College.

Well then I got assigned to DePuy's shop, assigned at Haverman's shop, so I felt pretty comfortable about being in that particular shop because I'd learned to do that at the War College.

DR. KIRKLAND: What is a POM?

GEN. THURMAN: A Program Objective Memoranda. It's a five-year or currently six-year program for the allocation of resources to the Department of the Army—manpower resources, acquisition resources, military construction resources, research and development resources, reserve components resources and the like. How many people you're going to have in the Army, how much money you're going to have in the Army and how much you spend on all those things.

DR. KIRKLAND: Does it include how many buildings will be built at Fort Ord?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: And how many trucks and—

GEN. THURMAN: How many trucks you'd buy, how many in those days, how much money you'd put toward research and development for the Bradley fighting vehicle or the tank or Apache or Cheyenne in those days and the Black Hawk, all those kind of things.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you apply money to R&D [Research and Development], does that include an objective to be achieved year by year with these allocations?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. So what it does is, the program is the laying down of what the Army's force structure, research development and procurement, military construction, and reserve components programs are going to be for the next five years. And that's ruled on by the Department of Defense, and, subsequent to that, they issue a budget and you go and defend that budget before the Congress.

DR. KIRKLAND: The role of the Assistant Vice Chiefs to build the POM each year for the next five?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. You did that on a rolling five-year. Now they do it every two years. So I became a worker bee in all that, and I became the guy in charge of manpower accounts in the POM. We had another shop that did exclusively manpower work, but I had manpower accounts in the POM.

They did recruiting, drafting, other kinds of policy. But I was doing the POM work.

A couple, three months after I'd been there, the then-Secretary of the Army, Stan Resor, was faced with—this is 1970 now, late summer or fall of 1970—he was faced with the restructuring and downsizing of the U.S. Army, not unlike what we're doing now after the Cold War. In those days we had a million and a half people in the Army.

And the question from Secretary Resor's operation is, how low to take the Army and then what would be its force structure, what would be the needs for the procurement accounts, the research and development accounts, military construction accounts, et

cetera? So, indeed what this was, it was the process of forecasting what would be the size and shape of the Army after the Vietnam War.

So DePuy set up a separate shop. And I was chosen to be the head of that. And he told me to take a few guys and figure that out.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you pick them from within the other shops?

GEN. THURMAN: I got to pick them from the rest of PA&E and if I needed somebody from down below I could get it from someplace else in the Army staff. As I recall it, there were five guys or so at that time.

DR. KIRKLAND: They all green suiters?

GEN. THURMAN: They were all green suiters. We were then working with the Army staff, and iterating based on what we knew, and try and set up a plausible reason for why we should have “X” number of divisions and then what were the cascading dollars required to support those divisions, et cetera.

In the course of doing that work, we ran through iteration after iteration after iteration. There was a substantial amount of time spent by me and my little team with General DePuy, on the one hand, and with me and my little team with Secretary Resor. And I guess that’s when I became aware of how you do things in a strategic sense in the Army.

In other words, how do you forecast, how do you have a vision of where it is you want to go, how do you generate that vision of where it is you want to go, how then you apply the resources necessary to make it happen, and then how do you develop a sales methodology to carry that out?

DR. KIRKLAND: How did you get the vision? Did you do that by talking to other staff?

GEN. THURMAN: Let me give you an example. One of the things you will recall is at the tail end of the Vietnam War we were busy drawing down forces in Vietnam, but meanwhile we had forces in Europe that were going through the agonies of the damned with race riots and every other damned thing going on over there. But nonetheless we had commitments we had to have to take care of our European NATO requirements.

So it wasn't like I created the vision of what kind of force structure we'd need. It was more synthesizing what the national command authority said that it owed NATO in what was called the Defense Planning Questionnaire that got renewed every several years with the NATO ministers, both at State and Defense. And it was the translation of those goals into matters pertaining to what size and shape would the Army need.

So we came up with is something you well know because everybody knows what our NATO requirements were in those days. It was 13 and one-third divisions.

But then you had to do the calculations:

How many people does that take, how many recruits would you need in those case—draftees—would you need to bring in? What size would the training base have to be to support those draftees training them? How many people would you be sending to the Senior Service Schools? What would be the transient account? How many people do you estimate is going to be in the prison or the jug? How many people are going to be in the hospital?

And how much money will it take to support the development of what became known as the Big Five—the Bradley, the Abrams Tank, the Black Hawk, the Apache and the Patriot Missile System? How big would the reserves be? How much money would it take for them to operate? What would be the MILCON requirements, the military construction requirements overseas and here at home? And then how did you add up all that money and figure out how much it was going to take, how many people it would take?

DR. KIRKLAND: You had to crank in Korea, Alaska, Hawaii and that sort of thing also?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, and what we called special mission brigades around the world like Panama and Alaska, a variety of places.

DR. KIRKLAND: You would have the NATO document and NATO memorandum in front of you?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. We had a guy named Jim Compton that worked on that with us. And a guy named John McDonald was instrumental in working all that. We were sort of a little team of lieutenant colonels who knew both the ops side of things, the DCSOPS side of things as well as the procurement side. A guy named Harry Walker was our logistics guy.

John McDonald was our procurement guy. Jim Compton was the NATO guy. Other guys who would rise to some prominence in the services—Max Noah [LTG Max Noah] was down in the Secretariat at that time, Glenn Otis [GEN Glenn K. Otis] was in the Secretariat at that time. So we're banging ideas off those guys and synthesizing all that and putting together the necessary documents for Resor to make decisions about.

It was a case of a—this may sound self-serving but it's not meant to be; it's meant to be a lesson—it was a lieutenant colonel working probably in a lieutenant general's billet at the time. Now we'd give those kind of missions to the DCSOPS and tell him to do that.

But we're still fighting a war in Vietnam and getting out of Vietnam and all that kind of stuff, so DePuy was a guy, the kind of guy DePuy was, so he seized the initiative and went and did that. I recall meeting with Resor maybe eight hours a week. That's a lot for a lieutenant colonel. And on substantive matters. And plowing that back into deliberations, explaining to him why we had to have "X" amount of money in the ammo account, and "Y" amount in the weapons and track vehicle account and "Z" amount in the research and development account, how many people it's going to take and all that.

And I recall the end game was sort of like, we projected that you could do a 13 and one-third division force with special mission brigades and you could do that with 761,000 people. Turned out later when we got to 13 and one-third division the number was 771,000. But at the time we did all that work it was at 1.5 million level force.

So I look back on that as sort of a watershed event in my career because in order to get the data, interact with people and all that kind of stuff, we weren't the reservoir of everything. We were the synthesizers of a lot of it. And so I got to know the Army staff and how it worked and how to get information out of it, how to push the system. This was now my second tour on the Army staff.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have problems getting DCSOPS, DCSPER, DCSLOG...

GEN. THURMAN: No, absolutely not. DePuy had a tremendous amount of authority. And it was not a problem. We tried not to abuse it, although others would say that we did. But people enjoyed working for us and with us, and we got it done. And so the point I make about that is, that changed my life as an Army staff officer because the education was in a period of three, four, five months; and at the conclusion of that I was probably the expert on the interrelationship things pertaining to five-year programs.

So I'm turned back then after this project is over—turned back to Haverman. And Haverman makes me then the chief of the Program Development Team which develops the POM. And I did that for the next two years. So I built, as a lieutenant colonel, three POMs for the Army. And as such then I was conducting all kinds of meetings with the Secretary of the Armies both Resor and Froehlke, who succeeded Resor, dealing with OSD, PA&E, which was a fairly strong house in those days. It's now withered and essentially a eunuch on the DOD staff.

But, in all of that, I would say that that two-and-a-half years as a program guy gave me an extraordinary vision inside the Army as to how to make it work, interacting directly with General Westmoreland, who is the Chief of Staff, with DePuy, with the Vice Chief in those days who was Bruce Palmer [GEN Bruce Palmer, Jr.]. Dutch Kerwin [GEN Walter "Dutch" Kerwin] was the DCSPER of the Army, Stilwell [GEN Richard G. Stilwell] was the DCSOPS of the Army, distinguished people who knew a tremendous amount.

And I learned from all those people, and many of them became my friends. Even though we were several grades different. But I always look at that as one of the—Donn

Starry was in the Force Development Business. Fritz Kroesen was in the Force Development business.

So those days in my career were crucial to developing a wider perspective of the management of the Army, management and leadership of the Army.

And so I probably was the major change function as I developed.

DR. KIRKLAND: Why do you think General DePuy picked you to do that?

GEN. THURMAN: One, I think as I'd been a War College graduate.

DR. KIRKLAND: Weren't all the people in that?

GEN. THURMAN: Not everybody. My boss was an ICAF graduate. Haverman was an ICAF. Why they did, I don't know. I think Haverman did that. I don't know why I was chosen. I was an available body.

DR. KIRKLAND: It was quite a crucial function it seems like, and—

GEN. THURMAN: I think it's the twist of being at the right time in the right place and something falls on your plate. The question is, can you accomplish the mission?

DR. KIRKLAND: And you did.

(End Tape 5A, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland-Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 5

(Begin Tape 5, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: As the ADC walked off, he said to the Brigade Commander, “Don’t forget you owe me a relief in place.” Now what does that mean? That means that particular ADC at that particular moment is more concerned about going through a series of activities rather than getting it right even if it meant foregoing an activity. Do you follow me?

So the next afternoon at 5:00 a guy called me up, and I said, “Did you win or lose?” He said, “I won.” I said, “How many tows did you take with you?” He said, “I took the same 130 tows.” I said, “How many did you fire?” He said, “We fired 112.” I said, “Did you get kills with the tow?” He said, “Yeah, we got a lot of kills with the tows.” His tows weren’t in the fight.

Now here’s a case where going through the motions, doing an attack, doing a defense, doing a relief in place, doing a meeting engagement, all these things that you have to do as drills, if you don’t stop—the lesson in all this— if you don’t stop and get any of them right and you don’t get the weapons in the fray then the people lose confidence in their weapons. Don’t count on them. It won’t make up when they first go to combat and they’ll get their ass blown off if they fight a big enemy.

They won’t if they fight the Iraqis or something, but they would if they fight somebody else.

So there is a case where confidence says from a senior guy, “It’s okay to screw it up. We have trust and confidence in you. But go do it again until you get it right. And you’ll save lives doing that.”

Now that breeds confidence.

I don’t know who that battalion commander is. I know somebody who knows who that battalion commander is but I don’t know who the battalion commander is. I’ll bet you that forever he would get his tows in a fight because he now feels comfortable that it is a killing weapon system if it can be brought to bear.

So, it's back to, you asked about drills and competence and all that, and I just think that's where senior commanders need to apply their wisdom which, one, encourages people that it's okay to make a mistake; we're not flogging you for it, not writing you up as being a lackluster lout for getting whipped in this particular exercise. What we'd like for you to do is go through some little routine that analyzes what mistakes . . . this is it, the typical thing, the after-action review, is analyzes why it is you didn't fight well.

And then do it again so that you feel comfortable about getting your weapons in a fight.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that what that battalion commander did who—I'm trying to imagine what the difference between day one and day two in that battalion was, what—if he didn't know how to get them into the fight on Wednesday, what was the difference on Thursday and did get them in?

GEN. THURMAN: He concentrated on—

DR. KIRKLAND: Getting them into position where they could engage?

GEN. THURMAN: Getting them into position where the troops can engage them, and they probably put some smoke down on the company commander for the ITVs. And he's got an Echo Company that had ITVs in it, got it put into position where he could fight. Most of his equipment was ITVs. He didn't have any Bradleys, so it was an APC operation at that particular time in the 4th Mech Division.

So all I'm saying to you is, setting standards for people is okay.

DR. KIRKLAND: Rather than just running through.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Just don't go through the exercise so you can get checked off that you ran these four or five different exercises which they say you got to

do. Be confident it's something and say, "Geez, I need more time so I can get competent at something else."

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah.

GEN. THURMAN: So the 82nd—let's go back and reprise that for a moment. The 82nd was a joyful place to work. Very high regard for the division commander by everybody from the troops up through the leadership. Jim Vaught [LTG James B. Vaught] was another one of the ADCs. So several of the ADCs achieved lieutenant general rank. One did a four-star rank. A couple achieved major general rank. All these guys were turning over underneath Kroesen. And it was just a very comfortable place to work. Had terrific subordinates, had terrific boss, and you had a lot of bullets to shoot, and people wanted to train, so you trained.

DR. KIRKLAND: That does sound like a prescription for success.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: So what happened when you left the 82nd?

GEN. THURMAN: That's when I got that lovely set of orders. At that time to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. So I left the 82nd and spent about a month on holiday, and then I went out there to be the Deputy for Combat Developments at Fort Sill. I didn't know anything about combat developments. I mean, you're talking about a guy, fish out of water now. I knew nothing.

Now the ADC out there, the Assistant Commandant out there was a guy named Vernon Lewis [MG Vernon B. Lewis, Jr.]. He'd been my predecessor in the—he'd been in the 11th and he'd been my predecessor in the 82nd, and now he was the Assistant Commandant at Fort Sill. The commander at Fort Sill was Major General David Ott, who's a distinguished artillery officer and later would become the corps commander in Germany.

So I was given this mission of being the combat developer in the schoolhouse. I didn't know anything about combat developments.

DR. KIRKLAND: What does combat developments mean? Tactics or equipment or both?

GEN. THURMAN: No, it's equipment. Doctrine and equipment. But not the teaching side of the schoolhouse, principally in looking at doctrinal use of artillery and then what weapons systems or ancillary artillery systems need to be brought in order to do the job better. So I got into that, and I was there about three months, came out on a brigadier general's list.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have three years in grade yet?

GEN. THURMAN: Two. And I got a call the day I came out on the list, and it was from General Bill DePuy. He was now the Commander of TRADOC, had been the Commander at TRADOC for two years. And he said, "You are going to be assigned as the Deputy Chief of Staff of Resource Management," a billet that I had helped him create when TRADOC was created. It took the comptroller functions, personnel functions, force management functions, put them all in one shop called the Resource Manager. And that's over all the Army now. But at that time we were the only command that had that. And I said, "When do I report?" He said, "You report as soon as you can clear post."

He said, "There's only one thing I want you to do." I said, "What is that?" He said, "I want you to be a brigadier general when you get here." I said, "Well I got no control over that. You want me to get promoted out of here?" He said, "I don't care. You can get the toll taker on the Mississippi River Bridge to promote you, I don't care how you get promoted," but he said, "When you get here, you be a brigadier general when you arrive on post."

So a day or so later there came through frocking or came through instructions to promote me; whether I was frocked or not I don't recall, may have been frocked. So I was promoted by General Ott and my brother. My brother at that time was a major

general. So I got promoted and headed East and became the Resource Manager at TRADOC. Took over from a major general named John McGiffert who later would be the Director of the Army Staff and then retired as the Fourth Army Commander at Fort Sam Houston. [Auditor note: McGiffert actually commanded the Fifth Army at Fort Sam Houston.]

So I became the Resource Management guy for General DePuy and then I was working—General Gorman [GEN Paul F. Gorman] was the trainer. Many of these guys, Woodmansee [LTG John W. Woodmansee], Burdeshaw [BG William Brooksbank Burdeshaw], others had been promoted. Burdeshaw had been promoted, I think Woodmansee would be promoted the next year or whatever. And Burdeshaw was in the Combat Developments, guy named Stan McClellan was the personnel guy. Went to work for DePuy at Headquarters TRADOC, terrific period of service because Paul Gorman was just coming in with the ARTEP [Army Training and Evaluation Program] business, and the SQT, Skill Qualification Test, which had to do with many things I've just talked about. What are the skills you're supposed to have?

DR. KIRKLAND: Standards, Army wide, by grade, wasn't it?.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. Which a lot of people don't like. See, there's a euphemism that goes around the Army said, "We train to standards." Then you say, "We train to what standard?" They say, "We train to standard." You got to keep picking at that—what is the standard? So Gorman and DePuy wanted to have everybody train to a specific standard. And I heartily ratified it. I think that's the way to do it.

So skill qualification test in my view is right on. Other people in the Army don't like that, but I did.

DR. KIRKLAND: They want more local autonomy?

GEN. THURMAN: Local authority about that. You get local authority about that, you find some people won't do it because they haven't got moral backbone to go do

it. They don't have the moral backbone to somebody's—let me tell you what I learned in recruiting command. I'll tell you that one more time.

If you don't set the standard, somebody else will set the standard below you, and it may not be congruent with what you had in mind. So this is the thing you say, we want all infantrymen to have certain standards, all artillerymen have certain standards, all armor guys have certain standards.

Now if they all have certain standards, then it doesn't make any difference where you go in the world or what units you get assigned to, we know that you have a basic set of standards. A lot of people don't like that, because they say, "You're telling people what to do." And you say, "That's right, we are. This is not a everybody do their own thing operation. This has war-fighting connotations to it."

So of all the branches of service, the two that have most nearly the kinds of standards you want are the artillery and the armor. I mean, there is a way to load the weapon in a tank, just like there is in a howitzer. It's standard drill. You want everybody to be damned good at the standard drill and we can figure out what else you know you got to be good at.

Well, at any rate, those were exciting years, spent '75 to '77 down there and moved up to be the Program Analysis Director at the Department of the Army. But that's when the first glimmers of the National Training Center came along. Gorman and I went out to take a look at Fort Irwin, California, which was then a National Guard post. Quite different now than it was then.

So that was quite a formative period in my life.

Now it's easy working for DePuy because I'd already worked for him for three years, so it was none of this "get used to the boss" game. DePuy had done an oral history. You can take a look at that sometime if you want to figure out what he was doing there, and I won't recount what he was doing.

But one of the things he did was, we'd travel with what I'd call a traveling squad. It's one of the techniques I'd learned from him that I would later employ both as the Chief of Recruiting and as the Commander of TRADOC, Commander in Panama, which we all know is true the command is wherever the Commander is. So DePuy would take Gorman, Burdeshaw, and Thurman and we'd go somewhere.

And I wasn't in the training business. I wasn't directly in Combat Developments business. But the osmosis that went on there with the other two guys who were very good at their business—Gorman at training and Burdeshaw in Combat Developments—rubbed off. And in my case the comptroller, resource manager could go anywhere with DePuy.

Having said that, I recall going to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, one day for example, and DePuy said to the then-Commandant, General Ott, who I respected highly, he, DePuy, had a scheme up his sleeve. This is at the time that the then Chief of Staff General Abrams had asked his subordinate four-star generals to cough up spaces so he could create sixteen divisions instead of 13 and 1/3. So DePuy was on a trail of how to cough up spaces.

So he said to David Ott, "Right now we're sending recruits through Fort Leonard Wood or Fort Dix, and then we send them here to Fort Sill for advanced training." "Yeah, that's right." Said, "Suppose I gave them to you from day one and you came here and you had them for the total period of time, couldn't you start training them on something in artillery on day one like show them what an artillery projectile is going to be or—?"

"Yeah, yeah. That's great. You mean I'd get them for the whole period of basic and advanced training?"

"Yeah. That's right."

"God, that's a great idea."

He said, "I bet you if you took that basic training, that advanced training, you could probably squeeze out some time."

"Yeah, yeah. Boy, I could probably do that."

"So, why don't you take a look at that and give me, let me know in about a week what you think you can do?"

So Ott came back in about a week and said, "We might be able to squeeze out two weeks of time out of there. DePuy, going back on the airplane had already told me, said, "Take three weeks out of that what used to be 8 and 8 with a week in transit to get from one place to another, so 17 weeks. He said take it down to 13 weeks." To me, going back on the airplane.

I said, "Okay." He said, "And figure for me the number of trainees that we could reduce and the number of trainers we could reduce." All this stuff I'd done before in the

PA&E job I'd had as the programmer. Follow me? Right back at working for Stanley Resor three years earlier, 1975 so it's five years earlier, but the same conditions pertain. So we calculated that and then he said to General Abrams, "If you will let me do one-station training at—Fort Knox already was doing that—let me do that at Fort Benning and Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and couple other schools—I'll bet you I can save 'X' number."

He turned to me and I gave him the calculations. Able to save 5,000 people, which is half of one of these new bobtail divisions. Said, "Now the condition is you got to give me barracks money so I can put up a barracks down there."

So his grasp of what the art of the possible was and then a guy like me—I was the calculator in the back room—

But the point I want to make is, between DePuy and Gorman and Bill Burdeshaw and Combat Developments and I'm sort of the sweep-up guy here in terms of finding the resources for these things, they were able to make some major shifts in terms of how to run a business enterprise.

So that was quite a learning opportunity. Of course then I got fully into combat developments, so I learned a hell of a lot in the two years I was down there about combat developments because I sat in on every meeting that was done in the combat developments. So I got to know the people in Combat Developments, what they were able to do in various activities both in the Army Materiel Command as well as in TRADOC itself.

I think duty at TRADOC—this is what I call my third tour in TRADOC now because I was in TRADOC when I was at Fort Bliss, Texas; then I went back to Fort Sill for a brief period as a combat developer; then I come in this job at Headquarters TRADOC. So by the time I'm at TRADOC headquarters it's my fourth or fifth tour. So getting to know the Combat Developments business and how the role of the Army Materiel Command gave me a great insight into how to be an effective programmer when I got back up to be the major general in charge of Program Analysis and Evaluation. It also gave me great insight in how to be a better Vice once I became the Vice Chief.

The other thing I'd say to you is, understanding what the school system does for the Army—doctrine, leader development, equipment development, equipment requirements and the like—those things ought to be understood by every Army officer

that arrives at the top of the pile. Therefore, one of the things if I had anything to do about it, and I was the Chief of Staff of the Army, every hotshot general I thought I had, I'd make him cycle a tour into TRADOC.

It's not to say there aren't other important jobs to be done, but there is a learning curve about that that if you can serve a tour as a brigadier general or a colonel or as a branch school commander at Leavenworth in one of the jobs there, in the Combat Developments business or whatever, there's just a wealth of information that comes through you about how the Army is run that's very difficult to get in one of the operating commands.

And so my own view would be that those would be highly prized, highly sought after jobs because I'd have all my hotshots go through them.

If you look around the Army at this moment December 1993, Sullivan served in TRADOC, Benny Peay served in TRADOC, and a newly announced four-star, McCaffrey, served in TRADOC. Joulwan did not to my knowledge. Maddox did. Downing did. Jimmy Ross I can't recall, I think not. But essentially Reimer did not. Don't believe he had a tour. But sort of three-quarters of the four-star generals in the Army today have served in TRADOC. I don't think that's luck of the draw. I think that is calculatedly done.

So there's a great wealth of information about the bedrock undergirding of the Army, those things that serve the U.S. Army well between WWI and WWII are located in the training command. So it was important to me to go back there and do that particular task. There were other jobs.

I mean, it cut me out of being an ADC. So that's how I spent two years as a brigadier general.

DR. KIRKLAND: What's the real point of ADCs? Is it training to be a division commander?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I think the business of being an assistant division commander gives you—there's a great leap between being a brigade commander and being a division commander. And having the opportunity to be an assistant division

commander gives you a raised perspective that takes you away from what I call the nitty gritty of running a brigade and gives you a better perspective about how to employ the various elements of a division or those things that can be appended to a division in a reinforcing role that you perhaps didn't get when you were a brigade commander.

So I think it is a learning opportunity. And I'm not denigrating that. I'm just sorry I didn't have that opportunity. It would have served me better had I had one. But if I were king, what I would do is, you'd not be an assistant division commander but one year because I'd want to cycle as many people as I could through that particular billet of being an assistant division commander.

I'd run it on the model of the Kroesen Division. It's an 06-08 division. And these guys are cycling through for training about the operations of divisions and how to operate so that you can get a chance to observe a good division commander operating a division.

And you were able to parlay that then if you were elected to be a division commander or whether or not you go off and do other work, which you fully understand the needs of a division. And, oh, by the way, in case of mobilization you'd be available to be a division commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: And you put the other year in TRADOC or some place like that?

GEN. THURMAN: Or staff job in Washington, Joint Staff or elsewhere. Now once you get locked into Joint Staff you're in there for a couple years.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's a new requirement.

GEN. THURMAN: Always new requirements. It's always progress to add new requirements.

DR. KIRKLAND: One thing I kept hearing when I was collecting data in the late '80s was, got to have more time for new lieutenants that aren't—even the lieutenants were saying I wish I had a year and a half or two years to travel with one platoon, my

first platoon particularly, before I get shuffled to another platoon or a staff job. It's a rushed experience forming an Army officer.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, there was a lot to get done in 30 years. Then inside that 30 years there ought to be some payoff time.

DR. KIRKLAND: War College?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I'm talking about there are people who rush through billets. They don't become competent at anything. When I was the Vice Chief I used to speak to all the new brigadier generals, and the discussion went something like this.

"You've been selected because of your future service, not your past service, so it's what you're going to give us now that you were selected for. And therefore I want you to make sure that you notify the General Officer Management Office if you have any impediments in service."

In other words, "If there's someplace in the world you can't go because you have family problems or you have children that need special care or whatever it may be, let us know that right now because now you're going to pay the Army based upon the investment we've made in you. And we're going to figure out the jobs that you can help us out with based upon your competency."

You see, a lot of people don't like that because they want to select their own jobs. If you take me as a brigadier general, DePuy knew I was competent at resource management. I'd been doing that kind of work in the Pentagon for three years, and he wasn't hiring me to be an artillery commander. He was hiring me to be a resource guy, and I was pretty competent at that. So then I come in and be the PA&E. Two years after that, so this is now my seventh year after I get through with two years there. I spent seven years in Resource Management; I'm pretty competent then.

DR. KIRKLAND: Payback time.

GEN. THURMAN: Payback time. You say, in my case suddenly I went to the Recruiting Command and didn't have a chance to quote "be a division commander." I felt badly about that because that's what I really wanted to do. But the Army had better ideas than mine for what they wanted me to do. So when you get to be a general officer you're doing what the Army wants you to do, not necessarily what you'd like to do because it's time to pay off.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's an inversion of what many people perceive as—

GEN. THURMAN: A lot of people feel it's their business to tell the Army what they want to do. It's the other way around.

DR. KIRKLAND: If ever there was an expert in telling the Army what he wants to do is Max Thurman.

GEN. THURMAN: But not when I was a general. Pay off time then, do what the bosses tell me to do. Always do, and never was AWOL.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was it Shy Meyer who made you recruiting command commander?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: You must be talking to somebody else, not me.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I was sure he was talking to somebody else and not me. But it turned out he wasn't. He was talking to me. So I went out there and did it. Had fun while I was doing it.

DR. KIRKLAND: You managed to do that pretty much throughout, haven't you? I haven't heard anything about the time you were miserable.

GEN. THURMAN: I always had fun because every job I've had has been a learning experience, either by having good bosses to learn from or the sheer nature of the work to be done was inherently interesting. I think you have to find that. Some people are given responsibilities that they don't crave, and therefore they don't look for something to get interested in. Then they become storekeepers and mind the in-box and the out-box, but they're not really genuinely into it, and they don't feel good about what they're doing.

DR. KIRKLAND: A lot of that around, not just in the Army.

GEN. THURMAN: Probably.

DR. KIRKLAND: Could you describe the difference between the command climate that General Kroesen created and that command climate which Colonel Norris created, sounds like they're fairly similar. Except there seems to be a joyfulness about the 82nd that wasn't there in Colonel Norris' Group.

GEN. THURMAN: I think in the main they had a lot of similarity in terms of letting people below them run their business. I think the difference between the two of them would, one, be one is now major general and he's had two divisions and the other had one brigade command, brigade group level command and just had to do with the relative difference in position. One guy's just been around longer and done a lot more and seen a lot more than the other man.

DR. KIRKLAND: A higher level of confidence.

GEN. THURMAN: Ah, I really don't believe you could compare a division commander's domain and that of a brigade commander's domain. The nature of the duties are different. The nature of the duties are so different that notwithstanding what style you have, I think they transcend your style. Both those guys I got along with very

well. Never was accosted by Colonel Norris who's a perfectly fine chap. Just different from Kroesen. It was not a micromanagement.

DR. KIRKLAND: Both of them seemed to let you do your job.

GEN. THURMAN: Do your thing and report back.

DR. KIRKLAND: Another interesting thing, we were talking earlier today about, in connection with tour lengths in combat, the importance of the commanders learning curves and how it could be dangerous if there's a frequent change of commander, but then you did very well in both of your combat commands, 82nd, not in combat but fire brigade.

In spite of the fact, as you've described to me, the many times the limited amount of contact with the force that you'd manage. It worked for you. You were an effective battalion commander, effective brigade commander without much else in the way of troop contact. So your other argument holds water, too, but they do seem to be contradictory.

GEN. THURMAN: I think the 82nd Airborne DIVARTY, for example, was and still is an enormously competent, well-trained outfit because it had almost inexhaustible resources to train. And it attracts, in the main, very high-quality people. If you think about it for a moment and you had fought Desert Shield, Desert Storm not for 100 hours but you had fought it for a year, then tell me about the level of competency of the next group of company or battery commanders and the next group of battalion commanders and the next group of brigade commanders.

Now, at the moment we have the National Training Center. But if I had to go to a conscription and I had to set up those training periods like we did with the National Guard by sending them to the National Training Center, the Georgia Brigade that went before they were certified to go overseas—then you could envision that I would have to send my replacement units and officers through a similar experience at the National Training Center.

If you go back and read some of the work like *Certain Victory*, the Army's history of the Persian Gulf War, you'll find comments by the company commanders out there that "This wasn't the first attack I'd been into. This is the 21st or the 19th or the 10th or the 9th. I've been through this thing nine times at the National Training Center."

I'm just trying to suggest to you that even in our own Army today trying to find the next group of commanders that have gone through that with their battalions like our current battalion commanders have gone through it then you got to create the circumstance of which they can take a battalion through the National Training Center.

That sounds a little bit convoluted, but if I laid that out on a resource timeline for you, you understand that to replace a battalion commander of a tank battalion who had been to the NTC, I got to take the same battalion commander and take him to the NTC and let him be a battalion commander at the NTC.

Otherwise, I'm sending a rookie in to take an experienced guy's place. Follow me? So it may be better to fleet up the battalion exec or battalion 3 if he indeed is competent and make him the battalion commander and stay longer in country.

I'm just saying, I don't think we've worked all that out in our heads about a protracted conflict. Follow me? As long as you can overpower them, overwhelm them, get it done in 100 hours or five weeks or whatever the hell it is then you've got no problem with keeping people over there.

I think you may say to me, well there won't be any circumstance in which we'll get embroiled in another Vietnam, so your question is moot. I'd say, yeah, it may be moot but it almost became non-moot in Persian Gulf because we had to make a decision about whether we were going to stick with our people or rotate them because we weren't sure when the attack was going to take place.

So these are matters to be studied, laid down in what I would call an operations research mode. A lot of people don't like to hear that. But it's a matter of laying the calculus down much like we tried to do in the COHORT. You can't just say we ought to do COHORT, go do COHORT. You got to sort of look at where its effects on things, what are the resources required to do that. So if you believe that rotating commanders every six months is good, then you don't have to worry about it.

My own view is, I think it's bad. I think Vietnam proved it's bad. Now you may say, well what is the max length a guy can be a battalion commander? I say, go take a look at WWII and tell me what it is. If you are a researcher, you could go and tell me that and say the average lifespan of a battalion commander in combat in WWII was "X" amount of months. But he may have had "Y" amount of months in combat as a 3 or a brigade S3 or an XO or whatever it may be so he can begin to get some yardsticks about the relevant training of people that happened in WWII.

Now one reason DePuy was adamant about trying to create the National Training Center was that he had been in a unit that was poorly trained and had an officer cadre that wasn't very well trained. That's one reason he wanted to get on with getting a National Training Center. I think our officers are probably the best trained in the world. But the question is, who are the next guys going to come in?

Well, if you don't have a big force, let's say you get down to 10 divisions, all 10 divisions are created and over there, how many of your National Guard battalion commanders have been through the NTC? And the answer is, not very many.

You asked me about my own career. I think my own career would have been enhanced if I'd had more troop duty, no doubt it about it, been a better commander. Maybe I was satisfactory, but maybe I could have been excellent, better, more innovative.

See, again, I think you have to set up some systems, and that's the reason we've set up the system we have, which is for the average guy. But there would be some people outside that, but clearly as I've already stated in current parlance I would be a nonentity without having had sufficient amount of battalion time.

DR. KIRKLAND: My impression was that even at the time you were in the Army you had to climb uphill quite a ways in order to get the assignments that you wanted and constantly being turned down as being—I'd like to hear the story of how you got the job with DePuy, how you managed to overcome the obstacles. They'd say you weren't qualified, haven't been to Navy PG School.

GEN. THURMAN: No, I hadn't been to grad school.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh. Is that the only one?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, hadn't been to graduate school, and I told then-Colonel Bill Richardson, I said, "Well don't you still run papers around here, don't you have to get actions done in the Pentagon?" I said, "I'm probably the best action officer in the Pentagon." I'd only been there for seven months as a DCSPER guy, but I knew how to run papers in the Pentagon. Richardson knew who I was.

DR. KIRKLAND: You'd been invited there, hadn't you? Weren't you assigned there and then they said you're not qualified to be here?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I'd gone up to apply for a job when I was still at the War College because I wanted to come back and work in that shop. I'd seen the shop at work when I was a lieutenant colonel in the Army staff at DCSPER, but I wanted to get in that particular shop if they had a vacancy.

So Richardson was the XO, was the hiring and firing guy at that time. So he said you don't have any advanced degree, and we hire advanced degree guys. I said, you know me from West Point and I know how to run papers here in the Pentagon, so I can do that. So if you need anybody to run papers, I'm the guy.

So I don't know how that got decided. Don't know.

DR. KIRKLAND: Richardson must have made a recommendation.

GEN. THURMAN: Either that or he just hired me. I don't know. Maybe he just said, "We're going to hire Thurman, I know him, and that's the end of it." I just don't recall that. I mean, he'd never confided in me about that. Pretty soon I had orders to go to work there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Some people made some pretty good judgments on taking a chance on you and it certainly paid off for them time after time.

GEN. THURMAN: Rule one, when you're given a job, try to do it the very best you can. That's rule one. Any job. Like being the billeting officer at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. It's not a very glamorous job. You just try to do the best you can and apply yourself. In other words, I think you overcome a lot of problems about if you have a reasonable demeanor with your peers and your bosses and you're willing to interact with them.

Now sometimes you get rebuffed, you know, and they say buzz off, we're not interested in that. That's fine, but that doesn't stop you from coming back the next day on a different track with a different subject or that subject with a different sales pitch. I think most everybody is looking for somebody to get something done. And if you're then willing to work in our system, you can get reasonable chits for working. If you work, you'll do okay, simple as that.

See, I think you have to enter into it on the grounds that you asked me to serve and do this line of work; I will give you the best shot I can give it. If you don't like it, get yourself another guy. And it's easy for a bachelor to say that. So that gives you very high confidence that there's nothing too hard for getting done. I mean, just tell me what it is you want to get done and go get it done.

And on the other hand, it says you're very comfortable if this isn't meeting the mark and you turn out that you are not gifted at this particular work that somebody wants to dump you, they dump you.

Dr. KIRKLAND: Yes, the courage to resign.

GEN. THURMAN: No, not resign. That's not the point. The courage is don't be hard pressed, don't get disconsolate if somebody says you're not cut out for this kind of work. In the main, if you work hard and you have a good demeanor about that and you get the work done, people will have a good feeling about what you're trying to do. They may overlook some of your faults. Because one, you are willing to go to work and two, you are of happy demeanor and you don't sulk. In the main, you've got to get the work done. Being in the Army is about getting the work done. That's what it's about. Whatever job it is, we're asking you to do work. We'd like for you to do it at ever progressing levels so that you can be of more value to the enterprise. But the principle is

the same as in civilian life. If you go to work for a firm in civilian life or if you work for yourself, the notion is to get work done. Not stroke people. It's nice if you can stroke them and all that, but we're not in the namby-pamby business. We're in the business of getting work done. In our case, in the Army, you get people killed. That's the reason I am not a behavioral scientist. See the behavioral scientists would say the way you do this is you stroke people, make them feel good and they'll go do work. I say no, no, you set standards, tell them what it is you want them to achieve. When they achieve the standards you set, meet the goals you set, then you stroke them and then they will feel good. Motivation, you don't stand up and motivate people. You say, "Let go motivate." That's not the way to do it.

You set standards, ask for people to do things for you, for the benefit of the unit or whatever, they go and do that, you clap them on the back, give them a piece of ribbon, hold them up in esteem in front of their fellows and suddenly they have motivation. They feel good. You don't fire people. I mean I fired a couple but not many. I mean I got a helluva reputation for firing people. I fired a total of three people.

DR. KIRKLAND: Two in the 82nd?

GEN. THURMAN: All three in the 82nd. Fired two and relieved one and moved him to another job because he was cursing the troops. Couldn't stand that. I mean it's not that I don't use profanity because I do. But you can't stand in front of a formation and curse them. He had gotten tired. So there is a burn out. You got to recognize when people burn out.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did he ever go back to being a First Sergeant?

GEN. THURMAN: Yea. Good man. Terrific guy. Good family. He got re-acquainted with his family after that. See, in the case of the Battery Commander, I told you he slept. In the intervening week I was out in the field and I relieved him in the field. Because he could not organize his battery in a parachute assault. Now I want to tell you, if you're a battery commander in the Artillery and you cannot organize your battery for a

parachute assault and shoot bullets when you get on the ground, you got no business in being a battery commander. He'd been an aviator. He got his CH-47 driver and ended up being a battery commander. He was ill equipped for that, but nonetheless, he was there when I got there and there you were. So I got out there and I relieved him and I told him to go back into garrison and I would see him on Friday morning. This was about Tuesday morning. So I got back in from three days in the field and he came in to see me. I said, "How do you feel?" He said, "Well, I want to tell you that this is the first three nights of sleep I got in six months." I said to him, "You know, this is not your business. Maybe flying CH-47s is your business but this is not your business. And you are not comfortable with it." He was not doing his job. Now here is a case where this wasn't round one. This was round two for this individual. So it was better for everybody that he be gone. Because if we had gone to combat, somebody was liable to get killed.

DR. KIRKLAND: That was a crazy system that went on for I don't know for how many, maybe twenty years, where Army aviators were also expected to be branch combat competent.

GEN. THURMAN: Not possible.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's impossible.

GEN. THURMAN: Rare kind of guy can do both.

GEN. THURMAN: Really rare...ability to be competent in both. Most of these are found in the cavalry where there are both armor guys and cavalry guys.

DR. KIRKLAND: If they stayed in their cavalry units, it would probably work. This business of trying to be an artilleryman and an aviator, that's where a lot of the early aviators came from was the field artillery.

GEN. THURMAN: Once you got into the aviation game full up and then you'd try to come back and be a successful battery commander, some people did that but in the main, very difficult.

DR. KIRKLAND: When the artillery was mixed with air defense and you had to be competent in three specialties, it got ridiculous.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, thank you, sir. Take up PA&E next week?

(End Tape 5, Side A)
(Tape 5, Side B, is blank)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 6

(Begin Tape 6, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: Special luck. See the POM was being done on current numbers, but this was to forecast what the end state of shape of the Army would be after Vietnam, after the drawdown was completed. So it was a special look. It was done like, for example, when Carl Vuono was Chief of Staff of the Army after the Cold War ended he had to come to grips with how to take down the size of the Army, and what size would the Army be?

We had 18 active and 10 Reserve divisions, and he ended up with 12 active and 6 divisions. So he had to go through a process of how do you scale all that, and how much money, and how many people does it take? So it's a question of iterating to get to the right answer on what size will the force be on the one hand, and then later would be what does it take to support that in financial terms, personnel terms.

DR. KIRKLAND: You spent these 8 hours a week with the Secretary of the Army, you would have documents you'd present him.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: What would they look like? Would they be lists of activities and procurements and constructions, numbers of people associated with dollars?

GEN. THURMAN: Stan Resor was one of the—I have enormous respect for him. He's one of the men who got into the details of how things operated and ran. So maybe one week we would spend it on force structure; another week we'd spend it on research, development and procurement; and another week we'd spend it on how would the people be provisioned, where would they be going and how many would it take for

the training establishment? So it was sort of broken up into piece-parts that when you assembled it holistically then you had a forecast of what a new five-year program would look at after the end state was achieved.

DR. KIRKLAND: What kind of questions would he ask?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, if you recall, we'd had an ammunition problem, just to give you one little indicator. You may recall that in the aftermath of the Korean War there'd been an allegation that we had a shortage of ammunition. Well, Resor had a guy in the DCSLOG [Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics] business that did nothing but monitor ammunition because he said we'd never run out of ammunition as long as he was Secretary of the Army in Vietnam.

So, for example, he would look specifically at an ammo account and say, "Show me how we have made provision with the right amount of money to go in the ammunition accounts." Or, "Show me where this force is supposed to do its job in Europe, and do we have the right amount of reserve forces then to back it up and the right amount of supporting force, which would be what we'd know now to be the combat support and combat service support to support the 13 and 1/3 divisions."

We were committed to a defense planning questionnaire that said we had to get 10 divisions to Europe; later that would become 10 divisions in 10 days as we go later into the '70s. But in those days it was 13 and 1/3 divisions with four divisions deployed overseas.

So he'd be interested in the details. What would have to be the draft rate in order to sustain that kind of force?—because we didn't have an all-volunteer Army at that time, came in with the Nixon Administration later on. So thorough inspection of the accounts because he was very competent. He spent a very long tour—don't know the exact number, but several years as a Secretary of the Army, so he was a detail man. And he got into the details.

How big would the NCO corps be, and what would be the officer corps, and how many people would be trained at places like Leavenworth and the Army War College, all of which got into the details of what the training account would be in the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: What would be the criteria for justifying, say, this is enough or this is too much or this is inadequate?

GEN. THURMAN: We had a thesis that 13 and 1/3 divisions met our immediate need in NATO. So that became a driving parameter of what would the force structure be? Then we had these other special mission brigades they were called in those days, separate brigades. Alaska, Panama, elsewhere, that we had to provision. And so once you took that force together you could then determine; and based upon assumptions made on what the disposition of how many posts we'd keep open and that kind of stuff, you could make assumptions on how much you thought it was going to cost you to do that.

Now money wasn't necessarily a constraint, although we may have supplied some constraints at that particular time in order to give us some sort of reasonableness in terms of how much money we were going to have. But I don't recall that particular constraint. We may have had one, but I just don't recall what it was.

You might go back sometime and look at some of the records, archives on the AVICE business in the year 1970, early '71, and get some indicator of that. I don't have any documents about it. My recollection is that there were physical constraints obviously going to come in, but the principal constraint was, get rid of people because you're running a draft.

You had to get rid of the draft because the draft was an oppressive thing in the American psyche, and therefore you wanted to on the one hand reduce the force level to the right force to support Europe, and on the other hand you wanted to get rid of as much of the draft as you could get rid of, because that was an unwelcome thing in America. We're talking about 1970 now.

Now in the case of how much money you would spend in procurement, research and development and acquisition I can recall putting that POM together with a figure of about \$2.3 billion which provided the requisite amount of money for R&D, for the Apache, at that time, the Cheyenne and later it would go into the Apache. A main battle tank, a thing called the Mic V which turned out later to be the Bradley. And a UTAS,

which was a utility aviation helicopter which would later turn out to be the Blackhawk. But all these things were in R&D in those days. They were not in production.

So it was rather modest in terms of mainly ammo in production, trucks, some communications gear, but very modest procurement and mainly R&D, which later would provide the ability to take off when the Reagan years came upon us.

We had what was called a bow wave of procurement money of which we were spending more money and we were projecting to spend money in R&D that when the items arrived at procurement time, the procurement funds would exceed what we had in our program. That was called the bow wave of modernization. And guys like Don Keith [GEN Donald R. Keith] who was the DCSRDA, later the AMC commander, other people, would look at as saying my God the Army will never be able to buy that stuff, it's got too much stuff on its plate, not enough procurement money.

Turns up when Reagan came along, we had the stuff in Research and Development waiting to be bought, so we bought it. That's what went to war in Desert Storm.

So there's a big argument about bow waves and all that, but my own admonition about that is, you always want a bow wave in case you have to go fight. You got to have equipment to outshoot, outfight the enemy. And we had that, fortuitous, when the Reagans arrived.

The fiscal restraints I don't recall. I'm sure we had some but I don't recall what they were.

DR. KIRKLAND: You became a colonel during this period.

GEN. THURMAN: I became a colonel. I was out of that job when I became a colonel. I became a lieutenant colonel promotable, and I was promoted to colonel about April of 1973. By that time I'd left that job because my brother had come to take over as my boss, and DePuy said, "You can't work for your brother [LTG John Royster "Roy" Thurman], that's nepotism. So you work for me as my special assistant getting me ready to go down to TRADOC and you'll help me organize TRADOC because the general order—"

DR. KIRKLAND: That was brand new.

GEN. THURMAN: There had been a general order signed creating TRADOC and Forces Command from CONAR effective 1 July 1973. By this time I was on orders to go to the 82nd Airborne Division to command that. And that's a whole other story.

So in the intervening period of about four months I worked for DePuy helping him get organized to go to TRADOC, and I set up some systems down at TRADOC which would be helpful to him. And I essentially staffed TRADOC.

DR. KIRKLAND: Hired the people working?

GEN. THURMAN: DePuy's view was, if he had 20 good colonels, 20 good lieutenant colonels and 20 good majors, that was enough to run the 100,000 person TRADOC, plus his own genius and the general officers. So I was the officer in charge of finding out who the 20 good colonels, 20 good lieutenant colonels, 20 good majors were. I did a pretty good job.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did you do that?

GEN. THURMAN: The office of the AVICE had the authority to requisition files from MILPERCEN. So I did that. I'm now his special assistant. So I did that. I looked through a thousand files. What I did was I looked at them on the grounds, were the people reasonably available in the summer of 1973 for a PCS movement? In other words, I wasn't trying to remove anybody from a current job.

So, for example, in the grade of major I looked at all the people serving at Leavenworth going to school there and all the people at the various staff colleges included the Armed Forces Staff College. Two of those guys I hired. They both were operations research analysts, West Point graduates, distinguished combat records in Vietnam, gone to Naval Post Graduate School, and were coming out of the Armed Forces Staff College.

One of their names is Thomas Carney [LTG Thomas P. Carney]. He's now lieutenant general and DCSPER of the Army. Both these guys were majors. Another guy was major general, at that time Major Steve Silvasy [MG Stephen Silvasy, Jr.]. He had service in the Dominican Republic where he'd won the Silver Star. He's now a major general in the Army, and he's the J7 of the Joint Staff.

A major named Dane Starling [LTG James D. Starling], who was a logistics officer, just retired in 1993 as lieutenant general, transportation officer, lieutenant general, became the deputy CINC at TRANSCOM. If you begin to get the picture—

DR. KIRKLAND: You got budding stars.

GEN. THURMAN: I knew enough about how to screen a file for talent. In other words, they had to be good at their own branch for openers. They had to be right for this kind of assignment, had to have had the credentials with the troops at the right grade so they wouldn't miss out doing that. They had to have good files.

DR. KIRKLAND: Good efficiency reports.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, so they had to have a good file, although the efficiency reports were less important. What was important, what jobs had they had? Then DePuy wanted a four-man staff group that worked directly for him in combat developments. So I hired four guys for that. One guy was commanding the 2nd Division Artillery in Korea, coming out in the summer of '73. He had been the exec to Major General Jack Deane [GEN John R. Deane, Jr.] when Jack Deane was putting in the McNamara line in Vietnam, sensors.

And Deane later would become the AMC Commander. And this officer also had a tour in combat developments in the building and had been a DIVARTY Commander. So the chances are 95-to-5 he's going to be a general officer, and had a degree. So he knew the R&D community, and his name was Bill Burdeshaw. And he was later promoted to brigadier general.

Second guy I hired was a White House fellow, Cavalry aviator, then studying at the Hoover Institute, and when I called him up and said he was going to come there, he could have killed me because CONARC had the reputation of being the land of the sleeping colonels. And his name was Jack Woodmansee [LTG John W. Woodmansee]. He'd go on to be a corps commander in Germany, and he's now the chief operating officer of a very large firm in Dallas, Texas.

Third guy was specially selected. I'd known him for the years I'd been a programmer in the Army, and his name was Jim Compton [COL James R. Compton]. And Jim was an artillery officer who knew data systems in DCSOPS and also had been the NATO book handler in DCSOPS. So he would be extremely useful in terms of knowledge of the operations systems in the Department of the Army. And Jim is now retired and is going to civilian in the Office of Secretary of Defense.

The fourth guy was a guy that had never been to Washington, troop officer, made his living with the troops. His name was John Foss [GEN John W. Foss]. He retired as a four-star general.

DR. KIRKLAND: You did some good picking.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. So I knew how to read records. And I picked guys like Bill Tuttle [GEN William Gilbert Townsend Tuttle, Jr.], who later became a four-star general. Those four guys—Don Peel who became a three-star general. So quite a number of those guys did very well, and all of them resented coming to Fort Monroe and working for Bill DePuy—until they got there. When they got there, they thought it was the greatest thing that had ever happened because Bill DePuy was an electric leader. So I didn't go to work there. I left. All these guys said, "You sorry son of a gun, you got us on orders to come in here and you're abandoning, you're bailing out."

I went down and commanded the 82nd Airborne Division, artillery.

DR. KIRKLAND: You said there's a story in that also.

GEN. THURMAN: That's a whole different story. That story is a study in what the Army used to do versus what it does now. The Army now selects brigade commanders, battalion commanders. In those days, it didn't; you had to go get yourself a job.

DR. KIRKLAND: Really. So the individual initiative for those—

GEN. THURMAN: You just had to struggle to get an assignment, and you had to be accepted by the division commander. Right now you don't get accepted by the division commander; you get issued to the division commander. But in those days you had to run a race to get accepted to be a brigade level commander.

Now, yeah, MILPERCEN would nominate you, but the better way to do was to be asked for. So there was an officer going out to the 4th Division, and so I was still the lieutenant colonel promotable at that time, but I said to him, "I'd like to go out and be the DIVARTY Commander at the 4th Infantry Division." He said, "What do you know about self-propelled artillery?"

I said, "I know a lot about self-propelled artillery; I commanded an SP outfit in Vietnam, I know all there is to know about self-propelled artillery." It's going a little far because he didn't know all about those nuke weapons in self-propelled. But I said then I'd been in the nuke weapons business in the Honest John so it wasn't strange to me.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who was this guy you were talking to, a general, commander of the division?

GEN. THURMAN: No. He thought he was going to command the division. But in the end game he didn't get the division command, so I didn't get to go to the 4th Division. Then I went to Germany and applied to be the division artillery commander in the 8th Infantry Division. My brother was the ADC and had left the 8th Division. But I knew the 8th Division Commander, so I asked the 8th Division Commander if I could be the Division Artillery commander of the 8th ID.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you fly over there and hustle the job—

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. This is back in *deja vu* or Vietnam, follow me? You got to move out. I mean go back and look at my record, I only had eight months or a year. I had one year with troops in a period of from . . . —since leaving the 11th Airborne Division and the 24th Division in 1958, and now it's 1973. That's 15 years. I had one year with troops. So when you looked at going back to that criteria from Vietnam over there at MILPERCEN, why humma humma. There were helluva lot of other guys that spent more time with troops than I did.

But General Michael Davison from West Point was now CINC USAREUR, and he put another guy in as Division Artillery commander over there. So I didn't get that billet.

Then I went down to the 1st Cav Division, Fort Hood, Texas. I knew the division commander slightly. He was an aviator, Major General Jim Smith. So I went down and interviewed with him and said, "I'd like to come down and command your DIVARTY." He said, "Okay," after he mulled it over about 30 days.

About 30 days later I got called up and said, "No, you're not going to command here because the new division artillery commander here is going to be Colonel Jack Merritt." So now I'd struck out on three DIVARTYs. There are only 13 of them available.

So then serendipitously out of the blue I get a call from MILPERCEN, and my assignment officer is a colonel named Wendell Gilbert. And Wendell and I had been in the 11th Airborne Division together, the mafia of the 11th Airborne Division. Wendell says to me, "Would you like to be the division artillery commander of the 82nd Airborne Division?" I said, "You mean I don't have to go down for an interview?" He said, "No, General Kroesen already knows you." I'd never served with Kroesen, but he knew me by reputation because he'd known me on the Army Staff.

So he said, "He'll take you as DIVARTY Commander." I said, "Gee whiz. Going down to the 82nd Airborne Division, I'll take that in a heartbeat, how soon can I get there?" So that's how that came about. It's an interesting story of, in those days you had to work to get yourself a brigade commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: No surprise to you—you'd been managing your career in a very personal way before you even got in the Army, at least after you entered the Army.

GEN. THURMAN: It's an episodic thing that as an example when I came out of the 82nd DIVARTY, which was in about March of 1975, turned it over to Carl Vuono, MILPERCEN had asked me, "Where would you like to go?" I said, "I'd like to be the chief of staff of any division in the Army worldwide." They said, "How would you like to go to Fort Sill, Oklahoma?" I said, "I wouldn't like to go there. I already answered the question. You asked me a question and I answered the question."

So in about a week they called up and said, "Fort Sill would really like for you to go to Fort Sill. How would you like to go to Fort Sill, Oklahoma?" I said, "I told you once, now twice, I'd like to go be the chief of staff of any division in the United States Army." They said, "Well, there are none available." I said, "Well, you asked what I'd like to do; that's it."

About a week later the guy calls up and says, "How would you like to go to Fort Sill?" I said, "You keep asking me this question and I keep giving you the same answer." I said, "I've never been AWOL in my life in the Army. So if you cut the orders, I'll have to obey the orders, but you asked me where I want to go and I'd rather be a chief of staff anywhere in the Army—overseas, CONUS, doesn't make any difference."

So they cut the orders and, obviously, I reported to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. But it was that constant tension because I was an out-of-the-ordinary, not because of competency but because of where I'd gone in my career, that MILPERCEN sort of took a little bit of a jaundiced look at where they thought I would be suitable to be assigned.

So when I got in the business of trying to scrape up a job as a DIVARTY Commander I had to go out and do a little work on myself. But, in the end game, it came through: MILPERCEN did assign me, and I got the job anybody would crave to have, which is made the division artillery commander of the 82nd.

So now having helped General DePuy get himself organized in famous downtown TRADOC, seeing that launched, I was gone by the month of June of 1973 and headed off

to Fort Bragg and took over from Colonel promotable Vernon Lewis who had also been in the 11th Airborne Division, working for Fritz Kroesen.

DR. KIRKLAND: Sounds pretty much like nirvana.

GEN. THURMAN: It's not bad. I'd never been assigned to the 82nd, but I'd had four-and-a-half, almost five years in the 11th. So I was an experienced parachutist and knew what to do in the parachuting games, so although I hadn't been in the 82nd I was soon to learn all the business about loading out fast. By September we had parachuted into Turkey in an exercise, and by October would come the Yom Kippur War, the 1973 war, October '73, and we got alerted to go over and fight then. So it didn't take long to—we didn't go—but it didn't take long to get organized for combat in the 82nd.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you go there, how did you assess the go-to-war capability of the battalions?

GEN. THURMAN: You mean going in?

DR. KIRKLAND: */ you arrived were those battalions as a group ready to go fight?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah. The division had been high on the list of contingency forces to load out from CONUS United States. They were well-rehearsed. Vern Lewis [MG Vernon B. Lewis, Jr.] had commanded, I think, three batteries and two battalions in combat, and he was a distinguished artilleryman. So the units were very well-trained. I knew that from personal knowledge. I had a very strong staff, had an executive officer named Raphael Hallada [MG Raphael J. Hallada] who'd later end up a CG at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

The S3 was an officer named Jerry Granrud [LTG Jerome Granrud] who'd end up a lieutenant general commanding general of the U.S. Army forces in Japan, U.S. Army-Japan now. If you look at those two guys, I had two sterling subordinates, both of whom

had been in the division for a couple years as officers in battalions. Neither one had had a battalion at the time.

So the tempo of training in the 82nd was one of those things where it's easy for a guy like me to come slip into it, and everybody knew how to go do an immediate alert, rig equipment, get it ready to go and all that kind of stuff. That was just routine operations. Early on that summer we ran a big combined arms live-fire exercise; the Marines came up, Reserve Artillery was embroiled in it. So we had a very large exercise.

I think the best thing that can be said, it was led by a distinguished combat veteran named Fritz Kroesen. I can't tell you how good the command climate was there, no way to express how good a command climate. I'll never forget the entry session I had with Kroesen after I signed in. I reported to him, hadn't taken over the DIVARTY. It was going to be the next day.

I had an office call with him the afternoon before. I'd known Kroesen a little bit but I never worked for him directly. I'd known him as a staff officer. Here is about a quote of what he said to me, "Welcome to the 82nd Airborne Division. We are happy to have you as a DIVARTY Commander."

He said, "I've got a couple instructions for you. I'd like you to command the division artillery." I said, "Okay, I understand that." He said, "You've got some battalion commanders down there that have never commanded a battalion before, so this is their opportunity to learn how to command a battalion. So I'd like for you to do is let them command their battalions. What I'd like for you to do is, I'd like for you to command the DIVARTY."

He said, "You know what I do is I command the division and you command the DIVARTY and they command the battalions; you got that?" I said, "Yeah, I believe I understand what you're talking about here." He said, "Incidentally, I've already commanded a division before." He had the Americal Division in Vietnam. I said, "I believe I understand this thing, cold turkey."

Kroesen had that taciturn, confidence-building, non-frenetic, everything-is-doable, nothing-is-a-crisis manner about him. So it wasn't a fear operation going to work for Fritz Kroesen because there wasn't any of that in the division.

Now when I got there about the 15th of June 1973, Ed Partain [LTG Edward Allen “Ed” Partain], whom I’d served with at West Point, was a brigade commander. Roscoe Robinson [GEN Roscoe Robinson], who I didn’t know but was later to be a four-star general, now deceased, untimely leukemia sort of like my leukemia, and the Third Brigade commander I’ll have to think about. All three of those brigade commanders and Lewis, who I was succeeding, had come out on a brigadier general list. It was unheard of to sort of have four guys from the same division, same time, come out on the brigadier general list.

So I got there and I was sort of the rookie, and all these other guys were promotable to general officer.

DR. KIRKLAND: You hadn’t even made colonel yet, had you?

GEN. THURMAN: I’d made colonel in April. So within a period of about 45 days then Jim Lindsay [GEN James J. Lindsay] took over the brigade, later be a four-star general. Sandy Meloy [MG Guy Stanley “Sandy” Meloy, III] took over the brigade. Bob Elton [LTG Robert Moffat Elton] took over the brigade. I guess he took over about that time. So when we ended up with the new team on-board they were all very competent guys with their craft. I thought I was a good artilleryman. So we had a very comfortable arrangement with the division commander.

Fritz had told me that he wanted me to continue to run live-fire exercises with battalions and that I would be the officer in charge of those exercises and would be the chief safety officer in those exercises. His admonition was to make them as difficult and demanding as possible without killing anybody. It was that interaction of me as a DIVARTY Commander with my colleagues on the one hand but with their battalion commanders—because I had to run one of these exercises.

So that’s where for example I met Carl Steiner [GEN Carl Wade Steiner]. He was the battalion commander at that time. Carl and I used—he was lieutenant colonel, commander of the battalion, and I was a DIVARTY Commander supporting him, on the one hand, but acting as a controller and safety officer.

He and I went out and operated up and down the middle of the nights, shot a lot of bullets together, and that bond continued when he was 18th Airborne Corps Commander and I went to Panama. Asked Chief of Staff of the Army if he would let me have him to be the tactical commander in Panama because I had the utmost confidence in Carl Steiner.

But the atmosphere with Kroesen—I don't believe he ever called me on the telephone, he did in the course of 18 months, he may have called me once a month on the telephone.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did he meet with you, periodic get-togethers?

GEN. THURMAN: We met once a month we had what was called a blue room commanders call. We had all the senior officers of the division plus the battalion commanders of all the units in the division. We would meet frequently. What I am saying to you is there was none of this burdensome, "I read on the blotter yesterday or this morning that you had some 'Gibroni' did X, Y or Z," whatever. None of that.

He called me, he used to routinely call me if he was going to make a decision on a courts-marshal proceeding that either went against me or ratified what I said. He was getting ready to take final action, he always called me up and say, "I've reviewed this, going to do A, B and C, got any problem with that?" "No problem with it."

The only other admonition that he had was that he expected to be notified if I planned to relieve anybody. It wasn't a question of him vetoing it. He wanted to be notified about it. Ended up relieving one battery commander and one battalion commander during the tour.

The point I want to make about it is, it wasn't an oppressive command climate. It was everything you'd seek. And the reason you'd seek it, the reason it happened because you had a man who was very comfortable in command as everybody knows. Saw him as Corps Commander, saw him as USAREUR Commander, saw him as a FORSCOM Commander, saw him as a Vice Chief. He's a very approachable, solid, dignified, thoroughgoing, unflappable commander.

I recall our getting tuned up to go to—we were out on an exercise. I was the architect of command post exercises. He assigned that to me as a functional mission. So I was doing one of these about every two months or so, and we were in the field in October doing one and got an order to report to the Blue Room. We got into the Blue Room and he said, “There’s a fracas going on in the Middle East, so exercise the 18-hour alert.” I raised my hand and said, “Are you telling me to draw live ammunition and rig it?” He said, “Draw live ammunition and rig it.”

End of that. Nobody asked any questions. There wasn’t any frantic this or that. This was 3:00 in the morning, but we all knew our business. It was a very talented organization.

DR. KIRKLAND: This was a time when the Army was in very low repute with the country as a whole.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: You still had primarily staffed, I guess, with lower level enlisted draftees.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, but Airborne you’d got a double-volunteer system, one to get in the Army and second to—you had to volunteer to get in the Airborne. So that pushed a lot of people into the RA category.

DR. KIRKLAND: So they made some decisions of a positive nature.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I can recall only one rumble in the division. It was a particularly oppressive night, and the power went off in the division area. There were a lot of guys out in the street. Kroesen came down, walked around in the street, and that was the end of that.

DR. KIRKLAND: He talked to guys?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: He was the sort of person to talk to soldiers?

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: What would he talk about?

GEN. THURMAN: Again, I say quite taciturn. So he would go out and look at you in training and he would walk up to a soldier and he'd say, "How are you doing, Soldier? How are you doing, Sergeant? How are you doing, Trooper? How are you doing, Men?"—if it was a howitzer section or a platoon. There was just no—he was a man who was loved by the troops.

There's some people that are and some people that aren't.

DR. KIRKLAND: Would they tell him how they were? Would they say, "Fine, sir"?

GEN. THURMAN: No, I think he got a very good insight into the size and shape of the division. He had a peculiar—he put out a letter, which is one of the curiosities that I've ever seen put out by a senior guy. He wrote a letter to all of the command structure in the division and it was called the 06-08 letter. The 06-08 letter said, "This is an 08-06 commanded division."

Notice he left out 07.

Then he went on to cite what the relationship would be between the division commander and the brigade commanders. One pager. Then he said, "And the ADCs will assist me in carrying out my responsibilities."

DR. KIRKLAND: That's exactly how it works, isn't it?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, but by leaving 07 out of it, you understood that I had access to the 08 anytime I wanted it, notwithstanding what the 07 had to say. We got along with the 07. We had a distinguished group of brigadier generals—Jack Forrest [LTG John F. Forrest], later would be lieutenant general; Joe Fant [MG Joseph Lewis Fant, III] would later be a major general; some more will to mind in a minute.

But the point was, it was clear what the chain of custody was between the division commander and the brigade commanders. That permeated down the lines. So it wasn't any folderol about big brother's overlooking your shoulder.

Oh, Volney Warner [GEN Volney F. Warner] was one of the ADCs that later would be a four-star general.

That particular letter was a stroke of elegance I would say on the part of the division commander to clarify relationships on the post. Now I'd find the ADC—Volney Warner used to go out and spend all the time jumping with us in the field, going through ATTs and battalion tests and battery tests, and all that kind of stuff.

DR. KIRKLAND: Just there watching?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. Volney Warner probably spent 300 days a year probably in the field when he was the assistant division commander for maneuvers. If the infantry battalion went out in the field, nine of them, cav squadron is 10, if they went out in the field, he was in the field with them. Made the parachute jump in with them, watch what they were doing, followed them all through the activity, made the heliborne assaults with them, slept in the field, didn't come in out of the field for three or four days while there were out there doing their ATTs or battalion tests. We called them battalion tests in those days.

I had an arrangement with my fellow brigade commanders, whenever one of their battalions went in the field one of my batteries went in the field because that's the way we would deploy on the 18-hour sequence. So I'd jump with the battalion, as well, infantry battalion, and I'd watch what my artillery battery was doing and my LNO was doing with that battalion.

One of the first things I did when I got there was move the artillery liaison officers down to the infantry brigades and now the infantry battalions because if we wanted ownership my rule was anything the infantry battalion commander or brigade commander wants they get it unless it's disapproved by me personally. That's the way we were going to support people if we went to war.

So we had very good relationships with them, and that's the way I got a chance to know my battery commanders and my first sergeants and my chiefs of smoke and my liaison officers and alike. So we had some terrific officers, but you went out to observe them as how they worked with the infantry because that's who they were going to have to work with.

The same guys would then provide shooting fire for these guys when we did all these live fire exercises. So we were in the field all the time.

But the ADCs were out there all the time not only when I was there. They were there all the infantry were doing their thing.

It was quite a field-oriented division, so you had fun doing what you were doing because it was busy. Still is busy, it's the busiest division in the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Amazing though what competence in those privates and sergeants—

GEN. THURMAN: Absolutely. I'll give you an example. I went out there one day on a parachute jump on the western edge of Fort Bragg with a Battalion Combat Team with one of my artillery batteries. And neither the Battery Commander, nor the First Sergeant, nor the Chief of Smoke nor the Executive Officer landed in the drop zone. Because the Battery Commander didn't know his business and had not properly cross-loaded and this airplane had aborted and all these principles in the battery didn't get there. The battery was set up ready to go, some sergeant moved up to be the Chief of Smoke and got the battery laid, Liaison Officer came down and got the fire direction going and all that. So the competence was truly good. It's not that we didn't work at competencies, we did. We had all sorts of competitions that we ran in the DIVARTY in order to make sure that the Section Chiefs felt good about what they were doing, and so

the batteries felt good about what they were doing. Shot about 27,000 rounds a year. Used to beg, borrow, and steal ammunition from other 105 batteries, battalions and brigades that did not shoot. So the allowance is 20,000 and we were able to shoot 27,000 a year. Shot a lot of artillery rounds.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were the junior people not spooked by the presence of you and one of the ADCs?

GEN. THURMAN: No, it was common place. Everybody knew it was going to happen. You did not get in there from the point of view of trying to run the RSOP for the unit while it was doing its work. What you did was you observed people. If you did not like what you saw, you'd tell the Battery Commander to shape it up. But you can't observe that if you're not out there in the field with them. So I mean the principles of an artillery outfit coming in by parachute is how fast can you de-rig, did the people get there to do it, are you in position ready to fire, you can't observe that from afar. You got to be on the scene to figure that out. So the thing to do is to jump with the troops, observe all of that, when you got a healthy dose of things are going right, watch them move with an air mobile, see how well they were able to rig. So it was a matter of assessment of how is the training state as opposed to having somebody tell you about it.

DR. KIRKLAND: I can see that. In the relationship between you and General Kroesen, was one where he had great trust and confidence in you and let you do your job. I foresee that atmosphere from you to your battalion commanders, from your battalion commanders to your battery commanders would feel comfortable with you being there and with the ADSs there.

GEN. THURMAN: You'd have to ask them about that. I can't report to you about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: You could tell if people were stuttering or stammering or whether...

GEN. THURMAN: My view is generally that did not happen. Maybe it did and I did not get the feedback about it. But, you know, the notion of jumping with the troops, the notion when he told me I was the safety officer for an infantry battalion with live fire, mortars, machine guns, Cobras, 105 howitzers, 155 howitzers, all the infantry weapons and all that, you can bet your ass I was out there making sure that nobody got killed. In fact, I was the point man. So if anybody got killed, I'd get killed. Had a radio on my back. Operated with the forward observer in the lead element of the infantry battalion doing its thing. It wasn't personal bravado, it had to do with responsibility. And we didn't kill anybody. We killed some troops in a preparatory exercise when I was not out there. So I had to relieve a battalion commander as a result. Had a border accident.

(End Tape 6, Side A)

(Begin Tape 6, Side B)

DR. KIRKLAND: Because he was the Safety Officer?

GEN. THURMAN: He was in charge of that activity. The infantry asked him for a clearance to fire. He gave the clearance to fire without properly checking the impact zone of where the mortars were going to land. There were people in the impact area. People were killed. You see we traverse the impact area during all this stuff. We had a road right down the middle of the impact area. So we'd operate there. That's so you can get the ammunition fired in the impact area. We were all in the middle of the impact area. So it's a fairly sporty course.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's pretty sporty. Would you be standing around watching a battery in action, might one of the sergeants or the captains or the lieutenants, the executive officer come up to you and ask your advice on anything?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I did not operate that way. The way I operated, I would go into the position area and watch what they were doing. How did they occupy the position and what were they doing. Of course, obviously, any artilleryman, if there was an unsafe act, you gotta do something about an unsafe act. But in the main, it wasn't a question of going out there for the business of interrupting what they were doing. The question was to observe the quality of training. Are you doing what are you supposed to be doing? Are you getting the position put in? Is it silent? Are you getting your rounds off on time? Fire direction moving rapidly that computes solutions? General tenor of activity. Did they get lost in moving from one place to another? Did they come in on time? What was the disposition? Did they start digging in when they were supposed to dig in? How did they handle the ammo, stacking it properly? Stand behind a piece during a firing mission? Not interrupting the business, just watching it and trying to apply judgments about is the unit well trained or not? And, they were well trained. Now, different in running these live fire operations. Live fire operations put an enormous burden on two guys, Gerry Granrud, who was my S3, and me. Because we went through

every one of those things, and there was nine of them in a year, ten of them with the Cav Squadron. I'll just give you an example. The Cav Squadron Battalion was commanded by an officer who had been an advisor in Vietnam. And we were coming in with artillery and Cobras firing simultaneously with mortars and the arrival of the "slicks" with a company of troops. And I was standing by this guy, behind him, and I was doing the safety checks, but he was making all these decisions. The guy was having difficulty managing that. I said, "You were in Vietnam but you never were involved in an air mobile operation?" This is a piece of cake stuff. He said, "I was never in that because I was only an advisor in Vietnam. We never got air mobile operations in the sector I was an advisor in." So it was tutorial about that. We'd gone through tutorials about how to do it, but this guy had never done that. He was a lieutenant colonel but had never done that. Piece of cake for people who had done it before but when you've got artillery rounds in the air and you are going to call them off "X" seconds before the Cobras come in and "Y" seconds before the other stuff lands. You also got smoke on the LZ and you got white smoke too. So competency of conducting the kinds of operations we might have to go and conduct if we had to go to war.... Those things are strenuous, keep your wits about you because you could kill people. Kroesen told us to go do the real McCoy. And he said you are the safety officer for the division. Pretty simple direction.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did everybody practice for Cobras, mortars, artillery, infantry?

GEN. THURMAN: You'd go out and rehearse the operation on dry work beforehand, begin the coordination time points down. That was left to the battalion commanders obviously to go schedule that preparatory training to infantry battalion commanders to schedule preparatory training. Guys like Elton were busy supervising all that, and we got into real-live fire game and got pucker time.

But we had a competent division, knew how to shoot bullets. Everybody knew how to shoot bullets. Guys like Steiner and other people who were battalion commanders in those particular days, good work. Competent guys. Seen combat in Vietnam so they knew what they were doing.

DR. KIRKLAND: This time, I guess, maybe a lot of your company and battery commanders had been to Vietnam also.

GEN. THURMAN: No. A lot of them had not been. So a lot of people in fire direction centers hadn't been there. NCOs had been there. Very robust NCO corps. So a lot of people were being trained, no doubt about it. A lot of forward observers had never done that before because they'd just come out of West Point in 1972 or '73 or ROTC or whatever, so they were all newbies to the scene. Saw one of those kids over in the War College last week, gave a class over there and this guy was over there, had a lieutenant, came to work as his first duty assignment. They remembered. We spent a lot of time in the field, shot a lot of bullets. Now he's an ex-battalion commander going to the national War College doing fine. Ned Spohn, S-P-O-H-N.

DR. KIRKLAND: Leadership techniques or gunnery techniques or fire massing or—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, in every case of—we used to do all our testing of our battalions, sort of a battalion test, we'd do it off-post. Frequently we'd do them down at Fort McClellan, Alabama. We'd parachute in to Fort McClellan. This gave us a chance to rig our stuff. Parachute into Fort McClellan. Went through all the interaction with the U.S. Air Force in order to get the airplanes allocated, loaded, jumped.

And we'd take an infantry platoon, infantry company with us down there and run an integrated operation back and forth through the field and the Pelham Range at Fort McClellan. In all those cases we'd always select a section which would do a direct fire killer junior kind of deal.

So all the sections had to keep up with the killer junior routine, direct fire, learn how to shoot direct fire and learn how to shoot killer junior stuff, poop out a round out there, couple hundred meters in order to stop from getting overrun. So we had a best battery game going, and we also had a best section game going in order to foster gunnery competence at the section chief level.

I guess when I look back on my roots in the 11th Airborne Division, one of the first things I did when I got there back in June of '73, I said to Granrud and Hallada, because they'd been in the division quite a bit longer than I had, "When is the last time we had a gunnery exam, gunner's test?" They said, "Not in the happy memory of man." I said, "Okay, we'll have one in 30 days and I'll be down to supervise the thing." That created a little notoriety. This is all the officers had to take this thing. The instruction I gave them is, keep taking it until you make expert on it.

It didn't make me feel bad because I'd done that when I was a lieutenant, so I didn't lose any sleep about doing that. I remember I had one battery commander said he wasn't going to take them. I said, "It's okay, you don't have to take the test and I want you to stand up for your principle base, but the day after we take the test and you aren't there you won't be the battery commander anymore, because I got a set of principles. You got to know your hardware."

And I'd been mindful of Jack Vessey [GEN John William Vessey, Jr.] winning his Distinguished Service Cross as an artillery lieutenant colonel when he babysat a artillery battalion and he got overrun and he ended up with a sergeant firing beehive on the piece. So it was important to me to have people know their hardware.

Obviously, the captain showed up and took the test and passed it. He came up to me later, I mean much later and said, "You did me a courtesy because I really didn't know that piece like I knew the M101A1," which had been the standard artillery before the M102, which is the little Howitzer which is relatively new to the Airborne. He'd seen service in Vietnam but he hadn't seen service with that weapon in Vietnam.

So I think we got off to the right foot saying we got some standard to maintain around here. So if there were any leadership tricks I don't know what they were. I didn't try any. That's not my style. I'm not a trickster. My view is, demonstrate competence and you're in good shape.

I did one thing which was an interesting thing from the corps commander's point of view. We had a personnel inspection, and this team came down from the Department of the Army and inspected the personnel of the DIVARTY and we found out of the 2,200 people in the DIVARTY, we had three out of a position from MOS in grade qualification.

Three weeks later they came down and hit one of my buddies in another brigade, and he had 1,000 out of position. This is much later in the tour.

In fact, Tackaberry [LTG Thomas Tackaberry] by this time had taken over as the division commander. It was by serendipity that I'd gotten tired of overstrengths of one battalion and understrengths of another, and in terms of grades, so I leveled it all out in a session on a Saturday and Sunday, much to the chagrin of battery commanders and first sergeants.

DR. KIRKLAND: You moved people.

GEN. THURMAN: I moved people.

DR. KIRKLAND: Involve a lot of people?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I moved probably 300 people. I moved them because the mafia had taken over; that is to say, the personnel mafia. This guy had been in this battalion for four years and he'd been promoted in rank, and he was way over-grade in his particular job. Meanwhile the next door neighbor was undergrade. So we just leveled it out.

Well, leveling it out in a place like the 82nd is not hard. The DIVARTY is so close. People have served in the other battalion anyway. Right now it's a regiment, so it really doesn't matter that much. It's just a matter of breaking up the cliques and putting them in the right job, the right billet.

Well, corps commander had got the report that I had less than 10 in the wrong position. He got the next report that it was 1,000 in the wrong, so he went ape, couldn't believe it.

So I had to explain to Tackaberry how that was done. He said, "Well, you have to teach a class to your fellow brigade officers." I said, "Give me a break now. All these guys know how to do that. If they want to do that, they'll do it. Just tell them to go do it. But I'm not going to get up there and teach Elton and Jim Lindsay [GEN James J.

Lindsay] and anybody else, Sandy Meloy, how to straighten out their personnel system. They know how to do that; if they want to do it, they will.”

So I don't think I had any gimmicks about leadership. We had a good operation and it went fine.

DR. KIRKLAND: In light of what happened in that battalion in Vietnam where you had some switching around, I guess it's a totally different thing, isn't it? People are about the same competence level, but the personal relationships, trust and so forth—

GEN. THURMAN: I think it's different. I think it was done in all one fell swoop. It wasn't done with the notion they were on DEROS or anything like that getting ready to leave the unit. I told my battalion commanders, “I'm going to straighten out this personnel. Because, if you send a requisition up you wouldn't get anybody back because you're already over-strength in that billet.” So I wasn't doing anything to help battalion commanders get their—C-ratings, all that kind of stuff, when you looked at those things in the aggregate, DIVARTY had the requisite number of people. They were just in the wrong battalions because they'd grown up like that. It was the history of where they'd been. So I had to straighten all that out. So when Carl Vuono arrived he didn't have to do that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was this a result of maybe three or four years?

GEN. THURMAN: Several. Certainly it existed before my time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Accumulated.

GEN. THURMAN: The 82nd has a group of people that homestead there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. They keep coming back.

GEN. THURMAN: And therefore they would try to get back in the same battalion. So it was what I call a laissez faire personnel system, so I had to straighten out the personnel system.

DR. KIRKLAND: When did this unit readiness report come in?

GEN. THURMAN: It was there from the day I got there.

DR. KIRKLAND: The '60s? It was pre-Vietnam.

GEN. THURMAN: I don't know. See, I wasn't with the troop, so I couldn't tell you. But we had a monthly 2162 [Auditor note: monthly report being referred to is the DA Form 2715, Unit Readiness Report] or whatever the number report is, we had to turn in. Rafe Hallada was my maintenance guy, and we'd screw around with that. You sort of say, what sort of things did you do in leadership? One of the things I tried to do in leadership is set an example of excellence. I recall we had really old, ancient gama goats [Auditor note: gama goat was the name of the M561, a six-wheeled drive semi-amphibious offroad vehicle having an articulated chassis.]. When Fritz went up and got the Department of the Army to issue us a new set of gama goats—had been dropped so many times, banged around, that kind of stuff. These gama goats were going to go to the National Guard, and they were in foul shape.

So I took a guy and told him his job was to fix up all the gama goats, put a production line together, and fix the gama goats so when they were turned over to the National Guard they would be as close to new as they could be, given it didn't bankrupt the division to repair them. They were all banged up, the tailgates didn't work very well because you had to load ammo on them. They'd get banged up in a parachute heavy drop, and so we painted them all.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who was the guy told them to do this?

GEN. THURMAN: Guy named German on the DIVARTY staff.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he on the DIVARTY staff?

GEN. THURMAN: He was on the DIVARTY staff.

DR. KIRKLAND: What did he use for assets, people to do this?

GEN. THURMAN: We went battalion by battalion because we were going to do every one of the gama goats is going to depart, get brand new ones, so we set up a line and each one of the battalions when they got their turn to go through the line they provided the necessary labor to get that done.

And that harkened back to my time as a lieutenant when I took over an Honest John unit. I went over to draw the unit from another guy that already had it.

I'll never forget as long as I live, the battery commander said, "I know what every one of these pieces of equipment will do, and I'm giving you the best—because you don't know anything about it. I can make the rest of it work. You're getting the best launcher, the best five-ton, best wrecker, best poll trailer, best windset, which is used to measure the wind velocity." He said, "What are the bumper numbers you want on this?" He sprayed the bumper numbers on them while I was waiting. I'll never forget that.

The guy's name is Linc German. I said, "Linc, when we turn this over to the National Guard, put the bumper numbers on it, too, whatever they want. They're going to be clean, painted, all the canvas is going to be fixed, everything's going to be there the very best of our ability, 10/20 standards, and get it ready to return it."

In the maintenance side, I wanted to make sure my howitzers all stayed in good shape. So I went up to the Fort Bragg Post Maintenance Shop, and I walked in to the maintenance shop and said, "Where's the foreman here?" This is the artillery fire control maintenance shop. So the senior guy, civilian, been there 30 years. I said, "I'm the DIVARTY Commander here, and I need your help." He said, "What can I help you with?" I said, "First of all, I'm a graduate of the ordnance school. When's the last time the DIVARTY Commander came in to see you?" He said, "I ain't seen a DIVARTY Commander in here in 20 years." "Well," I said, "let me tell you what I would like to do."

I told him, “We have to go out and jump this stuff all the time, gets banged up, but more importantly, we go to combat you’re not going with me, so I need for you to transfer some of your maintenance skill to some of my own people.”

“So I got 54 howitzers and there are 52 weeks in the year. I’d like you take a howitzer a week and fix it up.” I told him, “By the way, that will give you some good marks for work done in post maintenance.” “Yeah you’re right about that.” I said, “I’ll also send you the sergeant and howitzer crew to work up here for a week. And you’ll teach them how to make sure they can fix this stuff if it gets broken in the field if we have to go to war.” “Boy, I like that.”

He liked that. So we cycled a howitzer through once a week. We never had a problem with howitzers. The post maintenance was not a problem. Went down, spent all our time oiling up—in my role as division safety guy for live fire-shoots, oiling up the range facility so we got well in with the fellows on the range. So we didn’t have any problems with that.

I don’t charge that up as leadership. I just charge that up as trying to gain resources for the unit.

DR. KIRKLAND: They swim together, don’t they?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, I think so.

DR. KIRKLAND: Where did you teach your people to do killer juniors on the direct fire? Did you have a range for that?

GEN. THURMAN: We had OP6, I believe, is where there’s a sort of a range you can do some direct fire on, plenty of space out there in case you miscalculate. There’s plenty of range at Fort Bragg for doing all that.

One other thing that happened in the fall of 1973 which I think is sort of important, Kroesen called me in his office and he said to me, “You are in charge of the Pop Warner Football League, little kids who want to play football.” I said, “Certainly you’re not talking to me. One, I tried to get quarters on this post and the corps

commander wouldn't give me quarters, wanted to give me a BOQ room and I'm not used to living in a BOQ. Secondly, I live off-post. Third, I don't have any children playing in the Pop Warner Football. You want me to run that thing?" I said, "That's crazy stuff."

He said, "They had a scandal in it last year, and you're going to run it. So suck it up and run it."

So I did. And I'd bought tickets to the University of North Carolina football games. They had a crackerjack football team and I never saw them play a game.

DR. KIRKLAND: You were out watching your own games.

GEN. THURMAN: I watched 30 games a Saturday. I had a rule. I said, "If I'm going to play football, everybody's going to play football in the DIVARTY." So we had a little rule there that we had each battalion and the headquarters battery DIVARTY once a month they had to do the work. That means they had to run the weigh-in, they had to run the keeping book on how many minutes everybody played, liming the field, et cetera.

I learned something from all that. Because what happened after a while is, since it became a battalion activity, pretty soon families came in from off-post and brought their own kids around and sort of tailgated it because their husbands were working at this endeavor. Later on, when I would become the TRADOC Commander and put an order out that you had to adopt a post activity—06 had to have one, battalion had to have one—so there was some labor and some military skill involved in running post activities.

My general view turned out, later you'd give Meloy one, gave him a baseball or gave Elton baseball and gave Lindsay basketball. There was something for everybody in running one of these activities. Well, what happened about that is military people know how to make the rabbit jump in a military environment. Most post civilians know their little piece of how to do a post activity, but they don't have the authority that a military figure has, and they don't know the system and they don't have the people resources that a battalion has or a division artillery has or an infantry brigade has.

So if you are setting up a framework for post support, you want military people at all levels to be part of that. So at the library you'd like to have a company commander or battery commander or battalion commander that can go around, say, at the post library,

and we don't want to run your library for you but you need somebody to straighten out your stacks or need to clean the place up or does it need to be painted today, self-help kind of work.

I often thought later on as I grew up in the Army after that tour down there, how many people would drive by the childcare center and say, if the post commander knew what was going on in the childcare center he'd close it down because it's not clean, not sanitary, not the right number of light fixtures, or whatever it might be. There's something about being a member of the military with a green suit or camouflage suit on that you know better how to make the rabbit jump in post activities.

Fritz showed me how to do that by giving me an order which I didn't like. So that became part of the learning curve of doing work on the post.

DR. KIRKLAND: You must have had your hands full: commanding DIVARTY, running all the live fires, and being the safety officer.

GEN. THURMAN: Everybody had their hands full. Everybody. It was a busy place, exciting place.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did it change when the division commanders changed?

GEN. THURMAN: No change.

DR. KIRKLAND: Very different kinds of guys though, weren't they?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Actually I didn't work for Tackaberry very long. I don't know when the division change of command took place, but I would estimate I worked for Tackaberry—I changed I think in February, that would have been my 18th month in February or March. Tackaberry may have been the division commander for three or four months.

DR. KIRKLAND: ...no impact on you, no change in the frequency...

GEN. THURMAN: No, I think they were quite different men, different styles of command. I think General Tackaberry was probably more aggressive in terms of getting into the nits and lice of what was going on than General Kroesen was—although I always thought General Kroesen knew all the nits and lice.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did he know? From wandering around?

GEN. THURMAN: He walked around and he listened. I just say to you that people loved him. They loved him because he gave you this enormous confidence, appearance of confidence, and he gave you the feeling of “everything’s okay.” So troops came up to him and to talk, and then you talk about people coming to talk to me in the field—they didn’t do that. But, when Kroesen was around or in the garrison or whatever, they’d come up to him and talk to him about anything. He was very comfortable with that, and I think he’s a gifted man at that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Any of these conversations with subordinates end up in phone calls to you?

GEN. THURMAN: No. He did not do that. He just soaked it in. He is the kind of guy—Let me answer it by this. The only rule I had in the DIVARTY was bad news is like a dead fish. It smells more with age, so get the bad news up here and let’s deal with it. Obviously, we did that with Kroesen. I called him one day. I was in my headquarters and got word of a mortar accident, this is preparatory to going out. I said, “We’ve had an accident on the range, got medevacs enroute, and I can’t give you the results, but I’ll give you the results when I find out.”

I went out in the field and found out. Then I had to appoint a safety inspection person to do a safety investigation, Article 32, and all the rest of that stuff that had to be done about that. Fritz said, as calm as he could be, “Report when you get ready.” It wasn’t any off the wall stuff. He’s a very calm guy. He’s seen everything. He fought in

World War II, he fought in Vietnam, commanded a division in Vietnam. He's very comfortable with all that, so he knew shit happens and when shit happens you don't get angry about it; you just sort through it. So he is a very comfortable guy to work for about that.

I think—you know about whether people call at night—I think a person who is confident in his ability doesn't care who comes to call nor where they come to call, can absorb whatever they find out without getting angry about it or irritated about it. We had a corps commander whose name was Dick Seitz [LTG Richard J. Seitz], now lives in Junction City, Kansas, terrific guy. Seitz was a guy that liked to come down and see what you were doing. And he'd drop in anywhere, in the field. I wouldn't be there and he'd go in the field, be seeing somebody shooting, or I'd invite him to come down to McClellan and walk around and see how we're doing with shooting bullets, or whatever. But I didn't run around worried about what he was looking at. I was comfortable. My people were damned good.

So if you're comfortable with what you're doing, you don't worry about who's checking up on you.

It is the insecure person who is—he's got Ziggy Belcher coming around here, got to clean this up, do that. There's a thing called confidence and another thing called competence. If you are competent that gives you confidence.

DR. KIRKLAND: That chases away insecurity.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. And lowers the tension level.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, and sometimes even competent people can be made incompetent if the tension levels are artificially raised. That was what was going on at Fort Ord in '85, '86, screwing up the COHORT evaluation, the ability of the COHORT system to demonstrate its full range of virtues. I wonder if General Tackaberry had to jack up the tension level to—

GEN. THURMAN: Not that I recall. He's an old Airborne guy, so he knew a lot about it, and there's sort of a fraternity about that. See, if you go back and look at how does all that play later when you get in the COHORT game, the five years I spent in the 11th Airborne Division was a period of COHORT-ism.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: NCOs that left the 11th would come back because there was no more division to go to. They'd come back and go to the 101st or the 82nd. So some of those guys would appear in the 82nd, although a lot of them were in the 101st. The 82nd DIVARTY was a COHORT in its own right. One is, we didn't get levied very much because we were on the cutting edge of going and jumping off. So there was a COHORT-ism. Everybody knew one another in the division artillery.

And if somebody went overseas to Korea or Germany they'd come back in a division. It was like coming back home for them. And there were a lot of officers who had come and gone in the division. I didn't happen to be one. I was sort of the outsider coming back in there, but a lot of them had come and gone. Some of them had commanded battalions and would come back as brigade commanders, some as company commanders come back as battery commanders or come back as battalion commanders.

So I spent a seven-year period in a COHORT environment, larger connection of COHORT that's not specifically oriented at a battery or company level like we did with the 7th ID, but where there was genuine reliance on competent NCOs and the troops that they trained who were in the main generally very competent, very comfortable with them.

DR. KIRKLAND: When I first read about your experiences in the division, your officer outbrief, this is how a division should be done, should be run.

GEN. THURMAN: You mean with the 82nd?

DR. KIRKLAND: With the 82nd.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: Then it seemed like subsequent assignments you were seeking to create a situation in which that kind of experience would become more general throughout the Army—the COHORT system, and through your emphasis on competence.

GEN. THURMAN: Competency I think is crucial. I believe that it substantially undergirds confidence, and I believe that competency is what gets you through difficult situations. If you don't know how your machinery operates for openers—I guess I look at one of the reasons the cavalry can be audacious is because they have a set of drills they go through. And that set of drills means that if you drill it long enough then you don't have to worry about knowing what the drills are and you can then concentrate on the task at hand.

My own view is there is a set of drills you have to go through, and if you go through those sets of drills then you'll be able to do better at then applying the factors of MET T—mission, enemy terrain—and the troops available to the task at hand. If you don't have the drills down right, then you'll spend a lot of time rehearsing—not for the new task but rehearsing the basic skills you ought to have.

Later when Bill Hartzog [GEN William W. Hartzog] and Mike Steele [LTG W. Michael Steele] go to Fort Benning as the assistant division commander and I'm the TRADOC guy, I try to get them to spend time on infantry battle-drill. That's somewhat controversial. I'm not an infantryman and so I don't pretend to be a battle-drill guy. But I said there ought to be half a dozen maneuvers that are standard fare you ought to be able to do at the drop of a hat no matter who you are in the infantry. Then somebody comes and says, "But everything's MET T." I said, "Yeah, that's right, everything is MET T, but there's a set of drills that says we dismount the Bradley in a certain way and we work our way through an ambush in a certain way. There's a certain set of skills you want to make sure everybody's comfortable with. Therefore you want to rehearse it. Therefore you want to teach that in BNCOC and ANCOG [Auditor note: Basic Non-Commissioned Officers Course and Advance Non-Commissioned Officers Course]."

And that's the reason I go back to that long song and dance I gave you about competency in—let's say something like the EIB—the expert infantryman's badge—which is a series of tests none of which is the antithesis of a skill that an infantry soldier ought to have, not a single one of them bad for an infantryman. There's nothing inherently bad about being an expert in your weapon.

Now if you're not an expert in your weapon, you ought to become one. You ought to be good at something. So it's a business of not do as I say do, but do as I do. That's a principle that you want to try to infect other people in.

One of the things we did down at Bragg as a DIVARTY guy, and I didn't invent it but I certainly kept it going, was the business of live fire. The live fire thing had been invented before I got there, but we kept it going because less adventuresome division commanders wouldn't let it go because it's risky. But if you go through that danger in a peacetime situation where you can control it, you will be much better at it when you get into war where you can't control all of those to the extent that you can. So it's a competency-building thing.

And the competency breeds confidence in ability to do things. It's a whole notion of rehearsal.

Those things are important. A scheme of how to train has to be put together to breed confidence in people's ability to do certain tasks. If they get to do those tasks, then you can make it more difficult.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you decreed there were going to be gunner's tests and everybody howled. Was it because they didn't know how to administer them?

GEN. THURMAN: No, no. There was some howling because that meant the troop officers had to go to work. Had to disassemble the breach block, go run the gun all against a stopwatch, all those kinds of things, in-place the howitzer and all those kinds of things. So you had to go down and put your hands on the machinery.

Some people believe the higher up you get, the less competent you need to be and the more generalist you become. My own view, and I've spoken on this when I was a Vice, it's too bad we call people generals. We ought to call them specialists. Because

when you get to be the DCSPER, what we'd really like for you to be, because we gave you the job of being a DCSPER, we'd like you to be a very competent DCSPER, not just sort of wave your hands around. Be very confident and competent at that particular problem; that's what we're paying you for this two or three years, that's what we're paying you for.

Lot of people say, just got to be a generalist and everybody's good at everything. That's bullshit. Everybody's not good at everything.

DR. KIRKLAND: Where was the gunner's test played out? The tasks and the criteria?

GEN. THURMAN: Those are in the ATP for each particular weapon. So for 105 howitzer, 155, eight-inch, whatever, there's a gunner's test we had, much like an EIB, tells you what the criteria is.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's not in the FM, it's in the ATP?

GEN. THURMAN: As far as I recall it is. You're asking me something 20 years ago and now I just tell you that chemotherapy works on your brains, anything I can't remember it's chemotherapy.

DR. KIRKLAND: What about the battery detail, survey, that sort of thing? Did the gunner's test apply there?

GEN. THURMAN: There were always a series. In days gone by and currently in the soldiers' manuals there are always tests associated with survey or battery operations, gun operations, howitzer operations, etcetera, fire direction operations. So there's a series of technical skills for each one of those.

But let me give you an example of how this pertains today. I'll give you something about TRADOC experience. I'll leap forward to my TRADOC days. I spent a considerable amount of time at the NTC observing, what went there. And one of the

things you observe... And I'll give you one vignette. I ran a test on what was the average opening range of TOW missiles at NTC? We'd bought these things to shoot 3,600 meters. And the improved TOW vehicle and the Bradley were out there, and their average opening engagement was 1,700 meters. The principle of purchasing the Bradley and the ITV with the TOW missile that shoots 3,600 meters is to pick off the opposing tanks before the opposing tanks get in the range of their own tank weapons, which is more like 2,000 meters.

But if I don't open up until 1,700 meters that means the other tanks are inside their tank firing range, and therefore they can bring their own tank fire to bear not only on my tanks but on my Bradley fighting vehicles which are thin-skinned, early improved TOW.

So you say, I bought this weapon for some purpose and how come it's not being used for that? What's going on here? There's something awry in either the way we've taught the use of the weapon or is something wrong with the equipment, there's something wrong with the leadership that doesn't know how to use it? You go through the doctrine of use, organizations you may have, tactics techniques and procedures you have, the skill of the people involved in using it, or is something wrong with the equipment?

You've got to find out what's wrong with it because we bought it for a different purpose. And by the way, it's not a trivial sum of money. We've probably got \$20 billion tied up in that system.

What you find out is, you have to go run the monkey, run the rabbit down the rabbit-hole until you find out why people aren't using it properly. Is it because the NCOs don't know how to use it because the officers don't know how to use it, because the equipment's not being maintained right? What the hell is wrong with it?

So as TRADOC Commander I got the infantry school, Hartzog was in charge at that time as assistant commandant, told him he'd put a team together and spend one month looking, analyzing data at National Training Center on 50 battalion attacks and 50 battalion defenses. Rub out the bumper numbers, we don't care anything about whether the 2nd of the 35th did any good or the 15th of the 42nd or whatever. We're looking at is

what are the trendlines in all of this and what the opening ranges are and what the effectiveness are about that.

So, when he came out of that, a month-long study, we were able to find 10 or 12 things that had to be changed in the training program in order to get the weapon to fire like we anticipated it was going to fire. That's called "details" in the business.

Now, if you go and straighten that out and if you build confidence about that, you will get something to happen.

Now break/break. After observing what had gone on in the desert floor, after conducting this particular test by having the infantry center go there, I visited a friend of mine in the field who's a brigade commander at Fort Carson, Colorado. He's down at Pinon Canyon. We're out there in the field, 18th day of February, happens to be my birthday, cold as hell, we're out in the field, we're watching a Cav unit attack an infantry battalion. After it was all over, the infantry battalion is severely mauled by this Cav unit.

So I go to the battalion commander in a little after-action critique.

Understand, I don't command anything here, right? I'm just a visitor. A friend of mine commanding the brigade. So I said to the battalion commander, "I'd like you to find out for me how many TOWs you brought to the field and how many TOWs were engaged in this exercise." So he reported, "We brought 130 TOWs to the field and we shot 18."

The assistant division commander was there, and I said to the assistant division commander, "The battalion got beat and one thing they didn't do, didn't get their TOWs in the fight." I said, "If I were you I'd rerun the exercise tomorrow morning, every piece of terrain, do it over again, see if the battalion commander can learn how to get his weapons in the fight."

Reluctantly the assistant division commander agreed to do that. I didn't have any authority because I'm the TRADOC commander.

He reluctantly told the brigade commander, "Why don't you do that?" After the assistant division commander left, I turned to the battalion commander and said, "I'm going skiing tonight and tomorrow."

(End Tape 6, Side B)

(MISSING INTERVIEW TAPES #7 & #8)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 9

(Begin Tape 9, Side A)

DR. KIRKLAND: I want to talk to you about a couple odds and ends. Have you kept in touch with Ray Murray [MG Raymond Leroy Murray]?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, very infrequently.

DR. KIRKLAND: Best you know he's still alive?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. The way you get in touch with him is, you ask the Association of Graduates where he is, or he is listed in the retired officer file. He's a major general, retired.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you were director of Cadet Activities, was it up to you to recruit the officers to be the sponsors for these 50 things?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, they were sort of self-recruiting.

DR. KIRKLAND: One guy would leave and they'd look for his replacement?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, as an example the Social Science Department had several things that they—the SCUSA [Student Conference on US Affairs] was one that they sponsored, the Debate Counsel and Forum they sponsored. Or something like the Glee Club—they took some people who were interested in Glee Club. If it turned out to be water polo, a guy now, General Max Noah was on (unclear) but he went to the War College. So some of it was self-recruited.

There's a guy there ran sky-diving that was a hot sky diver, had been a Navy fencing champ. He was a Marine officer stationed out there but he'd been a Marine

fencing and he'd been a Navy fencing guy when he was at Annapolis. So a lot of it was self-recruiting.

DR. KIRKLAND: They were actually interested in it.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Well, it was another opportunity to come in contact with cadets in an off-duty environment. You know, after the academics or after the Tactical Department did its thing—these guys were either in some corps squad activity. The current dean up there, guy named Jerry Galloway [BG Gerald Galloway], was the officer in charge of the Cadet Glee Club. Then later when he's back up there as a faculty member as a colonel he was the officer in charge of the Army football team.

So it was part of the climate of the institution to ask officers to participate in extracurricular activities with the cadets.

DR. KIRKLAND: So that wasn't your job then to find them?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, if I had one that wasn't covered then I had to get it covered. But they were sort of a hand-me-down game that went on. First year I was there I was the number two guy in the Glee Club because I'd been a singer myself before and barbershop quartet singer and that kind of stuff, sang all during high school and then college and all that. So I was interested in that, so I participated.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you were at Fort Bliss did you know Weeno Webanaw?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Kept up with them for a long time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Last I heard of him he was in the Offices of Personnel Directorate.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, as a full colonel.

DR. KIRKLAND: There was a theme you'd mentioned from time to time, that you were having fun while you were in the Army. I had fun while I was in it, but I sort of thought I was the Lone Ranger. Most of the time the people I was working with was full of doom, gloom, fear and anxiety and uncertain about not measuring up. It sounds like there wasn't much of that in the 11th Airborne.

GEN. THURMAN: No.

DR. KIRKLAND: I doubt if there was much of that at Fort Bliss. Did you ever encounter a down attitude, or were your colleagues having fun?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, I suspect that there were some people that didn't have fun—I mean, in various and sundry places. I think a lot of having fun in the Army is being around good people, being around people you admire, you're proud to serve with, being around good subordinates, being able to become interconnected with the families of various and sundry people. Now I mentioned one battery commander that worked for me who ultimately I had to relieve when I was in the 82nd Airborne Division Artillery. And I'm sure he didn't have fun.

DR. KIRKLAND: But that was an institutional error really.

GEN. THURMAN: No. I think what it was, he was ill-suited for that particular job. And when somebody gave it to him, he didn't decline it. He took it and hoped for the best. And you don't do that. You have to work at it. So I guess my general view is, there are people that go through the Army with anxiety. And, fortunately, I haven't served with a lot of them. Most of my people I've served with have been genuinely upbeat. I think anybody gets down on any given day. You can be down but, in the main, I think the Army and service life in general is one of those things that you have to be upbeat about it, you have to like it. It doesn't pay a lot. So you have to get the psychic rewards of thinking that it's a good, professional service that you're rendering, and you join.

DR. KIRKLAND: The next question is related to that one, sort of choice points. One choice point that we went past was when the guy from RCA offered you a job and really didn't seriously consider it I gather—

GEN. THURMAN: No. That was one of those things that was an aggrandizement of the moment. It was very nice of him to say that. He said it a couple times in a period of about three days. And so I think he probably meant it. I had no intention of leaving the service. I was full of what I was doing and had no intention of departing. So I gave it not one whit of thought, didn't look at it, think about it, didn't give it one whit of thought, didn't ask how much, didn't say what I'd be doing, none of that.

DR. KIRKLAND: You must have made a decision fairly early on. You had another choice appointment for three years, a spot where you could have said goodbye and you were in Europe then. And you must have made a decision by then. Do you remember thinking about it much or—

GEN. THURMAN: No. When I got in the Airborne—first of all I'd made a choice to go from a reserve officer to a regular officer because I had that authority when I had graduated, as a residual authority and graduated as a DMG. When I made that decision, then I was good for three years. So that put me in the three-year mark.

Well, a three-year mark I'd just gotten to Europe. So Europe was high adventure for a young guy 25 or 26 years old three years out of college—going all over Europe, seeing things, learning how to ski, traveling to Vienna, going to Berlin, in the field training, all the kinds of stuff you just want to do when you're a lieutenant in the Army.

I mean, if there was any money shortage it certainly wasn't in our unit. We went to the field all the time, never worried about where the money was coming from. Those things were beyond my pale. I was a lieutenant and it was great fun.

So the idea, then, when the three-year mark—you had to do something to get out then at the three-year mark.

DR. KIRKLAND: You'd have to resign.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, you had to put a paper in. So nobody came around and said, would you put your paper in because you've reached the three-year mark. So you can say by default I stayed in until I finished a three-and-a-half year tour in an overseas unit.

Then the next thing was on the list was, go to the advanced course; and so you sort of say, I guess I ought to go to the advanced course. So you go to the advanced course, and next thing you know you're going down and you're teaching rockets and missiles, something you don't know anything about. So that's sort of adventuresome. All the while you are motoring along with your contemporaries.

I think one of the things that people get antsy about is am I getting promoted ahead of time, am I getting promoted about the right time, am I lagging in promotion?

Well, in the '50s and early '60s everybody is getting promoted with everybody else. Your year group got promoted, and that was sort of it.

Maintaining relationships with the people that I had served with in Germany—and a lot of us were now serving in the United States. Several of us had come back to Fort Bliss, Texas, to serve, so things were going well. I didn't have to make a decision because I wasn't looking for an opportunity to get out. There wasn't any decision time about it.

Now, if I had stayed down there and kept working for the drunk in El Paso, then that would have been different. That may have forced me to make a decision, but I didn't have to because I left and went to Vietnam.

DR. KIRKLAND: There was another time, wasn't it, where a firm in West Virginia offered you a senior job?

GEN. THURMAN: No, that was back in my home town in North Carolina. Now that comes after I have been to combat in Vietnam. I am now a lieutenant colonel and I have been a battalion commander. A guy asked me to be a senior vice president of a furniture company.

DR. KIRKLAND: A furniture company?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, down in North Carolina. That I gave consideration to. He said, “Well, why?” And here it was late fall of 1968. And I don’t think it was a matter of disillusionment with Vietnam; I think it was more a case of, okay, I’ve done what a soldier is trained to do. A soldier is trained to go to combat, and I had led 600 men in a unit of my branch in combat. So I had done what a young officer would expect to do. Now, this was ‘68, so I had 15 years of service in the Army, and I had completed my battalion command.

Now today the average guy hasn’t gotten to his battalion in 15 years probably. But the notion of having done that sort of fulfilled a major objective in my life.

Then I was in a staff billet in Washington and the Pentagon, and I very frankly didn’t like that too well. I liked the people I was working for, but I was in a famous group that Mike Malone epitomized in his article called, “Winners Lose.” I had been a successful battalion commander in combat and came back to the Pentagon, probably had 35,000 people working in the Pentagon.

Mike Malone, Mike Kooslan, a number of us had come back out of the war and gone to the Pentagon from combat in Vietnam. I got back in—and I told you the story about the secretary that told me she could only do one of two things, either she would Xerox or type, but she couldn’t Xerox and type. So you’ve got to do one or the other. Here I had been leading 600 guys in combat and now I was a Xerox operator. That’s a pretty good-sized downer.

When you come off of a battalion command and go into the Pentagon for the first time, that’s a rude shock. I think it is now. I think a guy that’s been in the Pentagon goes out and commands a battalion and comes back, not a problem. But if it’s the guy’s first time in the Pentagon and he comes in there and he’s an action officer and he’s commanded a battalion in the field, big downer.

I took a look at that and I said, maybe I can go do a job in business. So I gave that some thought. But I was rescued by the Army then by getting appointed to the War

College. So I made that decision not to go in business and it didn't ever enter my mind again. I didn't worry about it then.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay. That cleans up the odds and ends. I will pick up with PA&E.

GEN. THURMAN: Let me go back. I'm not sure what we said about TRADOC and the couple years there—those two years working for DePuy, Gorman, Burdeshaw, and combat about Gorman and training and Burdeshaw and combat developments. If I tried to put together a montage of my life in the military, as a lieutenant colonel I was given an opportunity to understand the breadth of the Army headquarters and what it did because I ran the Army programs as a lieutenant colonel for essentially three years. With that and interacting with the Department of Defense, I understood the interrelationship on matters pertaining to fiduciary responsibility, the ability to get money out of the Congress, programming on a long time horizon.

And I saw some really, truly expert guys run the business there. DePuy was the A Vice at the time, Bruce Palmer was the Vice at the time, and Westmoreland was the Chief. So it really was a fascinating opportunity to see how the staff worked both with itself and was directing the drawdown of the armed forces after the Vietnam War and how it worked with OSD and Congress.

Going to TRADOC was quite a different view, and the view that I got there was how a man with a vision could change the Army. And how he did that was through the power of persuasion and intellect because he didn't have the authority to change it. The authority rested in the Army staff. The Chief of Staff still made decisions.

But, here is a case where a man in the case of DePuy, aided and abetted by principally Gorman and Burdeshaw among others, was able to change the structure of doctrine, of combat development—that's bringing on new equipments, of training inside of the training base itself and training inside the Army itself—and then persuade the Army to adopt what it was his vision said it ought to be.

So that was an exciting opportunity that forever created the impression with my mind that, while the Army is an enormous bureaucracy, that single individuals could

move it. So DePuy moved it, I think Gorman moved it, later Starry [GEN Donn A. Starry] moved it; and yet they never held the major job, which is the Chief of Staff of the Army. But they all moved the Army dramatically.

I saw Shoemaker do that at Forces Command. Shoemaker [GEN Robert M. Shoemaker] did one of the things that was one of the most pervasive changes in the way in which the Army worked, and that is he invented the CAPSTONE program, which has aligned the Reserves for the wartime mission—a brilliant piece of work. He's never been given credit for it. It was just an absolutely dynamite piece of work. It gave substance and breadth to the Reserves and the National Guard in a way in which they had never before.

Now why did I make that point? I make that point by saying that many people, even generals, believe they get caught up in the bureaucracy of things and that they have to obey whatever the regulations are, as opposed to create the regulations. So the opportunity to observe DePuy work on the Army staff and issue the first doctrine that came out in 1975 or '76, the Air/Land Battle doctrine that is later modified substantially by Donn Starry.

Those two guys in succession did something that can't be replicated probably in the Army. Gorman invented a new training system and then DePuy bought it and got it sold in the Army. That was task, conditions and standards codified in manuals, soldiers manuals, and ARTEPs. And, then, wisdom of beginning the National Training Center, which started in 1975, and it took five years before it ever came to fruition, but the seed was laid by both Gorman and DePuy.

So that plays a new role in my life when I get to be a guy that can also make waves in a different way. I think it's just important to say that I have never been up close to a guy for an extended period of time in an operational billet where he's an operational commander. I've been next to this guy when he was a staff officer and saw him move staff stuff around. But the ability to go out in the field and create it and change it and the whole Army changes and all that kind of stuff. He understood how to market—although nobody would ever accuse him of being a marketer.

DR. KIRKLAND: He had peers.

GEN. THURMAN: But he had to market to his peers. He had to market his bosses. One of the things he always said to me was, “I’ve got to have something new every month to give the Department of the Army; otherwise they’ll figure out something for me to do.” So I’ve got to figure out something for them to do once a month. So he had a project a month. He would dump it on the then Chief of Staff of the Army, whoever that might be.

PA&E. I come into PA&E and it’s like going home. I know about it. I’ve been there for three years, so I know what it’s supposed to do, and I take it over from John McGiffert [LTG John R. McGiffert, III], who then became my boss. He became the Director of the Army Staff. General Bernie Rogers [GEN Bernard W. Rogers] was the Chief for the first year and a half I was the PA&E, and then General Shy Meyer took it over. He was there for about six months before he ordered me out to the recruiting service.

Essentially what you were doing is, you were operating with a tail end of a Republican administration. Mr. Ford was still in office, and Marty Hoffmann [Martin Richard Hoffmann] as I recall was Secretary of the Army. He had succeeded a guy named Bob Froehlke. Then when the administration changes in 1979—a new administration comes in an odd year, so it must have been ‘76.

DR. KIRKLAND: 1976.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. The election is 1976 and the administration comes in in 1977. I don’t come there until ‘77. I’m there, and Clifford Alexander—forget what I said about that because that’s Froehlke and Marty Hoffman. Marty Hoffman was the last Secretary under the Ford administration, but Froehlke had served there when I was a lieutenant colonel. It was following Stanley Resor. But at any rate I come back in, and now Clifford Alexander is the Secretary of the Army. And we have some, whole new team there that was sort of absorbed and then they get on board. So by the summer of ‘77 when I get there, this team is assembled. In other words, they get inaugurated in, let’s see—

DR. KIRKLAND: Carter's crowd coming in.

GEN. THURMAN: So they get inaugurated in January of 1977. So I come in June of '77, and by that time the team is just about assembled, and they're about ready to get themselves organized as the new squad on the block.

Several things begin to happen about that. For example, Carter had gone down to Norfolk and given a speech where he derided the training establishment of the several services as a waste of time.

Now you understand, this is a guy who had been a nuclear submariner under Rickover [ADM Hyman G. Rickover], and of course Rickover had his own training program, which is very exhaustive and extensive. But he, Rickover, didn't have time for War Colleges and staff colleges and that kind of stuff; he just had time for his own stuff. So he pooh-poohed everything else and President Carter did the same or nominee Carter did the same in a speech in Norfolk.

So one of the first things we had to fight off is this humongous cut of the training establishment. They wanted to take it down by about 50 percent.

DR. KIRKLAND: This would be the schools for junior officers and—

GEN. THURMAN: Everything. Leavenworth, the War College, knock it all off, reduce it by 50 percent, gigantic cut in the training base.

Donn Starry now by this time had taken over the training establishment, TRADOC, from DePuy. DePuy had retired in the summer of '77 after four years at the helm of TRADOC from '73 to '77. And Starry was in and was faced with all these problems of reducing the training establishment. So we had to fight that battle. Bernie Rogers had to fight that battle and had to go up and fight it with Harold Brown.

There were substantial cuts still residual from Vietnam taking down the size of the Armed Forces. But, by now, we had sort of stabilized into the 13 and one-third divisions. There was very little money in the procurement account, but a substantial amount of money in the research and development accounts for the Big Five systems,

which were beginning to push their way through to coming to closure or getting in a position where they would be able to come to production.

So there were continuing battles with the OSD staff on, why do you need a Black Hawk, and why do you need an Apache helicopter, and why do you need a Bradley, why do you need an M1 tank, why do you need a Patriot missile system? There were fits and starts. The Patriot had a SAM-V at that time, and the Patriot had a difficult time. It was a very complex system, and they had a very difficult time. Project managers were trying to bail it out, and the company was trying to bail it out. So there was quite a great deal of turmoil in the procurement accounts.

Meanwhile down at the ranch we were beginning to go down the sump in the All-Volunteer Force. Bob Yerks [LTG Robert G. Yerks] takes over as the DCSPER of the Army. He takes over from DeWitt Smith [LTG DeWitt C. Smith, Jr.], who goes back to Carlisle to become the—if you recall Smith had two tours as the head of the Army War College. He had one as a major general and got promoted to three stars and then went back as a two star and commanded Carlisle once again, finally retiring in his three star.

Bob Yerks is now the DCSPER, and a guy named Bill Mundie [MG William L. Mundie] was the chief recruiter. We began to have some considerable problems with the recruiting service. One of the things that had occurred is that the Reserves were just going down and down and down. The National Guard was going down and down and down. General Bernie Rogers had given the Reserve recruiting mission to the recruiting service, and that was a big pill to swallow. But Gene Forrester [LTG Eugene P. Forrester] was the head of the recruiting service at that time, and he took that on with great energy and began to put in place the mechanism to go and recruit the Reserves.

But, at that time it was difficult to recruit Reserves or National Guard. One of the things that we did up in the Army staff was, a colonel working for me named Paul Donovan took a couple of people and we created in the PA&E several major programs to try to turn around the Reserves in terms of quality on the one hand, resources for the Reserves, putting some active duty people in, as well, and try to staunch the flood of the Reservists leaving and Guardsmen leaving.

Donovan should have been a general but never was. He retired as a colonel and went up to OSD, and later became the principal deputy over at AMC in the foreign

military sales unit. But Paul was one of those uniquely gifted personnelists who understands the systems well enough that they can make dramatic change.

So we had a strong influence on trying to help—one, to recruit the Reserves and, two, to populate the Reserves and sort of get them squared away so we can get some combat power generated out of the Reserves and the Guard. So we worked heavily with them as a PA&E and worked heavily with the acquisition people. We had to work hard with the Department of Defense trying to get our programs approved because everything was on sort of a downslope of money.

I recall one year submitting the POM and breaking the guidance. I broke the guidance, and I had the tape that accompanies the POM, the automatic data processing tape. I had all this excess money in it, which we didn't have for our program. I got chastised by a guy named Russ Murray, for breaking guidance about that, big-time. In fact, I got a letter of censure from the then-Deputy Secretary of Defense.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was Russ Murray an officer or a civilian?

GEN. THURMAN: No, Russ Murray was a civilian appointee of the Department of Defense. He was the PA&E of the Department of Defense. I knew the system well enough that if you ever got it into the system in the automatic data processing data system—

DR. KIRKLAND: Bank, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: —then you would have to write a program budget decision, a PBD, to get it out. So this meant that the OSD staff had to go write all these program decision documents to get the stuff out and take them up to the Deputy Secretary of Defense to get it out.

Well, I got zapped by the then-Deputy Secretary of Defense for being a horse's ass about not obeying guidance and causing the Department of Defense great problems. That's one of those letters I treasured for a while.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did that come directly from him to you, or did that go to the Chief of Staff of the Army?

GEN. THURMAN: No, it went to the Secretary of the Army. You know, it's that General Thurman hasn't done his duty like he should have. So that created some storm up there. Russ Murray and I are good friends and he sort of looks at that as, I got over on him on that one and I made some money for the Army. It was a little risky, but I had a good boss and it all turned out fine.

Well, in the spring of '79 we get in deep trouble in the personnel game. Bernie Rogers had a series of meetings in the Congress. I would go over and I would present the Army program.

Then General Rogers would say, "I'm going to give you a short introduction and then here's the Army program." And I would brief it. And there would be staffers and Congressmen there. It was a one-hour shot. Then at the conclusion we would ask for questions and answer questions. That was a way for us to communicate to the Congress.

General Rogers had formerly been the OCLL [Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison] guy, also been the Chief of Personnel, been the FORSCOM Commander, and now he was the Chief of Staff of the Army. So he's quite well-known on the Hill. This is one of the techniques he used to do it.

One day I went over there and Clifford Alexander and Bernie Rogers were there, and some congressman asked Clifford Alexander if it was time to go back to the draft. Of course he pooh-poohed that and said, "No, no, it's not time to go back to the draft." We were going down into a sump in people. We weren't doing very well. We weren't making the strength and weren't making quality or any other damn thing. We were opening it to 17-year-old, non-high school graduates. Anything to increase the size of the pool.

People were coming in that couldn't read in the sixth grade, and the manuals were at the 11th grade. And so they couldn't handle it—on and on and on and on. And the congressman turned to me and said, "What do you think, General?" And I said, "Yeah, I think it's time to bring back the draft."

DR. KIRKLAND: Breaking guidance again.

GEN. THURMAN: So here was the Secretary of the Army saying one thing and here was the lowlife major general saying something else. That didn't go down too well with Cliff Alexander.

DR. KIRKLAND: He was a social experimenter anyway, wasn't he?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, but that was clearly against policy. He didn't like that for some guy named Thurman to be against his policy like that. He never chastised me directly about that, but I got plenty of feedback from the Under Secretary of the Army who was a friend of mine, Walter LaBerge [Dr. Walter B. LaBerge]. Walt LaBerge said, "You made a big mistake, you shouldn't have said all that."

So then Bernie gets tabbed to be the SACEUR. That's when General Vessey gets nominated to President Carter to be the Chief of Staff of the Army, and he is not selected by President Carter. Then General Shy Meyer is moved from Lieutenant General to Chief of Staff.

DR. KIRKLAND: What was he?

GEN. THURMAN: He was the DCSOPS of the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: And what was General Vessey doing at that time?

GEN. THURMAN: Vessey was the Commander in Korea. One of his subordinates had been relieved; Singlaub [MG John K. Singlaub] had been relieved saying that cutting strength in Korea was a bad idea.

Now, I had a lieutenant colonel working for me named Harry Ota. He was an operational research analyst who spent all of his time looking at personnel stuff. He's very good. I had begun to follow this personnel game and see what we could do to help out the recruiting command about it. Our trendline was to go to expanding the pool of unsatisfactory people in order to get more people in.

DR. KIRKLAND: Bottom fishing.

GEN. THURMAN: Bottom fishing. Open it up at the bottom and go get more of the bottom fish, yes, right. Vessey, by the way, then does one of the heroic acts of anybody. After being passed over to be to the Chief of Staff, he agrees to be Shy Meyer's Vice Chief. That is an awesome dedication to public service.

DR. KIRKLAND: My impression is Vessey is a remarkable man.

GEN. THURMAN: He is a remarkable man, and that was a remarkable act on his part. The idea of getting passed over, being interviewed and not selected and then agreeing to work for a lieutenant general who had previously been Vessey's deputy—

Vessey had been the DCSOPS when he went to Korea and Shy Meyer had been his deputy. Then Meyer gets promoted to lieutenant general and becomes the DCSOPS, and then he gets promoted to be the Chief of Staff and asks Vessey to come back and be his deputy. And Vessey agrees. That is unselfishness at the highest order.

So then in November of 1979, Meyer asked me to go over and command the recruiting service. I think I served Meyer's interests well as a PA&E. Among other things he had a very strong relationship with both Harold Brown the Secretary of Defense, and with Sam Nunn, who was not the chairman of the committee at that time but he was an influential Democratic member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

I recall Meyer telling me to put a presentation together one day which would be delivered to Senator Nunn. It would be a view of the Army program about how the Army was being short-changed in the DOD budget. Budget meant program. So we did that. And it had to be unclassified.

So what we did was I put a team of guys in the PA&E to work. And I gave them only congressional documents. I said, now I want you to back into the Army program, but you can only use the congressional documents; and you have to show me where you got every number out of some congressional document that's open for public inspection.

DR. KIRKLAND: And it had to add up?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, yeah, they had to add it up. Well, it added up reasonably well. I delivered that thing to Sam Nunn. And about two days later Sam Nunn is having breakfast with Jimmy Carter—President Carter. He is using these charts that had been prepared explaining how the Army had been short-changed.

But also sitting there was Harold Brown. It was sort of *deja vu* of the Westmoreland briefing to Mr. Nixon—I think one of those formative times that the right set of charts gets to the right guy and you get the right decision. So we got some additional money about that. And that was spring or mid-summer of 1979 when Shy took it over.

(End Tape 9, Side A)

(Begin Tape 9, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: So I've been working for him now for a few months and we put that together. Then he decides, and Yerks influences him to send me out to take over the recruiting thing. I had followed it enough to know where the bones were buried in the recruiting business and got some inkling as to what had to be done out there. So it didn't really come as a surprise, although I really didn't want to go do that.

I wanted to go to division. I hadn't been in division since I had been a DIVARTY Commander, and I hadn't been in an ADC of a division. I felt I was going to be getting behind my contemporaries and I would not be suitable for advancement. So I really didn't want to go do that.

So that's sort of the PA&E thing. PA&E is a bunch of dog-robbing, day-to-day calculating, turn in programs, evaluate programs, evaluate select committees that are doing business on a variety of things. I guess I was accused by most people in SELCOM [Select Committee] of always presenting a new set of charts and data one hour before the meeting took place so nobody could ever get their ducks in a row—which is true.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's the tactic, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Percy Pierre was the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research, Development and Acquisition. One day he said to me, "You always zero-base everything in the acquisition business, and I want you to zero-base the operations and maintenance account." No mean trick—but we did that.

Carter had come in with a zero-base budget process which I didn't disagree with. I thought that was not a bad deal—although my compadres thought that was a terrible deal. But it turns out that was not a bad operation.

We had the usual group of Office of Management and Budget people that whenever you change an administration they get out all the old papers that have been languishing in the bottom drawer that previous administrations have disapproved and bring them back up on the table and get them done. And you see that in the Gore [Vice

President Albert A. Gore, Jr.] “reinvent government” thing. All kinds of stuff in the Gore reinvent game that has previously been discussed by people and defeated, but they were maintained in drawers in the Office of Management and Budget. And at the right time they’re withdrawn and placed on the table. And unless somebody has strong minded it they gain a new credibility and they start out to launch it all again and do various and sundry things.

DR. KIRKLAND: On a day-to-day basis, it sounds like your work was constantly adjusting, tinkering with, adapting the Army program in response to pressures from the Hill and pressures from DOD.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, I think that’s fair.

DR. KIRKLAND: And internal dissatisfaction within the Army about what had been decided last month or last quarter.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. And tracking progress in acquisition matters. I got a chance to work for two quite different Chiefs of Staff and three quite different guys as the Vice Chiefs.

One of the Vice Chiefs in those days was Kroesen. And Kroesen was a very quiet and taciturn guy who always wrote in blue office memo. He had a blue pen. He was quite a good writer. He was very thoughtful. He had come up from Forces Command to be General Bernie Rogers Vice and he only stayed there for 10 or 11 months or so and he went to be the commander in Europe.

The other was Vessey who came to work and took over. So I got the tail end of Dutch Kerwin [GEN Walter T. Kerwin, Jr.] who is a very, very savvy guy. And I learned how to run meetings under Kerwin, everytime we had a—SELECT Committee meetings, which is all the pachyderms in the Army, save the Chief who did not attend and the Secretary who did not attend. But the Under Secretary was there, all the secretaries and the lieutenant generals in the Army.

Kerwin would go around the room, and when we would get all done he would go around and point to everybody and say, “Now, do you agree, do you agree, do you agree?” And made everybody ‘fess up so that when the meeting was over nobody could walk out of the meeting and say, “well, I didn’t agree with what he said.” Made them all go on record.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were you allowed to disagree?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, you could disagree, but you had to say something.

DR. KIRKLAND: You had to say why.

GEN. THURMAN: In other words, what he was trying to do was preclude people from going out of the room and backbiting and saying, “Well, I didn’t have my say in anything.” So he had to go around. Later on when I became the Vice, I used that tactic. I would go around the room and point at them so nobody could escape. And that transitioned as well when Kerwin had gone down to be the Forces Command Commander and came up to be the Vice. And when he retired, Kroesen came up from being the FORSCOM Commander to be the Vice.

Then when Kroesen finally leaves and goes to Germany to be that, then that’s when General Vessey comes back in.

So I learned a lot from those guys about corporate management, how to drive the corporate managerial process. I had seen a lot of that with DePuy, but now I was up at another level of operation where it was very interesting to watch these guys do their business—to watch the Secretary of the Army, watch the Chief of Staff do his business with OSD and be helpful about that, or try to be helpful about that. I attended all the major budget meetings at OSD with Harold Brown and the chair. Go into one of the sessions with ten major issues for the program. Interesting. Interesting work. It’s how the government works.

DR. KIRKLAND: When there's a perception within the Army that the Army is being short-changed, this is an extremely relative notion and, of course, will be challenged by the people who made the decision about how the budget should be and will be challenged by the Navy and the Air Force. So what is the leverage that you and the other people who worked with you, Sam Nunn, for example? What's the leverage? Well, at first you had to convince Nunn because he's not necessarily an Army man.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, normally, you are fighting those battles inside the building, and so you fight the battle inside the building and in so doing you are trying to convince every echelon of the Department of Defense that your program is sound and that you need the money.

In the final analysis you end up going up to what is called a "major issues meeting." Those things still happen. I mean, 20 years later there are still major issue meetings. That is the last time that the Chief of Staff and Secretary of the Army or the Secretary of the service have an opportunity to present their case.

Harold Brown was a very open guy and he would let you debate. He would debate with you. Smart as hell. He had been previously the Secretary of the Air Force, so a lot of people thought his bias was with the Air Force. But he would let you argue the issue, and then when the issue finally came to resolution he would make a decision about it.

We perceived we were just not as well endowed. We didn't have as much procurement money, for example, as we thought we ought to have. But, I must say that Brown did keep all of the R&D programs essentially intact, which later when we were getting ready for Reagans to come aboard we were able to blossom up and turn them in absolutely first-rate hardware.

I will say that in the people issues, we got very good support from the underlings. There are sort of two levels of support you have to get. You have to get a level of support from the underlings in OSD who write the issues for the big guys to play with.

PA&E, in those days, was a very powerful instrument for the Secretary of Defense. Russ Murray [Russell Murray, II] was in the chair about that. We had duke-out sessions with Russ Murray and we would win some and lose some. Then you would go

up to the Secretary's level and you would try to win those that you lost before. Some you would, some you wouldn't.

In the personnel thing there was a fellow up there named Martin. Dr. Martin saw the same problems that we saw, and so he commissioned a study by an outside agency called Canter, Achenbaum, and Heekin. Those three guys were all advertising gurus out of Madison Avenue. They came and took a look at what was going on in the business enterprise, and they told the Department of Defense that they had a serious problem in the Army. This is all going on in 1979.

Shy Meyer is taking office in '79 and is talking about the hollow Army. We don't feel we're getting the right cut on the hardware side and our people are not doing very well. So there is some sympathy for the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: I see. Around DOD?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, between some elements of DOD and some elements in the Congress. And particularly Sam Nunn was one of those guys that was very sympathetic to the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who commissioned that study? Was that DOD's PA&E?

GEN. THURMAN: No, it was DOD Manpower. The guy that headed the manpower office at that time was a guy named Robin Peery. And Peery had a guy working for him named Dr. Al Martin. Al Martin commissioned that particular study. It took about a year for them to do that study, and the results came in late fall of 1979.

Meanwhile back at the ranch we had a guy named Nelson who was the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. His deputy was a guy named Bill Clark who has been over there for many years and is still there. Underneath Bill Clark was a fellow named Clay Gompf, G-o-m-p-f. Clay was a retired colonel of Cavalry who had been in the secretary's office for a number of years and then ended up as one of the third level guys in the assistant secretary's office. Between Clay Gompf and Al Martin, Clay Gompf at the Army level and Al Martin at the OSD level, they were

seriously looking at this personnel issue and they were pressing Yerks and pressing Shy Meyer to go out and do something about straightening up this terrible debacle that was ensuing in the recruiting service.

The other thing is, OSD had been a little penurious with the money that had been given to the recruiting game, a number of advertising and all that kind of stuff. So the stage was set with outside people looking at it.

I never will forget, Martin called me up one day as the PA&E. I mean, he didn't know that I was going to go out later and take command and neither did I. He was calling as the PA&E. I was a notorious figure as a PA&E in various staff agencies and OSD. They knew who I was and what my job was. So Martin called me up one day and he said, "I want you to listen to the briefing by Canter, Achenbaum and Heekin." He gave me this long dump and I said, "Well, what am I supposed to get out of this?" He said, "You're going to have to change the product."

I said, "What do you mean? I don't understand that." I mean, I didn't go to business school and I didn't know what the hell they were talking about.

He said, "We've got to change the product."

I said, "Change what product?" He said, "We've got to change the product called the 'Army.'"

DR. KIRKLAND: These guys are talking to you as PA&E?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. They knew that I had influence. As I say, I had some notoriety in OSD as a guy who got things done. And I had to interact with all the staffs because I was trying to get money for the department. So I cut across a lot of different turf up there.

The upshot of that was this guy said, "You've got to change the product of the Army." I said, "The Army is 200 years old; how in the world do you change the product of the Army?" Then it stopped there because they didn't know. They didn't know to change it.

DR. KIRKLAND: That was the recommendation of this hotshot team of advertisers.

GEN. THURMAN: Hotshot team says, “You’ve got to change the product of the Army.”

DR. KIRKLAND: I know that’s right. You’re selling it to people who you want to join.

GEN. THURMAN: We had this terrible slogan at the moment, “The Army wants to join you,” whatever the hell it was. It was a terrible slogan. But at any rate, this is all going on, and the Army is getting the short end of the stick. We are in the hollow Army, so it was sort of a downer period of time. There were very high attrition rates in the training base, units were undermanned. You’re coming out of Vietnam, you are sort of wondering where are we going with this Army of ours. So it was a period of trying to get going, get fired up, and get going.

DR. KIRKLAND: Unprogrammed losses among the troops and everybody leaving the Reserves.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, a really bad scene then. I think looking back on it we were blessed by having a young man as the Chief of Staff—Shy [Meyer], who had tremendous energy.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he younger than most Chiefs of Staff?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah. He came in a lieutenant general and got made a four star as the Chief. So he didn’t have any other four star job.

So I think he came in at age 49, became the Chief at 49 and retired when he was 53 years old. That’s when most people are made the Chief of Staff. So he had the energy. But then, he had this cool, calm, unruffled, inside man named Vessey that kept

everything smooth down there in the Army staff—the wise man down there, and everything was okay.

So that's sort of the PA&E days—duking it out with OSD. Still have a lot of friends left from those days. We were no pushovers. We fought. And the principal thing I think we got done was, Shy and Donn Starry started the process for changing, once again, the Army doctrine which would come out of 1983 or 1984, the Air/Land Battle Doctrine, which is a doctrine of offense.

The second thing I think we held onto was our R&D money. We didn't have much procurement, so we held onto the R&D, which later positions us to break out. Then Shy had highlighted with the hollow Army game that something was screwy with the personnel situation. So I think the stage was set.

And I think Shy's youthfulness gave hope to a lot of young officers. He was very well liked by young officers. He would leave Washington and he would fly to places around Army posts and just drop in, so that nobody went through a big rat screw getting ready for the Chief of Staff. He would just drop in. Even the crew wouldn't know where he was going. He would tell them to open a flight plan to the west, to Memphis, Tennessee, and then we will tell you where to go when we get to Memphis.

DR. KIRKLAND: Good security. Yeah, that's how to inspect.

GEN. THURMAN: So the young people, the Schwarzkopfs [GEN Norman Schwarzkopf, Jr.] and the younger people who were coming along, would all be ready. They would get sort of juiced up that they had a vigorous leader.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the staff business went on with a great deal of supervision by a guy named Vessey, who was a terrific guy in his own right. So that is sort of the PA&E business.

You can sort of say, well not much exciting went on. A staff job generally isn't exciting. Trying to mind the store and the PA&E trying to get resources. There I could tell a dozen tales. General Bernie Rogers had a mercurial temper, and I remember him coming back. He had been giving a speech down in Dallas, Texas, for AUSA. And they had touted the speech was going to have 1,000 people and it had 300. He wasn't very

happy about that. So he was flying back, going to stay overnight and come back in, in the morning. So I got word in the morning that while he was in the air that the meeting for the major issues had been advanced. So we would be first on the agenda the next morning at 9:00.

DR. KIRKLAND: While he was in the air.

GEN. THURMAN: He's in the air. So I said, "There's nothing he can do while he's in the air except get mad. I can't get him any books and there's nothing to think about, so why would I tell him while he was in the air." So I left a note with his steno and I said, "Please have the general speak to me the moment he gets in the office."

So he gets in there about 1:00 and he said—and he was generous. He'd call up the Army major general and punch the hotline button and say, "Okay, what is it, what do you got?" And I said, "Well, the major issues meeting has been advanced from the day after tomorrow to tomorrow at 9:00 and we will begin the pre-brief at 1:30 this afternoon, 30 minutes from now." Dead silence. "Get over here." So I go over there. He is furious about that. So I said, "Okay, we've got all these guys standing by." You know you just have to stand there and take it.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is a pre-brief to him?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. The pre-brief is to him getting ready to go up to OSD tomorrow.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: So we get in there and General Rogers had one tick. When he really got angry he would get up and go to the window and look out his window and drink a big glass of water. He would come back and if he was still mad after he had done that, he kept a big pile of pencils in front of him. He would just take several pencils and break them in half. Vent his spleen.

So about 5:30 in the afternoon he looked at me and he really ate me up. He gave me a hard time. And he got up, he went to the window, and looked out at Arlington National Cemetery, broke the pencils and turned around and said, "Listen, you little son-of-a-bitch, you're going to give the briefing tomorrow, I'm not giving it. So that's it." He slammed the book and he walked out. This was to Harold Brown.

I got his aide, a guy named Carl Vuono, and I gave Carl the books and I said, "Get the books over to the House." The next morning he came in at 7:00 and I said, "Is there anything else you need?" He said, "No, I got it all." And he had memorized every damned thing in those books. He knew everything. He had gone home and had a nice dinner and talked to his bride and picked the books up.

He's a master at retaining information. The next morning went up and did a beautiful job on it. There's those sort of humorous sort of things, all that humor, but one of the things you do is, you don't lose your humor about that. He was a great guy to work for and Shy was a great guy to work for and Jack Vessey was a great guy to work for. So begins the saga of the recruiting.

DR. KIRKLAND: Another time you got called a son-of-a-bitch, wasn't it?

GEN. THURMAN: Well the recruiting command story goes, Shy says, "Okay, you're going out there and command the recruiting command." I said, "When?" This is like November the 15th or thereabouts, and this is 1979. He said, "I want you out there in two weeks." So I believe I took it over on the 29th. I'd have to look, but I believe I took it over on the 29th.

General Mundie [MG William L. Mundie], the commander, did not want to have a change of command.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did he feel like he was getting sacked?

GEN. THURMAN: He did.

DR. KIRKLAND: And was he being sacked?

GEN. THURMAN: No, I don't think that was the case. Bill was a respected guy. He had been a Commander of MILPERCEN or the head of OPD in MILPERCEN. So he knew the personnel business. So I think he felt that the department wasn't supporting him. And that's probably right.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did he go on to be a division commander?

GEN. THURMAN: No, he retired. And went down to El Paso. He went into private business. But, yeah, I think he thought that he had been relieved. One thing he didn't want to do is he didn't want to have anyone serve on him for the turnover of the command. So Yerks was the DCSPER and Yerks insisted that he, Mundie, stick around until he, Yerks, and I flew out there.

So we flew out there and we got there late in the day, and it was pitch black. We went up to the conference room and he presented Mundie with a Distinguished Service Medal or a Legion of Merit, or whatever and gave him a medal and presentation. Mundie walked out the door and I owned it.

DR. KIRKLAND: So much for transition briefings.

GEN. THURMAN: There wasn't any transition briefing.

Now, as soon as I got this nomination which was two weeks before I took it over, I went back up to see this guy Al Martin at OSD. And I said to Al, "I guess you heard the jungle drums or the tom-toms have beat up here." "Yeah, boy, we're all happy you're going out there and all that." I said, "Holy mackerel." He said, "By the way, here is an advertising book you ought to read." He said, "Read this marketing and advertising, advertising 101, marketing 101."

So he gave me this textbook. He was a Ph.D. and he said, "It's the best book on advertising. Read this book and you'll know everything you need to know." And I said, "Well, look, I need some support up there, guys. I can't do this thing by myself. We've got to turn this thing around and I'd like to have some support." So I guess Shy had

gotten that approved by Clifford Alexander, but I don't know that. I still to this day don't really know.

DR. KIRKLAND: Your appointment?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: What was your relationship like with Alexander?

GEN. THURMAN: I got along with him fine. But he knew me to be the guy that had spoken for the return of the draft. But I got along with him fine. And I got along with his principal in the personnel business who was a guy named Bob Nelson. I got along with him fine. He was followed by a guy named Phil Peacock and I got along with him fine. I got along with everybody in the personnel game fine, down in the Secretary's office.

After Shy had told me that I was going out there, Vessey called me and said, "You are to report to me once a month and tell me what it is you need to turn around the recruiting service."

DR. KIRKLAND: Do you report directly to him or through the—

GEN. THURMAN: No. "You reported directly to me, once a month."

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that the way it always is, or does the recruiting usually report to the DCSPER?

GEN. THURMAN: No. My boss is DCSPER. So I went down to see Yerks and I said, "Here's the story." "Yeah," he said, "that's fine. You go tell him whatever you need to tell him." Well, that turned out to be the saving grace. The Vice Chief of Staff has the capability of ordering everybody to do everything. In this case, what he was asking to

be done was to go out and figure out what it took to turn it around and report back and then he would see to it that we would get the means to go do it.

So I had, obviously, approbation of the Chief of Staff because he called me and told me I was going to go out there. Vessey said he was going to be my daddy. Clay Gompf and Bill Clark in the DCSPER in the Assistant Secretary of the Army in Personnel and Al Martin at OSD personnel. So they were all—

You see, the Department of Defense had a certain vested interest in getting the Army's problems solved. Jack Marsh (John Otho Marsh, Jr.), Secretary of the Army, would later say it better than anybody could say it at that time. But when Jack was the Secretary of the Army, he would tell Caspar Weinberger [Caspar W. Weinberger, Secretary of Defense], "As goes the Army, so goes the All-Volunteer Force."

Because we take in the most people, we have the biggest pool of people to bring in every year. The other services in those days were half the strength of the Army and, therefore, we had a hell of a lot of people to bring in.

Well, I get out there in the famous downtown recruiting game.

DR. KIRKLAND: You owned it at 6:00 in the evening.

GEN. THURMAN: Six o'clock in the evening and I'm in charge.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who do you have to help you? Do you have a bunch of brigadier generals to help you?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I had two brigadiers and a chief of staff.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was the chief of staff a general too?

GEN. THURMAN: No, he was a colonel. One of the brigadier generals is Bobby Porter [MG Bobby B. Porter]. He is an infantry officer. One of the brigadier generals is Donald Connelly [BG Donald W. Connelly]. He is an adjutant general. The

chief of staff is a guy named Al Ono [LTG Allen K. Ono], an adjutant general. The head of advertising quits the day I was announced to be the head guy.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he an officer or a civilian?

GEN. THURMAN: He was a colonel. So he quit. So the advertising guy, acting advertising director, is a civilian named Tom Evans. Then there is a director of Recruiting Operations—I don't recall who he is. Those are sort of the main players when I get there.

So a little bit about those guys. Porter would leave soon thereafter and go and be an ADC, I think, in the 82nd; and then he took command of the 82nd Airborne Division, or he goes to be the 82nd commander directly out.

He soon leaves, and he is replaced by a guy that I have known for a long time by the name of Hardin Olson [MG Hardin L. Olson, Jr.], a brigadier general who comes up having been a brigade commander at the Big Red One, and he also had been an ADC there for a while. He comes up to do that now. Olson is an operations research guy. Connelly knows everything there is to know about personnel matters because he's an adjutant general.

And Ono turns out to be a guy who knew everything you wanted to know about recruiting. Ono had started out as a recruiter in a main station in Albuquerque or someplace out there as a captain and had come up through the ranks and had spent a considerable amount of time in the recruiting business.

Evans turns out to be a terrific civilian and knowledgeable about matters of advertising. Then I put the squeeze on the Department of the Army to get me an operations research guy. The change-up of getting Olson in there doesn't occur until about late June of 1980. So Bobby Porter is there the first six months that I was there.

Connelly stays there until sort of like January or so of '81 and then he becomes the DMPM in the building, Director of Personnel Policy. But, in November or December, I put the squeeze on the Army for an operations research expert and they serve up a guy whose name is Dennis Benchoff [LTG Dennis Benchoff]. And Dennis is at Fort Ord, California, and commands a maintenance battalion out there as an ordnance officer or chemical officer. He is finally released, and I get him in about February of '80.

Now, the first thing I try to do is, go out and meet all of the lieutenant colonels who command the battalions, 57 of them—from Portland, Maine, to Hawaii. And I want to meet those guys in 30 days.

Meanwhile, one other factor that influences all of us is there is a recruiting scandal going on and there are some 500 recruiters under indictment, everything from manufacturing false diplomas to molesting recruits. You name it, I got it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who uncovered this? Was it sort of a rolling thing or did it all happen at once?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it's a rolling inquisition going on. Connelly is in charge of all that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, so it's an in-house thing; it's not somebody outside command who is doing it?

GEN. THURMAN: No, it's inside the command; and we are busy prosecuting it inside the command. But it's a known stink.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's in the papers and everything?

GEN. THURMAN: It's in the newspapers and the subject matter of editorials. And Cincinnati was a hotbed of crap; Madison, Wisconsin, was one. A lot of places had all this stuff going on.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is 500 guys?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, out of 10,000 recruiters, we had 500 under various and sundry investigation. We had a stable of lawyers, terrific guys who did all this work. Connelly was the principal investigator.

And Connelly knew all of the regulatory matters. You recall, one of the things that Mr. Carter did, Carter came in and said, "We're going to have a general amnesty for anybody that went north of the border." Do you recall that? And Connelly had been one of the principals involved in that business of sorting through that. So he knew all the regulatory matter and how you had to go through the process of investigating various and sundry things in order to make them stand up and move the administrative law and the UCMJ.

So the upshot of all that is, I sort of had three things to do. One is recruit, two is to find out who my principal subordinates were, and three to take care of this scandal going on.

So I decided I would go on the road five days a week and then I would work legal cases two days a week.

DR. KIRKLAND: You had to, what, approve the sentences and so forth?

GEN. THURMAN: I had to either find the guy guilty or not guilty or serve charges or court martial him or give him the Article 15 or give him the administrative boot or whatever. I did not have general court martial authority; I had special court martial authority. General court martial authority resided with the general who commanded Fort Sheridan, Illinois, who was a FORSCOM general. So they had to take anything to a general court, it would be there.

So I had to go through all this rigmarole. And, oh, by the way, I did not have court martial authority over a guy in San Francisco. I had special court martial jurisdiction, but if I had to bring a general court martial against the guy I had to go to San Francisco and have the charges preferred out there. So it was a complicated legal problem.

So the way I got around this thing is I said, I will go to two recruiting regions. There were five recruiting regions, so I'll go to two recruiting regions a week, spend two days there, and I'll have the 10 to 12 recruiting battalion commanders come in and they would all give me a dump. We would start in the morning, and they gave me an hour dump on what was going on in their domain, because they were in charge of it and they knew more about it than I did. So I would listen for an hour and figure it out.

By the time I got to the third one, which turned out to be Kansas City, it was the San Antonio Brigade, but I had the meeting in Kansas City because it was easier to get to by aircraft. I had been to two of these things, this was number three, and when all these guys gave their dump I excluded all the NCOs. We would bring their sergeants major in and their chief of recruiting operations, so there was a three-man team there.

There was a lieutenant colonel, a sergeant major and the chief of recruiting operations who would be nominally a captain or a major. The three of those guys would give me a briefing, and I would listen for an hour, hour and a half, probe them back and forth, and that would take two days. We would bring the chow in for lunch and we would have dinner together, and we would work until midnight and get up the next morning and start over again, listening to the rest of the guys.

By the afternoon of the second day in Kansas City I said, "Okay, all the noncommissioned officers are excused, I just want to talk to the recruiting commanders." This is an executive session, so I had about 13 battalion commanders in there and the regional commander. And I said, "I finally figured out how this thing works here." I said, "You guys aren't in charge of anything. You're not battalion commanders. You're letting your sergeants major run it for you. You don't even know what you're doing." I said, "I noticed most of you can't even give a briefing about what it is."

One guy stood up and said, "You're dead wrong." It was one of those challenges by a lieutenant colonel who had enough spunk to stand up and say, "You're full of shit, General." This guy stood up and said, "That may be true with the rest of these turkeys around here, but I can tell you it's not true in my battalion. I run it, and I run it top to bottom." Incidentally, he's making mission too. His name is Jerry Blackwood. I'll never forget that as long as I live. He's now a stockbroker in Arkansas.

Meanwhile, I went down to the schoolhouse where we were teaching people in Fort Sheridan. We had this thing at Indianapolis and then—

(End Tape 9, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 10

(Begin Tape 10, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: The head guy, chairman of the board, chairman, CEO of N.W. Ayer, Incorporated, which was our advertiser and had been for quite a while—his name was Lou Hagopian. One of his principal deputies was a guy named David Means. One of the principal artistic guys was a guy named Ted Regan, and then under Ted was a guy named Lou DeJoseph. And then they had a guy who was the head of our account, and I can't even recall what that guy's name was.

But they gave me a dump and I sort of listened to all that stuff. And I said, I would like for all of you to get your stuff together and I would like for you to come out to Fort Sheridan; we're going to have an all-day session on recruiting.

DR. KIRKLAND: What had happened with that? Was it sort of a friendly briefing and they gave you their side of the story?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it was about a half a day long I guess, and it was sort of what is the agency: "This is N.W. Ayer, and here is who we do work for—we do AT&T, we do DeBeers Diamonds, we do Pepsi Cola, we do this, we do that." And they took me through the agency and they took me through the kind of ads they did with various and sundry people. And they talked to me about the Army program and how much work they've done for the Army and how they did the Army program.

So it was sort of what I call the entry session of how do we manage the Army program. But it was also flavored with the fact that "we are a responsible agency and we've done a considerable amount of work." In other words, you're not the only client we have and we do some big stuff and it works. And they had. "Reach out and touch someone" with the AT&T ad is—

DR. KIRKLAND: A pretty good ad.

GEN. THURMAN: A pretty good idea and “A diamond is forever” with DeBeers Diamond, that’s their slogan. And “The Army wants to join you,” current advertising.

Okay. So I took all of that in and I said, “Okay, the next meeting will be held in famous downtown Chicago, bring all your buddies. Set aside a day and we’ll spend time going through this program to find out how we do things.”

So in about 30 days I thought I had something of a handle on what the Army’s Recruiting Command was all about, how we issued instructions to recruit people, and I had some general feel about who the battalion commanders were in the field—although they were scattered all hell to breakfast—and I knew the five region commanders and got a good sense about that. I got a good sense about what the staff was good at and what it wasn’t good at.

The one thing we didn’t do is we didn’t relieve anybody in the staff. We didn’t relieve any recruiting guys. The point was to try to take what we had and turn it into a winning team.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you identify, provisionally, any people who were really losers in your first meetings with staff and commanders?

GEN. THURMAN: No, I didn’t.

DR. KIRKLAND: Sometimes you can smell a jerk.

GEN. THURMAN: No, I didn’t perceive anybody. It was sort of a beat-down command. And when you get a beat-down group of people, they’re looking for motivation, upbeat. “It can be, it will be better, things will change.” And I would think that—you get this probably more from talking to people in the recruiting service at the time—I believe that they knew who I was.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did they? You’ve been pretty much behind the scenes.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I visited out there once. Once. But I think the war, the jungle drums had taken off in the Pentagon. I was a fairly well-known guy inside the Pentagon.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, it sounds like you were. It sounds like you were the one people like to follow.

GEN. THURMAN: I think that a lot of people in the recruiting command did. Clearly Ono knew who I was, and clearly Porter knew who I was, and clearly Connelly knew who I was. Evans didn't know me, the advertising guy. But three principal staff assistants I had knew who I was and they knew that I came with clout from the headshed, which is what they were looking for. They were looking for some clout and some money to do things.

Ono was a terrific Chief of Staff. Any time I was on the road, he would call me up every night at 6:00 and he would give me a dump. He would tell me first everything that had gone well. Then if he had a problem, he told me what the problem was. And he always took action. He'd say, "I did this, this and this." He never said, "What do you want me to do about that?" He was a terrific Chief. So running the store....

And the three generals all are on the road all the time. Connelly was out trying to put out this recruiting scandal fire, and Porter was trying to exhort the troops to recruit more, and then I was trying to find out what was going on in the command.

Evans looked at me as a guy who would listen to what he said about advertising and he knew a lot about advertising.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he a civil servant?

GEN. THURMAN: He was a civil servant, a GS-14 or so.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did he know that much?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, he had been in the recruiting command for nine years as their number two guy in advertising, so he knew everything there was about the agency and all that good stuff. He knew how to buy the ads and how long it took to make them and how to pull strings in the advertising agency. And he knew what magazines we ought to be into and all that kind of stuff.

The staff essentially was a good staff. Now, we didn't have any analytical capability on the staff.

DR. KIRKLAND: So you had no way of measuring what worked.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. And so that's the reason I wanted a guy, and they gave me Dennis Benchoff; is now a major general in the Army Materiel Command and he's doing very well. Dennis was a terrific guy working for me.

I went out and recruited another guy who wouldn't come until the summer. He was in the War College at the time, a guy named Bob Phillips. And Bob was an Armor Cavalry officer. He came in and became my chief of Recruiting Operations. He's just terrific. He had a Ph.D. in business and behavioral science and just a terrific guy, make anything happen and make it happen again. But he didn't come until the summer, and Olson didn't come 'til the summer.

Well, reading this advertising book and understanding what had happened with the ... that the advertising was not well-respected—I got that from this dump up in the field—that the advertising slogan wasn't well-respected by the people in the field, the recruiters. One of the principal attack vectors went with the agency. So when the agency came out they had to sort of tell these stories one at a time even though they're interrelated.

The agency came out for a full-blown review of the Army program. I told all my guys, I wouldn't drink a lot of coffee after about 9:00 at night. I surely wouldn't drink any in the morning. I said, what we are going to do is start the meeting and we are going to have a lot of coffee on the table, but we are not going to interrupt the meeting—we're just going and going and going. The Energizer Rabbit was at work.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who all did you have there?

GEN. THURMAN: I had the Chairman of the Board and I had the chief advertising guy and the chief of the buying, how you buy the stuff, and I had Lou DeJoseph was our chief guy on putting together the ads. Ted Regan was a creative guy. I think all those guys were creative guys. Dave Means represented the headshed and Lou Grogan represented the headshed. And it was during the course of that meeting that I fired the account manager. Because he couldn't answer any questions.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have your two generals and Colonel Ono and your regional commanders there?

GEN. THURMAN: No, I didn't have the regional commanders, just the headshed.

DR. KIRKLAND: The account manager was the senior person in N.W. Ayer?

GEN. THURMAN: Responsible for the Army account.

DR. KIRKLAND: For this account.

GEN. THURMAN: Specifically for the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. And was that all he did?

GEN. THURMAN: That's all he did. So at the conclusion of the meeting I said, "This guy has got to go."

DR. KIRKLAND: And you said this right there in front of him and everybody else?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I told the Chairman, “I don’t want to see that guy around here anymore, I don’t like him. He hasn’t got the answers, he doesn’t know what we’re doing, spends too much time in Washington kowtowing to the Secretary and not enough time working for me, so I don’t need him. Get a new guy.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you get any argument?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, no. Advertising agencies work that way. I mean, just like that he’s gone. A new guy comes in the day after tomorrow. No time wasted. That’s the way the advertising industry works. If you don’t have confidence in the account manager, they get a new one like right now.

DR. KIRKLAND: And you knew that, did you?

GEN. THURMAN: I read my book. So what we decided at that meeting that went on and on and on and brought the sandwiches in, these guys are drinking up coffee, one thing you can’t do is you can’t slump. There are sandwiches out there and the meeting goes on, and these guys are dashing out of the room and back up—you know, what did he say while we were gone and all. The upshot of all that was I took control of the advertising.

DR. KIRKLAND: It happened all in that meeting?

GEN. THURMAN: That’s right. And I told Hagopian that he and I were a team, that I was the chief of the sales department and I had two piece parts to the sales department and advertising and I had the recruiting force and that he and I were a team. I was not his adversary, he was on my team. Now that help went over the agency to my line of work because the agency had perceived that there had become more and more adversarial relationships between the head of the recruiting command and the agency as opposed to a team proposition. That became a piece of our boilerplate.

We got a new account manager, listened to all the piece parts of the puzzle, and then they presented to me what they thought was the market out there. At this particular meeting in December I said, “We don’t have enough market analysis and therefore we want to turn on a substantial amount of market analysis, and we will pay you to do that analysis work. I want you to do focus group work and all kinds of data dumps out of national surveys, and commission a survey if that’s required and find out what kids think about the Army.”

And this all had to do with Canter, Achenbaum, and Heekin had been talking about you have to change the image of the Army, change the product.

So we then agreed that they would go do their work. Meanwhile, every month I’m in New York talking to the agency—How are we doing, what are we doing and all that. But we said we will meet again in late February, two months away, get the research done and we’ll have a big meeting. We are going to New York to do it. It turns out we can’t get it in New York and we do it in Stamford, Connecticut. You can’t get it in New York, there’s a strike and bad weather and so the best way to do is to get into Hartford and then drive down to Stamford and then drive to New York up there.

Tom Evans could give you a blow-by-blow of what went on at that meeting. It was a major meeting where we got research coughed up. We had ARI, Army Research Institute; we had West Point in the person of a guy named Tom Fagan who was doing research for us. We had the Rand Corporation doing research for us, and we had the agency doing research for us. All we did was listen to research back then and what was going on out there in the Army.

I guess one of the things that I came to understand was, the advertising had to appeal to the people that we were targeting, not to us guys in the service at the headshed. After all, we were already in.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, you were recruited.

GEN. THURMAN: So that started the train down the track toward changing the advertising game. And I told the Chief Operating Officer Lou Gogan, “I want you to create four different campaigns.” And he said, “We produce one campaign.”

And I said, “No, I want you to produce four. I’ve just come from the building. I’m an analyst, I look at alternatives, so I want you to give me four different approaches to advertising.”

And he protested. Then I said, “If you don’t give me four, I’ll take my money and go to a different agency.” He said, “In that case we’ll give you four.” I said, “I want you to get all of your creative people and I want them all to go to Fort Knox, Kentucky, and to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I want them to see heavy forces at Fort Knox, take a tank down range and shoot it. And we laid all that on. And I want you to go to Fort Bragg and find out light forces in the Army, jumping out of airplanes and all that stuff. You can’t jump out of airplanes, but you can see how they go do all that stuff.”

So they did all that. And then all this begins to come together in the February meeting.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, they had done all this in two months?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Wow.

GEN. THURMAN: Because they had to come up with these four pitches.

DR. KIRKLAND: When did you tell them to do that; in December or in February?

GEN. THURMAN: I think I told them to do that in February after we saw the advertising layout. And those four pitches turned out to be, “The advantage of your age—Join the Army,” “Join tomorrow’s Army today.” That was a big laser show, night vision goggles, lasers and all that stuff which was coming into being. Remember, this was 1980.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: “Be all you can be” and “Army will show you how.”
“Army will show you how” was oriented on “Come in and we will show you a trade.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, right. Post military.

GEN. THURMAN: And “The advantage of your age—Join the Army” was oriented on “Come into the Army and we will show you an adventure.” So adventure, technology, and sort of self-motivation, and the last one was a trade. Those were the four, and those were sort of the four major things that people said they joined the service for.

I think we didn’t decide on what they were; we decided that we would do the four in February, and then they took three months to put the four together—March, April and May to do that. We had to bring it in the building and make a presentation in the month of June or July.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have to make a pitch and somebody else had to make the decision? Or was your decision final on this?

GEN. THURMAN: No. The Army has a thing called the Advertising Council, which is made up of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, the DCSPER, and finally the Secretary of the Army himself has to approve it. And that’s rightfully so because it has to do with the prestige of the Army, is visible then. Do you follow me? So it has to be approved at the headshed of the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: There’s no integration though of a set of advertising systems, is there? This is the only advertising campaign the Army has, is that right?

GEN. THURMAN: No, there was a National Guard, a very cheap Charlie National Guard one, and a very cheap Charlie Army Reserve.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, okay.

GEN. THURMAN: And we ultimately got those lashed together, but this time they were not. Although I had the Army Reserve account because the Army Reserve mission was part of the USAREC mission.

So now Tom Evans is shepherding all this. He loves it. I've got some spizzerack going here—

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, something is happening.

GEN. THURMAN: —as opposed to the advertising sort of being over there on the sidebar. We had a guy who has made some notoriety at this moment in 1994, a guy named Chris Whittle, who runs the Whittle Enterprise down in Knoxville, Tennessee. Chris in those days in 1979, '80 and '81 did for us a thing called "Sourcebook," which was targeted to every high school kid in the nation. He told them about Army opportunities.

Now he does the Classroom One thing, you know, that brings TV into classrooms and they have advertising inside of the classroom. He does it with medics. He brings it into medical offices and the like. A guy who was at Yale University resigned and went to work for him in order to go into bringing—

DR. KIRKLAND: The former president of Yale?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. For the purpose of bringing on schools which are run by Chris Whittle's organization. So the upshot of all of that was a variety. We went through all this advertising stuff and we began to get this stuff on track to come together for final presentation in the enterprise.

The agency did, then, bring in four different completely done advertising campaigns. It may be the first time the industry has ever done that. Certainly it's the first time this company had ever done that where they actually went through making TV, radio, and print ad mock ups for each one of these four deals.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you pick four just arbitrarily?

GEN. THURMAN: Arbitrarily, right out of my ear. I said, “I want four alternatives.” And they said, “No, we give you ‘the’ alternative.” And I said, “No, you give me four alternatives and I’ll tell you which is the right alternative. We, the Army, will tell you which one is the right one.”

So we got ready to present that in the summer of ‘80. Normally the advertising agency presented the whole thing. And I said to Hagopian, “No, I’m going to present half of it, and you’re going to present half of it. The part I’m going to present is the research about who is out there, who we should recruit. And then you are going to come along and present the way to recruit them through advertising.”

DR. KIRKLAND: It would be four ways, right?

GEN. THURMAN: There would be four ways. And then we will recommend the solution after we look at these four ads.

And I had not previously made up my mind about anything because I didn’t know how it would be, I didn’t know what these four things would turn out to be. Do you follow me?

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: I just said give me four. So in the going in position, we didn’t have “Be all you can be.” These fall out of the research that was done.

In the lead up for all of this pretty soon we were knuckled down to where we got these four campaigns, and we begin to put titles on these four campaigns. I am doing my part by putting together the pitch for the target audiences—here’s the recruiting data, here’s the research that’s been done, the Rand Corporation national data, advertising agency data, our own data and the like, and who it is we ought to go after.

They put together the four story lines, and we merged the data, and I have a big meeting in New York and I do my rehearsal. They do the four campaigns. They unroll the four theme lines, and it’s obvious which one is the right one, or it is self-evident.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was the research contradictory, or did you get a fairly coherent picture of what part it was?

GEN. THURMAN: No. There was a very coherent picture of what the research said we ought to do. The research said that people joined the Army for a variety of reasons. One is to escape school, two is to escape what they've been doing or their environment, three is to learn a trade, four is to take time out between school before going to college. Another one is to earn money to go to college. Another is to go on high adventure. These are all rank ordered. We did surveys not only in the civilian domain, but we actually surveyed young people in the Army and first-term re-enlistees and got a good cross-section of that. We've got a lot of work done.

I said to Lou, "You've got to have a song." This was on a Thursday when we ran through the final rehearsal, and show time was going to be Monday in Washington. "So you've got to have a song." He said, "Okay." So I left New York and I didn't know what the song was going to be. Just get a song. They commissioned a guy named Jake Holmes, who was a jingle writer. He wrote "Be all you can be," and then he sang it, put it to an orchestra on Friday, and Saturday and Sunday they put the "Be all you can be" ad against a photo montage of faces of military people, upbeat faces of military people, male and female, all the races and all kinds of skill domains, aviators, mechanics and rangers, paratroopers, armor guys, et cetera.

By virtue of having gone to Bragg and gone to Fort Knox, they had come up with some rough outlines of ads like the tank ad and we do more for before 9:30 in the morning. They had the rough outlines for those things. Monday morning I go in and get ready to give the pitch and I'm going to give it about 10:00 in the morning. I'm in there about 7:00 and Lou said, "Do you want to hear the song?" And I say, "Yes, I want to hear the song, of course I want to hear the song." So lights go out, montage goes up, and they played "Be all you can be." And when the lights come on, tears are running down my cheeks. And I said, "Done. This is it, man. I mean, this is it!"

So then during that particular day, that morning at 10:00 we start the review. And all the principals are in there. I get up and I give the opening, and I give all this research

data. I said, “Now I would like to introduce Mr. Lou Hagopian who is going to give you the four alternative ways to which we can tackle this market.”

Then I went and sat down at the table.

The first one comes up and they came up in the order in which I gave them, which is “The advantage of your age: Go join the Army.” So he goes through this, while the research shows this, here’s the way you’re going to—show you the ads and the print matter, and here’s this, and listen to this being read over the audio like it’s going to come out over the radio and so on.

Then “Join tomorrow’s Army.” He’s going lasers going through the night and tanks shooting laser, people shooting the lasers and all this kind of stuff, and night vision goggles and all that kind of stuff. They haven’t played the song or anything.

So now, “Be all you can be,” and went through that. We began to get pieces of paper thrown across at me from these pachyderms sitting around the table. I open it up and it said “Be all you can be.” “Be all you can be.” “Be all you can be.”

The last one was “Army will show you how,” which is the trade thing. And then he says, “And here’s how we would cap it off.” We had already decided what the thing is going to be. It would be “Be all you can be.” So this is how we would cap it off and here’s sort of the background music that will go on, lights go down, all these pictures come up, they’re fading in and out with various and sundry pictures up there. They’re playing, “Be all you can be.” Lights come up and everybody is clapping everybody on the back, “God, that’s great stuff,” you know, and cheering, hollering.

And the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower, Nelson, gets up, rushes upstairs. He says, “Start over with that montage when I bring the Secretary in here.” He rushes upstairs, gets the Secretary, brings him down there, and Alexander comes in. The room darkens, we get it all off the screen, everybody is sort of exuberant, you know, and the montages come up and the music goes on and the lights come back on again. And Alexander says, “Great.” So we’ve got this all organized and I said, “We’re ready to go.”

So it took us six months from that day to get the first four ads done. The first of the four ads was a tank ad, M1 tank, brand-new, had to get clearance from the security people to get that ad done. I said, “I want you to take them inside of a tank.” The tank on the outside looks like any other tank. I want to take them inside the tank and show them a

solid-state computer, a laser range finder, a turbine jet engine in the rear and an old Spec-4, I can't think of that kid's name, I thought I'd never forget it, but I just lapsed it. Then we had one on the Airborne, and we had one on an air traffic controller bringing in aircraft in a driving rainstorm at Fort Lewis, Washington. We had a helicopter ad going down through a bunch of trees and all that stuff. Kevin Crowley, Specialist Fourth Class, Kevin Crowley in the tank ad.

So we got those ads put together. It took us six months to do it, and we broke those ads on the week after Christmas, during the Bowl games, and the pro playoff games. Then we had a one-minute ad on the Super Bowl that cost us \$345,000. Now it costs you a million for a minute.

DR. KIRKLAND: A minute on the Super Bowl?

GEN. THURMAN: Huh?

DR. KIRKLAND: A minute on the Super Bowl is one million bucks?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, but then it was about three hundred thousand. I told the advertising agency one other thing. After I went up there and looked at one of the ads they were trying to shoot, he showed me this wimp ad that had this wimpy looking guy in it. And I said, "Is that guy in the Army?" He said, "No, that guy is not in the Army, he's an actor." I said, "No more actors. We will always use Army people in the ads." "Oh, we can't do that. We can't do that." I said, "Yeah, you will. You will do what I tell you, damn it. You will use Army people in the ads." And I said, "We are not hiring any wimp actors here." Later on they go back to doing that, but not while I was around.

I said, "The Army is big and strong. It doesn't wear glasses, it hasn't got a thin scrawny neck. It's big and brawny—big, thick necks, no glasses, broad shoulders, size 44, and it has mass. So there's not one tank, there are lots of tanks. And there's not one helicopter, there's lots of helicopters."

So we influenced the ads pretty directly. They could not get away with an ad without me going through from start to finish, every step of the way in doing all that.

So that is sort of how the advertising campaign broke. The final thing on that is I had the Army Band take the song and score it three different ways for a 17-piece orchestra, a 47-piece band, and a 100-piece band. And I shipped it to every college and high school in America, three different editions. I asked the guys who did the media buying how many times did a kid have to listen to a song in a 30-day period in order to be able to sing the song. The answer was 18. I said, "Well, hit up 30 times in the first month. I want the ad campaign to be the biggest breaker ever. I wanted all the kids in America to be able to sing the song in 30 days." So they did.

Just a sidebar about that, this means this ad campaign didn't get done for a year, the first year I was there. So on the 18th of February now we are in our seventh week and I'm invited to go out to Rockford, Illinois. A friend of mine out there, Reverend Bobby Yonts, he and I had gone to high school together. He was a Methodist minister. He and I celebrated our birthday on the same day. He called me up and said, "Why don't you come out here and we'll celebrate our birthday together. We haven't seen each other in 20 years." So I said, "Okay."

So it's our 50th birthday, 1981. I went in his household and there were two boys there, one 11 or 12 and the other 17. And the youngster is sitting beside me and he said, "Are you the 'Be all you can be' man?" This thing had only broken seven weeks. I said, "Yeah, I'm the 'Be all you can be' man." He said, "Those are really good ads you have on television." This is a minister and his family.

And I said, "Which ad do you like the best?" He said, "I like the one about the helicopters coming through the woods." I said, "What do you like about that best?" He said, "What I like about that best is at the end where the older man puts his arm around the younger man and says, 'Not a bad job for a rookie.'" I said, "Why does that mean something to you?" He said, "Well, it means that the Army cares about people."

That's an 11-year-old talking. I said, "You're exactly right, they do care about people. People are the Army. That's us."

I said, "What is the other message in that ad?" He thought for a moment and he said, "It's something about going from high school to flight school." I said, "What does that mean to you?" He said, "I don't really know if it's exactly right, but maybe if you've

got to go in the Navy or the Air Force you've got to be a college man. I don't know." I said, "Well, that's exactly right."

I turned to his 50-year-old father and I said, "Do you know what we're talking about?" He said, "I haven't got the foggiest idea." I said, "Well, you see, we're not interested in recruiting you. We're interested in recruiting him."

That's a true story, no embellishment about that. So that told me that the message was getting into the homes of America in a way in which no Army message had ever gotten in before.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's almost as if it was in code, it slips right by the parents and into the ears of the target.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. Now, the other thing I said to the agency is, "In every one of your ads you have to target three different groups. You have to target the youngster we are trying to recruit, then you have to target the influencer group which is his parents or his college or his high school guidance counselor, high school teachers or the like. The third group you have to target is the Army, you have to aggrandize the Army."

DR. KIRKLAND: Internally, right.

GEN. THURMAN: So this thing of having the older guy put his arm around—see, that aggrandizes the Army. That's the old warrant officer putting his arm around the young warrant officer saying, "You know, good job for a rookie." Or that's the sergeant putting his arm around some kid saying, "You did a good job," sort of like a mentor.

Now, N.W. Ayer was very good at that. If you look at the DeBeers Diamond ads, for example, the conclusion of the DeBeers Diamond ads is a very tender moment between a husband and a wife or between a suitor and a potential fiancée or whatever. It's just the tender moment when there's recognition that the spouse or the suitor has given somebody a very precious object, a diamond in some form or another.

If you also look at "Reach out and touch someone," there's a—

DR. KIRKLAND: There's a gentle feeling there.

GEN. THURMAN: One of the most touching ones in there is the one of the black lady who is talking to her son who is away in the Army or the Navy or whatever it is, and he's calling her up and reporting something good he's done, and she breaks out into tears and "Reach out and touch someone." And you really do that when you pick up the phone and call somebody.

So they were good at that. They understood the guidance about having to aggrandize serving military people.

So that was sort of the advertising gambit. Now, you had to have money to put that stuff into print and into the media and into all that. When I went back to Vessey in one of my monthly kind of meetings I said, "I'm going to have to have more advertising money to put this campaign in a major leap-off to get us going here so we can really smack the American people with this particular ad and this advertising stance that tells them you've come to work with us."

We ended up with a normative ad, a normative behavior. You know, you could come and join the Army and you could be all that you can be given your God-given talents, as opposed to it's a job or it's an adventure or it's a stop-out position where you're stopping out from school before going on to another school.

So I think the ad turns out to be what we really believed about the Army. And that is, if you go to work in the Army, at least this is what I believe out there. I believe you go to work in the Army, you can do most any damned thing you want to in the Army given whatever creative abilities you have. And if you don't, you have to look at the Army as saying, well, maybe you don't have any creative ability. As opposed to saying, you know, nobody listens to what I say and nobody lets me do anything. A squad leader is a squad leader and a private soldier is a private soldier. If he wants to be a very good mortarman or an artilleryman, or whatever, in the infantry, or whatever he wants to be, he can be that. So I think that it took on in the Army, it got internalized by the Army.

General Fred Mahaffey was a friend of mine who left the Department of the Army and went to command the 3rd Infantry Division in Germany. He made "Be all you can

be” sort of a slogan for the Marne division. There were signs all over the place, “Be all you can be” and all this. So a lot of places around the Army it got internalized as a perfectly okay thing.

We took all the message traffic in the Army, for example, and at the top and the bottom of the message traffic put “Be all you can be” and saw little clerks looking around things and sergeants looking around things and pretty soon they get fired up and they say, “I guess these guys really mean you can be all you can be.”

DR. KIRKLAND: This is important because if you sell something to the public and then they get into the Army and find out that that’s not what is there, then you give it a 12-month cycle and your ad campaign is cut off at the knees.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. The worst thing that can happen to you in an ad campaign is the famous downtown, poison the well back in Main Street, USA. That is the worst thing you can ever do, which gives it a whole other line of reasoning that has to do with cleaning up the avarice in the recruiting service.

We simply had to change the recruiting stance of the recruiter. We had to change our work force.

So I went to the Department of the Army in another one of these monthly meetings and I said, “I want to change the work force.” And they said, “Yeah, like what?” And I said, “Right now people volunteer to be recruiters and they may be volunteering for the wrong reason.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. They volunteered for it and then it became a career field.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: You didn’t have to go back to infantry periodically. You could spend 25 years . . .

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. That's right. So I said, "I don't want that in my recruiting force. I want the recruiting force to be just like the drill sergeant force. If you are good enough, you get selected to be a recruiter. And then, you will return to the force and you will have to serve with those guys you recruited." And so there will be custodial responsibility and ownership from the time you recruit a guy until you serve with the guy back in the force.

Now, because Vessey was the Vice, he said, "Do it." That was the end of that. And I kept that going for as long as I stayed on active duty. And it still is back like it was before now.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is it really?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: You kept it together until '91.

GEN. THURMAN: I essentially left the Army in '87 when I left as the Vice and I went down to TRADOC. And I didn't have any influence over their budget. So I kept it going from 1980 to '87. Then the termites got in the way, and they persuaded various and sundry people to go back to old methods.

That has finally been submitted. Last year they finally got it done in 1992. They turned it back to "It's a full-time, volunteer in, serve your life there," and all that.

(End Tape 10, Side A)

(Begin Tape 10, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: And at the NCO coming in, the rookies coming in. We had ARI. Dr. Joyce Shields was the head of that part of ARI at the time and she devised a one-week piece of instruction that was both a practical exam and a tutorial about why it would be a good idea for you to come and be in the recruiting force. Even though you had been ordered to go into it. We had to make a sale as to why it would be good for you to go do that. “We will give you some skills that you don’t have.”

It was terrifying to come into the recruiting force. I mean, we had just thrown 500 people out of it. It was all in the *Army Times* about purging all this stuff. People began to say, “Gee whiz, it’s a hard place to come and work. We are liable to get fired and thrown out and that will ruin our records and all that.”

So you had to, then, appeal to these people that you brought in as newbies to get into it. So we began to change the recruiting force, put them through the school that we ran in Indianapolis and tried to give more people an opportunity to become recruiters. We made them follow their people all the way through graduation at events to individual training. They had to keep a roster on how well their people were graduating. So that became a major thing for the noncommissioned officers.

For the officers, I wouldn’t take anybody to be a District Commander at the time, which was a captain’s billet. I’m sorry, an Area which was a captain’s billet. It was like being a company commander. Unless he had been a company commander of the branch he was in. So he’s substantially improved the quality of people in the area. Most of them would tell you it’s a lot easier being a company commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: Line unit?

GEN. THURMAN: Line unit, company commander of a recruiting base. Then at the officer level we said we wanted 50 percent former battalion commanders in whatever branch they were. And the Army—again Vessey said, “Do it.” It’s that simple.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did these two stick?

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. Then we wanted half the people in the brigade command slots to have been brigade commanders, and that stuck. So from that standpoint we got very good officers and very good NCOs coming along. Got rid of the 500 people that had been alleged to have conducted recruiting malpractice.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did most of them stay in the Army or most of them booted?

GEN. THURMAN: Most stayed in the Army and were reassigned elsewhere, administrative action. But they were out of the recruiting business. Where there was flagrant cheating and scandal, they got Article 15 or court martialed. So that sort of took the—

DR. KIRKLAND: That was a housecleaning, I guess.

GEN. THURMAN: No, we didn't go down and say, "We'll dump 10,000 recruiters and get 10,000 new ones. "

DR. KIRKLAND: You just got the ones that were bad.

GEN. THURMAN: We replaced people and we started moving people out. We said, "You've been in the recruiting business for four, five or six years, it's time for you to move on."

What happens in productivity? We had individual productivity curves on every single recruiter. You find out after about three years in it the productivity begins to decline except for some very exceptional people. They get tired of it. It is a negative industry.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's a tough industry.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, when you have to make 35 telephone calls to get eight people to agree to talk to you further, to get five people to take the physical exam, to get three people to take the mental exam, to get one guy to join the service, I mean, you are in a negative industry and people get tired of that after a while. Some people thrive on it, a lot of people get tired of it.

So we began to rotate people back in the force. We had more people wearing recruiting badges sort of like drill sergeants, and it began to pay off for us back then.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that something that you wear for life, the recruiting badge after you get it?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. So one is the character of the force and one is the recruiting game. A third attack vector became the business of taking the mystery and potential deceit out of telling you what your job is going to be; promising people one thing but delivering another.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is this what the recruiter says to the prospect or what the boss says to the recruiter?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, what the recruiter says to the prospect.

DR. KIRKLAND: Demystification.

GEN. THURMAN: So what we did was, we embarked on an enterprise that said, we will put into every recruiting station and every guidance counselor station a TV tape of every one of the MOSs. So, for example, you would bring up—a guy says, I want to be in the infantry and you say, well, let me show you what you are going to be doing in the infantry. And you punch up a three-minute segment. And the TRADOC would be responsible for producing that three-minute segment and keeping it current.

We also put in a very leading-edge automatic data processing system, computer system. The system was designed by a guy named Steve Donovan, a civilian who worked

for me. It was designed to take your scores on your ASVAB [Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery], your high school scores and your personal desires, beat them up into a machine and give you back 25 top options for you to join.

DR. KIRKLAND: Twenty-five for each person?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. And they came up on the screen five at a time. So let's say you said, "I won't join unless I can be in the infantry." Okay. So infantry came up number one for you. But you had to have the requisite skills to get in the infantry and you had to have the requisite physical characteristics to get in there. So all of these would be put together and mashed in this thing, and it would show infantry and say, "Yeah, Thurman is capable of doing that. He's also capable of doing artillery and the armor mechanic, linguist, whatever else he was good for."

Then you look at that and say, "Well let me see that infantry tape." And the tape would come up and you say, "I don't want to get in that." Then you would go down to the next tape and be in the artillery, the next tape the mechanized or the next tape the linguist, and you would work your way through until you made a sale on that particular guy.

Now, this very sophisticated computer system was a reservation system. It would be like an airline reservation system, but instead of saying you're a male or female and you're going from Boston to Los Angeles on flight number X and seat number Y, this tells you your height, weight, your mental acumen, how much schooling you have got, et cetera. I mean, it's a very sophisticated reservation system.

The reservation system continuously analyzed how many seats were to be sold in the infantry, armor, artillery, et cetera, versus how many had been sold. And we're always working for the needs of the Army, and therefore the 25 reservations were then skewed to meet the needs of the service based upon seasonality of sales. Very sophisticated.

DR. KIRKLAND: So that means a recruiter can punch this thing in and say whether the guy could be a medic or what he would have for his first choice.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. He could punch medic in, but medic may come up number 25 because the needs of the service say we need armor guys more than we need medics—or mechanics or cooks or whatever else there is. So we present cooks earlier than medics even though he’s qualified for medics.

Very sophisticated, very good at doing that.

Now, when we first started out, I found out one of the key guys in the business was the guidance counselor. He had a lot of control. Now, the guidance counselor can’t control this computer system. He can only control the input. At the headshed we control the computer system by inventorying what’s in the computer as being sold already for the next year ahead. But when I first got there we didn’t have this very sophisticated computer system.

We were short combat arms guys, and my view was, if you don’t have combat arms guys, you haven’t got an army. So I told the guidance counselors, “Every fourth guy has to go in combat arms.” And the guidance counselors say, “Roger.” And suddenly we were filled up in the combat arms.

So you see, part of this drill was finding out how to issue instructions to the various segments of this very sophisticated organization in order to make things happen.

Okay. Now, the first year when I got there, I had a 172,000 mission on my back. Because the previous year we missed by 17,000. We missed essentially a division full of troops. And almost all of them were in the combat arms.

DR. KIRKLAND: A 10 percent shortfall, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. So the next year we cured the combat arms. I figured it would cure the combat arms, people would feel better because units in the United States would start getting filled up with combat arms people. So there was a psychological operation going on.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, you’re changing the product at the same time that you are changing the picture that you are presenting.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, people in units would begin to feel better. Suddenly infantrymen are coming through the door instead of saying, we don't have any infantry. See, the blame was being laid on the recruiting man that didn't recruit the infantry.

And I said, "No, no, we're going to recruit infantry because the Army is infantry. That's what the Army is, and everything else is secondary. So we're going to fill every single infantry billet." So we began to do all that.

The problem, though, in the first year that I was there is we have mal-normed ASVAB. And so we took in a large number of people who were mental category fours and even some high fives that we didn't know we were taking in. We thought they were 3Bs. So the first year in my stewardship was lackluster in terms of the quality that we wanted. But we began to set the stage for what was the quality we wanted, which was we said we wanted to get 63 percent in the upper half and we wanted 90 percent high school diploma graduates and we wanted not more than 20 percent mental category four.

That year we didn't do that. The tests got straightened out and we had to go back and re-norm it. We had 25 percent were upper half, 50 percent were kept mental category four, and 50 percent were non-high-school graduates. So the only thing we made on round one, year one, was called Thurman—was we made volume.

Now, in recruiting practice we made a major shift from going after recruits in what I call the contract, in the accession mode, you're going after them in the contract mode. Up until the time I got there, accessions were the mainframe, and so every Monday you looked at how many people you shipped in the Army. After about three months of that I began to say, "No, no, we're going to change to contract." Everybody told me I would break the system, that the system couldn't handle that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Contract means a certain number of discount—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, contract means I tell you if you're a recruiter, you've got to bring in three contracts this month. You don't worry about when they go in the Army, I'll figure out when they go in the Army. You just bring me three people to the Army.

But you see, if I tell you I want you to bring me in three for next week—

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. That's a different story.

GEN. THURMAN: —Then you've got to go get three guys who are willing to come in next weekend, then you're looking for the dregs, you are bottom fishing then. So by going to a contract, I could also put people back in the high schools because I wanted to get people in the high school market.

I went to one recruiting station in Newburgh, New York, not a station but a battalion. There was a guy name Fitzgerald up there. I said to Fitzgerald, "How many high school diploma grads did you bring in last month?" He said, "Zero." He said, "Don't you know what we do in Newburgh?" I said, "No." He said, "Well, we have Bedford Stuyvesant and the Bronx, and what we do is we go down, and if there's a shortfall in the recruiting mission, we make it up. We don't go into any high schools. We don't even know where the high schools are."

So I said to him, "Okay, Fitz, you got the same mission you had before except they're all high school graduates. You may not put in a non-high school graduate until I tell you you can."

I thought he was going to have heart failure right on the spot.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, I'm surprised he didn't.

GEN. THURMAN: So he failed his mission for the next couple months because he had to go find out where the high school graduates were.

DR. KIRKLAND: Totally reshape their program.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. We also began what I call the adjudication process. We instituted a thing called the Rule of 50. There was one me, there were five brigade commanders, 57 battalion commanders and 2,500 company commanders. So if you think about that for a minute, me versus the 57 battalion commanders, that's one in 50. Then

five brigade commanders, and I said there were 2,500 company commanders, there were 2,500 recruiting stations, 250 company commanders. So then there were five brigade commanders on 250, so that's one in 50. Then there were 57 battalion commanders on 2,500 recruiting stations, so that's one in 50. So I had the Rule of 50.

I would give the mission to the 50 battalion commanders while the five brigade commanders were around. They were sitting there while I was doing the mission. They could hear the mission going. So there is no distortion about what I told battalion commanders to do. Then the brigade commander had to go give the mission down to the captains and so there's no distortion about what the brigade commanders had.

So I was reinforcing the mission process all the way down. We called it the adjudication session. I made some great friends with some lieutenant colonels in those sessions.

There was a guy named Zaldo in Sacramento, California; there was a guy named Newell in Santa Ana, California; Jerry Blackwell was in Kansas City. There was a group of these guys that enjoyed the repartee, the two Fitzgeralds. There was one Fitzgerald in Newburgh and another one in New Jersey. And they enjoyed the repartee of arguing with the general.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was this adjudication in the negotiation of—

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, that was in the negotiation session. In other words, I gave them a trial mission. They would come in and tell me how they were doing. We would do this on their turf. In other words, we would go to Charlotte, North Carolina, and do it or go to San Antonio, Texas, or go to San Francisco or wherever the hell we were doing it by regions.

DR. KIRKLAND: You and the brigade colonel would go see the battalion commander?

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. And they would bring along their sergeant major and they would tell us how things were going in their particular domain. Then I

would say, “Okay, now I’m going to give you 250 mental category 1 to 3A high school diploma grads, 50 non-high school grads, and 75 women,” and go through this drill. Then they would say, “Oh, we can’t do that, not possible.” “Well, what does it take for you to do that?” Well we need another \$25,000 worth of advertising, local advertising.”

I’d say, “Okay, you got it.”

Or the guy would say, “I can’t get 75 women, the market won’t stand 75 women here in this area.” I would say, “Okay, 60 women, and then you bring me 40 more mental category 1 to 3A males.” In other words, you give up 15 females and I’ll make you take not 15 males, but 30 males for 40. Well, that became a sporting venture and we did this every quarter looking at a rolling year ahead.

And so, then, this was a year ahead updated every quarter; every quarter updated the year ahead. So you kept a rolling, goaling system; and a rolling, goaling performance system by doing that.

Then the brigade commanders had to go down and see the captains, and then the lieutenant colonels had to go down and see the sergeants from the stations. Then in furtherance of all this we instituted a thing called “The Mission Box,” and you carried that around on your person. And it said, Sergeant Thurman has to get three high school diploma grads male, one high school diploma grad female, and they all have to be mental category 1 to 3A; there can’t be any CAT 4s, no 3Bs, no non-high-school graduates. And woe be unto you if I found you out there in Recruiter Land without your mission card.

I was up at Long Island one day—at Fort Hamilton in the Long Island recruiting—where they had their testing going on. I saw this recruiter standing out front, and he was anxiously looking outside waiting for some prospect to show up to go through the guidance counselor game they played. I said, “Hey, sergeant, how you doing?” He said, “Oh, I’m doing fine, sir.” I was in civilian clothes going to Germany. And I said, “Let me see your mission box.” “Well, I left it in my shirt and I sent my shirt to the laundry.” I was DCSPER now, and I said, “Sergeant, I’m the DCSPER of the Army. My name is Thurman. Does that mean anything to you?” I said, “Go to the laundry and get your shirt and get the mission box out of it and bring it back here. And if your recruit shows up I’ll be sure to take care of him while you’re gone.”

But, I mean, it was sort of a death on you if you didn't carry this mission box around. This was a management by objective function. Do you follow me? There was no bullshit as to what it was you were supposed to be doing for the month. You got three months. You got October, November, and December. Then you got January, February, and March. And you kept a rolling mission box about what you were doing.

Now, if you had three high school diploma graduates and that was it, males, and you brought a female, you didn't get any credit for that until you got the three high school diploma males. We had it very narrowed down as to what it was you were supposed to be doing. So the mission box, management by objective, the rule of 50, and the adjudication system, the negotiation process, advertising was going on, an extensive automatic data processing system put in to manage all that.

Every morning I had a regression analysis of how much sales had been done the day before, whether I was making my trend line or not. This was fed out of machines. I mean, Walmart couldn't do it any better, the Giant Food Company couldn't do it any better.

The people changeover that we instituted, the acceptance by the Army about what it is we're doing, those are sort of some highlights.

I've got a paper that I presented at the second All-Volunteer Army thing. I'll give you a copy of that. There are sort of 11 major—

The other very significant one which I should mention is, meanwhile, now in January of 1980 I go to the Department and I say, "I've got to have an educational aggrandizement." By now, it's turning out that education is what people are looking for. This is a major one so I need to hit it.

So after much stirring about, we got Dr. Al Martin at OSD to approve a trial. What I found out then is you can do anything in the Army under a trial if you label it that way. It's a test. So it's a test and we've got the Rand Corporation to do the work on 25 percent of the country. And we put this test in and we measured all the recruiting statistics, all that kind of stuff, advertising weight and all that business, and we began to see whether or not an education aggrandizement did make a dent in trying to bring more high quality people into the Army.

And the answer was, sure enough it does. But we then got that expanded nationwide by the late fall of 1980. So by 1981, we have the Army College Fund is now part and parcel of our recruiting arsenal. And it was targeted on 1 to 3A high school diploma grads. That's the way you got them.

That leads later into a rejuvenation of the GI Bill. The early part of it was the Army College Fund. We had an aggrandizement, and we applied it to combat arms. So we were able to change substantially the quality in the combat arms. We had a lot of really smart kids going into the combat arms because we would say, "You can go on a two-year tour and we will give you \$9,600 for college when you get out." And that was a big seller in those days. And we substantially enriched the combat arms.

DR. KIRKLAND: You better believe you did. It was amazing the kind of guys that were in that were privates.

GEN. THURMAN: I go back and look at all that in retrospect and one of the things that Paul Gorman was trying to do in TRADOC when we were down there, he was trying to do self-based instruction.

DR. KIRKLAND: You can't do that.

GEN. THURMAN: And we were delivering mental category four strength. So he was way ahead of his time from the delivery process of what we were bringing in the Army. It turns out later we can deliver the right guys to him. By that time the positions have hardened to the point that people didn't want to give up a lock-step kind of basic training.

DR. KIRKLAND: You were a major general and you had junior people working for you, but I would really like to know how, what happened with the culture of the recruiting command, which had been run since Julius Caesar's time by NCOs. And how did you get the officers to take charge, to have the confidence to take charge, and get the NCOs to accept direction?

GEN. THURMAN: Every year, at the conclusion of the year in November and December recruiters had a big, they call it a training session and it does have some training in, it, but truly it's a victory celebration.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was this every region? Every ...

GEN. THURMAN: Every battalion has one. And I went to one in Columbus. The first one I went to is not far from Chicago; it was in Columbus, Ohio, in early December. The second one I went to was in San Diego, California, run by this guy named Tom Newell. I got up to give my speech at the annual awards conference. I had heard all these guys that had come up and gotten rookie of the year and the number one recruiter of the year and the Reserve recruiter of the year and the most improved recruiter of the year, and on and on and on. I got up to get ready to give my speech, I'd been there six weeks, and I said, "Is there anybody in here that knows what a gunner's badge is?" A sergeant first class raised his hand. I said, "Hey, Sarge, what is a gunner's badge?" He said, "Sir, it's a badge that tells me that if you are a field artilleryman that you know how to gun the howitzer."

I said, "Are you a former artilleryman, Sergeant?" He said, "Yes, sir, I am."

I said, "Do you have an expert gunners badge for your time in the artillery?"
"Yes."

"What kind of outfit were you in?"

"Well, I was in the 155."

I said, "Okay, so tell everybody in here what you had to do to get the gunner's badge."

Now, I asked in the middle of this banquet. You've got wives there and spouses there and all that kind of stuff. Newell doesn't know what is going on. I'm talking to this sergeant.

He said, "You have to disassemble a breach block and reassemble a breach block." I said, "You have to do that under a timeline?" He said, "Oh, yes, sir. You have to

do it with a stopwatch. You have to be able to lay the piece, put on the deflection, the elevation, and you have to be able to cut fuses and the projectiles.”

I said, “It’s sort of like you have to know your craft in the artillery, isn’t it?” He said, “Yes, sir. You have to know how to shoot bullets out of the howitzer.”

I said, “What do you suppose a gunner’s badge in recruiting would be?” This guy looked at me, and a couple of drinks had been had by most everybody there, and he said, “You’ve got to be able to put a man in boots.” That’s the phrase of putting a guy in the Army.

I mean, there’s so much about talking about it, you’ve got to put a guy in boots. That means he actually gets to the—

DR. KIRKLAND: He starts basic training.

GEN. THURMAN: —basic training. I said, “Effective today, every officer in the recruiting command will have to earn his gunner’s badge in the recruiting business 60 days after he joins the recruiting service. That means that every officer will have to put a guy in boots within 60 days.” The whole place stood up and cheered.

You see, the sergeants knew that the officers didn’t know how to recruit, they didn’t know how to pick up the telephone, they didn’t know how to talk to a guy, they didn’t know how to take him through the guidance counselor game and all that. So what we did is came back in and put that thing out as an order. Then recruiters started having to do just what sergeants in the artillery do for young lieutenants.

They have to coach the young lieutenant in how to gun the howitzer because most kids come out of basic school and don’t know how to gun it that well. They’ve been around it, but they really don’t know how to gun it.

It’s just like sergeants teaching a young trooper in the infantry how to be an expert infantryman. You have to teach a guy how to be an expert. Yes, he can walk the 25 miles or he can do the compass course, but you have to teach him how to use a compass.

So we put that out and we said every officer has to go to the recruiting school at Indianapolis, and while you're in the recruiting school you can start making telephone calls. You've got 60 days to put a guy in boots.

So we would have referral lists come up from the commands, and some Captain Smerdlap would start telephoning a guy to make the sale when he got home because he was going to be in this school for two weeks before he got a chance to get to see this guy.

Of course, then they have the negative side of it, which is guys hanging up and saying, "I don't want to talk to you. Blow it out your barracks bag." So it took six weeks to realize that the officers didn't know how to recruit; most officers didn't know how to recruit. A guy like Al Ono did because he had been a captain down there in recruiting and knew something about it. Most officers lateraled into recruiting at the grade of captain or major or lieutenant colonel or even colonel, so they really didn't know how to do it. You had to teach them how to do it.

It would be like me having to go in the infantry unit at the grade of captain after being an artillery officer at the grade of captain. I would have to go learn the infantry weapons like mortars and recoilless rifles in my day, and BARs and stuff which I didn't really learn to be artillery at the same level of competency that an infantry officer did.

That's how I won them over. I put that thing to test.

Clifford Alexander came out to see me. I had been in Chicago about 30 days when he came out there to see me. He brought his General Counsel, Sara Lister, who is getting ready to be appointed as Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs in the Clinton Administration. And he brought Janet Hill who was the wife of Calvin Hill, the mother of Grant Hill, the kid that plays basketball for Duke University, and she was his special assistant. I didn't know it at the time, but Clifford Alexander's father had been at Great Lakes as a Navy person and then Cliff had come along and gone to Yale and Harvard and he had become a very prestigious lawyer and a civil rights guy and all that.

So he wanted to go back to Great Lakes because his father had been in the service up there, and he came to see what I knew about recruiting. I had been there 30 days, a hotshot guy from the Pentagon sent up there by Shy Meyer, and this guy is speaking for

the draft. He wanted to find out whether I had assumed command of the recruiting command or not.

So I said to Ono, "I want you to get five captains, five recruiting sergeants off the street and five recruiting NCOs from the station chief level up to say the sergeant major level. "And I said, "I do not want to know the names of anybody and no general will be permitted to talk to them. You are the only guy that can talk to them, and they can say anything they want to, to Clifford Alexander." The purpose is for them to tell him about recruiting. And I said the order of march will be the five recruiters off the street, then the five senior sergeants, then the five captains.

"Here is the only instruction I will give you. I want them to come from all over the country. They can have six months or less in the recruiting service and six months to a year and then a year to 18 months, then 18 months to 24, and then over 24, one of each. The same thing for the officers. Senior sergeants all have more than three years."

So Clifford came in and said, "How are things going?" I said, "We are finding out about the recruiting program. We've been here 30 days trying to get my feet on the ground here. We will get it going." I gave a little briefing and I said, "Now, before I really sit down with you and tell you what I think, I want to introduce you to some recruiters."

And I programmed 30 minutes per group. "And you ask them questions, you know, ask them anything you want to ask them."

DR. KIRKLAND: So you get the five of each as one in a kind of a committee then?

GEN. THURMAN: These three people, and they had a couple aides and acrobats here, so about five on Clifford's side including the two ladies and then five of the recruiters. And then after 30 minutes or whenever you want to question them, they go away and bring in the next five. And I said, "I've had no interaction with them, none of my officers have had any action with them, so I don't know what they're going to say. I haven't told them to say anything. So whatever it is you ask them, they'll answer."

So they did that, and it took about two hours. They stayed a little longer than they thought.

I walked in there and said, “Now before you tell me anything, I’m going to tell you what they told you.” I said, “The first group is a little bit unsure because recruiting is difficult out there and they have a great deal of pressure brought on them because they’ve got to make a mission given to them by their NCOs—which is the second group—who by the way don’t recruit; they just issue orders and tell these other guys to go out and bring people in, bring them in by next Monday because you’ve got to make a mission on Monday night.”

I said, “The captains don’t know anything. They don’t know what the sergeants are doing who are telling the young troops what to do. So there’s a tremendous amount of pressure between the captain who doesn’t know what the sergeants are doing and the guy on the street because the sergeant in the middle is putting all the heat on the guy at the bottom.”

Alexander looked at me and says, “How do you know that?” I said, “Because I’ve been around and I’ve talked to people in this command and that’s how it works.”

I said, “The problem is, it’s being run by NCOs.” I said, “What we are going to do here is get officers in charge of this command, and I am the number one officer here in charge of the command. We’re going to get the captains so that you would expect a captain just like in an infantry unit or an artillery unit or an aviation unit, he’s running the unit. He needs the help of the sergeants because there’s no doubt in anybody’s mind who is running the units.”

I said, “Is there any doubt in your mind who is running the recruiting service at the moment?”

He said, “Absolutely no doubt about it. It’s the sergeants because the captains haven’t got the foggiest idea.”

See, I knew by the time they got to the captains they would have enough questions to ask, you know, by having probed the others. They would be able to say what the hell is going on.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, it's very difficult for officers who come in with no expertise whatsoever.

GEN. THURMAN: As soon as we got the expert gunner's badge going so everybody knew what they were doing in recruiting, then the NCOs began to listen to the officers. Do you follow me?

Other than that, I went down to the school one day and I knew a captain in this course. I said, "What did you learn down there?" He said, "I learned as soon as the instructor left there was a sergeant major in there who had been an old recruiting sergeant major who said, 'Don't listen to what the school says, we'll tell you how to do it.'"

So there was no discipline. There wasn't a system invoked about that. So we got that squared away and separated the officers schooling. I mean, we had the officers going to school with the noncommissioned officers. We separated that because we don't take the advanced course with the noncommissioned officers.

We've got a special school for the noncommissioned officers because their duties are different. It's not because they're not quality people; it's because their duties and responsibilities are different. And officers run units and NCOs do what officers tell them to do, and they advise officers about things in their domain; but in the end game, a company commander is responsible for the unit, not the first sergeant.

That is a sensitive subject because a lot of people want to say that it's the NCOs who run it. Well, the NCOs don't run it, the officers do. Now, in the British Army the NCOs run it, but not in our Army.

Do we revere, do we respect, do we honor, do we school, do we train, do we give responsibility to our noncommissioned officers? You bet. But it's officer run and led. That was not what was going on in recruiting school.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. Somehow the officers had to become competent to run and lead.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. And confidence devolves from competence. So one of my hallmarks is you've got to be competent in order to breed confidence. And

that's the reason you listen and learn, and then people will respect what it is you ask them to do because they then figure out that you know what the hell you are talking about.

Now, meanwhile during all this activity there's a substantial amount of work in Washington with the congressional committees making sure that they know what we're doing. So I was called to testify frequently, met with each one of the big four committees at least once a month in order to make sure that they knew what I was doing, whether I was making progress. Do I need educating funds? Do I need more advertising funds or whatever?

So again, Vessey and Yerks did not impede me going to the Congress. I mean, they knew that I knew what the Congress was all about. I kept them informed about what I was doing. I had Congress people come out to my headquarters and spend time with me, and I took them to the advertising agency, like Kim Wincup [G. Kim Wincup], who would later become the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower in the Reagan administration or the Bush administration.

DR. KIRKLAND: What's the big four committee?

GEN. THURMAN: The Senate Armed Services Committee, the House Armed Services Committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee, and the House Appropriations Committee. Those are the people that control the DOD funds. So that's recruiting.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, that's an amazing story.

GEN. THURMAN: Terrific year and a half. Well, year and eight months. It was fun. We had a bunch of winners. There is nothing like having a battalion commander and a bunch of recruiters win. See, the Army needs privates in this organization, so sergeants work. So sergeants have to make it happen.

For a guy to come in to the Recruiting Service as a sergeant, let's say a grade E5 or E6, it is like a battalion commander coming to the Pentagon for his first tour.

DR. KIRKLAND: He doesn't have any troops.

GEN. THURMAN: He hasn't got any troops to order around. The only guy he can order around is himself. So a recruiter has a lot of sympathy and empathy, and in the meantime it's a question of how well are you doing. The other thing is, it never stops. You get a mission every month, you've got to make it every month. I mean, if you bankrolled 10 last month it doesn't count by the next month; you have to make three next month.

DR. KIRKLAND: You can't stockpile them, huh?

GEN. THURMAN: No stockpiling.

DR. KIRKLAND: What happens if somebody doesn't make a mission, the recruiter or a captain?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, there is a remedial training situation. He's taken off mission and put into a remedial training status. And there's a sergeant located at the battalion headquarters who is responsible for that, for taking it in and beginning to go through the drill again.

Sometimes a guy stops making his mission because he's been there too long and he begins to take things for granted and he forgets how to call up people on the telephone or go down to the local high school and talk to the guidance counselor. So there is a performance curve on every recruiter. Sometimes a recruiter gets lazy and sometimes he just loses the—

(End Tape 10, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 11

(Begin Tape 11, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: It is the nature of sales.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: I went to Mary Kay, I called up Mary Kay and I said, “Mary Kay, tell me how you motivate people.” And she said, “Well, 15 percent of the people you don’t have any problem motivating. And 70 percent of the people you try to give them motivational tools that will make them operate like the top 15 percent.” That’s where the pink Cadillacs come in. And the bottom 15 percent never make it. So you get rid of them. So there are some people that you simply cannot get them to do it.

DR. KIRKLAND: What about a captain who doesn’t make mission or battalion commander?

GEN. THURMAN: I can’t tell you exactly how many reliefs we had in there, but the number was not exorbitant. We have a guy go in and sit down with them, you know, and they sit down long enough to train him or straighten him up.

DR. KIRKLAND: It’s a business in which an officer may have but limited control over the productivity of his force.

GEN. THURMAN: No, he’s got a lot of control over their productivity. He’s got to see that they’re working and doing what he told them to do.

We had a system. There’s a system that you have to call 30 people a week in order to get one guy recruited. If you don’t make the telephone calls, ain’t nobody is going to get recruited. You have to have a system in place to make that happen.

Somebody has to check the system. So, the officer or the battalion commander has to go and sit down and look at a recruiting station and check the system to see if the system is being followed. It's a very elaborate, systematized way to go about it.

Now, does that stifle innovation? No, it doesn't stifle innovation. But what it does say is, there are certain inescapable things you gotta do. You have to get a list of the high school diploma graduates out of the high school. Who is in the senior class? You have to get their telephone numbers. So you have to make a call on the principal or the guidance counselor. Now, maybe an officer has to make that telephone call on that particular person in order to make sure it's a reputable deal and they understand what the advantages are. So you have to make a sale to the local principal.

I had to call up a bishop one day because the local people couldn't do it. I finally called the bishop and I said, "You're not letting us get in your school system. I'm going to come over and see you and explain to you why it is disadvantageous to your people, your youngsters, not to know what is available to them in the armed forces." And he acquiesced. But we had one Catholic school system in the country that wouldn't let us in.

DR. KIRKLAND: Never did?

GEN. THURMAN: Never did.

DR. KIRKLAND: There is a lot of that floating around in the wake of the Vietnam War, I think.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, and so we had to work their way through it. I got a guy on an airplane one day I was coming from Dallas back into Chicago and there was a guy sitting next to the wall and I was sitting on the aisle. I was in my uniform in the cheap seats back there. He said, "You're in the Army." I said, "Yeah." And I introduced myself. I said, "What's your name?" He gave me his name. I said, "What do you do, Tom?" He said, "Well, I'm a professor at Ohio University." Not to be confused with Ohio State. I said, "Are you just traveling on a meeting or some professorial meeting down in Dallas?" "No," he said, "I am the Vice Chairman of the American Guidance

Counselor Association.” I said, “Is that right?” He said, “Yeah.” I said, “You and I are going to do a lot of business.” I said, “How do I get to be a member of the American Guidance Counselor Association.” He said, “I’ve got a form in my briefcase, I’ll give it to you.” So he gave it to me, I filled it out, and I gave it to him with a check.

He and Don Connelly and I became very good friends. Connelly was working for me at the time. I said, “Your job is to get us on the platform every time there is a guidance counselor meeting anywhere in the nation.” I’m like, “Go down there and get with Sweeney.” The guy’s name is Tom Sweeney.

And I said, “You get with Sweeney and you make sure that we are on the next National Guidance Counselor Day and I’ll go down and give the pitch.” So I did that. Because I had to get into the Guidance Counselor Association and get aggrandized.

So I call up the NAACP and I say, “I’ve got to get on the platform at the NAACP and tell them about opportunities in our Army.” So they invited me to come down to Miami at the National Convention of the NAACP, and I gave a pitch down there.

DR. KIRKLAND: You loosen them up every way you can.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I mean, you have to go work them. And I said, “We have a tremendous color-blind meritocracy that we are delighted to have people come and be part of our enterprise here, and you need to know what opportunities we have. We send people to college, we send them to West Point, we send them to ROTC, and scholarships. I mean, we have a tremendous opportunity for upward mobility through education, and we need you to know that.” And then local NAACPs would begin to open up on us.

So those are the kind of things you have to do. You just have to assert yourself and go around the nation and be visible and be a lightning rod. If you get turned down by a particular church group in Chicago or Cincinnati or wherever it was on that particular day, or Columbus, Ohio, wherever it was, so be it.

DR. KIRKLAND: I read some stuff in the *Army Times* about the controversy about medals for recruiters. It seemed like it was being awarded like air medals for a

certain number of sessions or recruits. I don't know whether it was in your era or before or after. What was the situation with respect to awards? You said there was an awards banquet every year.

GEN. THURMAN: Awards banquet every year. We had a separate set of recruiter awards. Okay. And the recruiter award, there was a recruiter badge. And then the way in which the badge was constructed, if you made your mission, specifically the mission that you were given, for six months running, you got first a silver star on the little tab at the bottom of the badge. If you made your mission 18 months running, precisely as told to make it, you got three of those stars, which turned your badge gold. So you would then see some silver badge recruiters with some stars, you would see some gold badge recruiters.

And then if you got three gold badge stars, then you got a recruiting ring. Okay. That meant that you had six consecutive six-month periods, that's three years running that you made your precise mission. Everybody can't do that. So if you missed a six-month period, you didn't start all the way over again, but that meant you had to have another six-month period before you could get your next gold star.

So there was a reward system like that built up.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was that there when you came, or was that the one you inherited?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it was there, but we refined it. We put longevity in it, sort of like a parachute badge. You know, you can't get your senior badge unless you have two years' service, you can't get your master badge without three years' service. Then you have to have so many night jumps and so many this's and that's. Have you ever heard that before? So there is a system like this in the Army. For badging, okay.

So we had that kind of system for recruiters. Now, did recruiters also get Army commendation medals or Army achievement medals, or Army meritorious medals? Yeah, they got that.

Now, did every recruiter get that? No. But we had an internal reward system. And then we had, you could get an achievement medal if you did something spectacular, just like you would in the unit. I don't think it was abused.

DR. KIRKLAND: There was some sort of controversy, but I don't think it was while you were there.

GEN. THURMAN: I'm a liberal medal guy. I was as a staff officer in the Pentagon, I was as a battalion commander, I was as a DIVARTY Commander. I believe that a bit of ribbon on your chest will make you more likely to stay with us than not.

DR. KIRKLAND: How about when you were a CINC?

GEN. THURMAN: I was liberal.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were you the one that set the policy then?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I'm liberal. I'm a liberal. You get in a combat situation where you are liable to get yourself killed, I'm a liberal with awards. If you do the job and you've got to do something, I'm a liberal about that. I mean, after all, you risked your life.

DR. KIRKLAND: I agree with you 100 percent.

GEN. THURMAN: I mean, there are people that don't want to give any out and say, "Look, I got mine, but you can't have any."

Now, I didn't get a whole lot. I got a Legion of Merit, I got two Bronze Stars, I got a bunch of air medals out of that. I didn't get a DSC, I didn't get a Silver Star, and a bunch of others. But I am a liberal medal giver.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's a fine thing.

GEN. THURMAN: And when I got to be the DCSPER, I instituted a set of civilian awards that mirror the Army military awards.

Do you know why I did that? Because you only have 400,000 civilians, and some of them serve a lifetime in the Army and get out and nobody ever hangs a single gong on them for doing anything. But yet they give you 30 years of their time. And what do they do? They get a little pin up here; they get a little certificate that says, 35 Years' Service.

One of the best things we ever did in the Army staff, and John Wickham did it, he gave a miniature staff badge. Do you know the Army Liver Patch?

And if you had been on the Army staff for X number of years as a civilian, you got to wear one of those in your lapel. Big, big, big morale booster.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'll bet it was.

GEN. THURMAN: So I've been here doing the same kind of bullshit that the staff officers have been doing, but nobody cares. Now suddenly somebody cares, and that perked up the civilians just like that. So I am a liberal award-giver.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were you the one that cooked up the achievement medal—created it?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't recall.

DR. KIRKLAND: That seems to be fairly recent. I don't know exactly when it came in. I guess it was before your time.

GEN. THURMAN: I don't recall.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay. Well, that's a good day's work.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay. I'll go and let my dogs out since they've been cooped up now. Now, let me talk to you a little bit here now, okay.

I have come to the conclusion that I am anti-biography. Okay. And so if you want to continue the process I am happy to do it on the grounds that you want to investigate the Army personnel system. And I will tell you very frankly why I don't want to get into the biography game. There are a large number of people who have done a lot for the Army that are not biographatized who have been my mentors. Kroesen is one distinguished officer. Vessey is one, Bernie Rogers is one, DePuy, Gorman. Those guys, I'm not fit to carry their shoelace in many things that they've done. I've been their good first lieutenant in many of those things that they've done.

So I feel very uncomfortable in a biographic session. So if you want to proceed down the pike and you want to continue to march on trying to improve the Army's personnel system or some major issues associated with all of that, I'm happy to continue the process. Biography, I am not interested.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, let's continue the process and see where it leads. Let me tell you about a conversation I had since I last saw you. I was talking to a guy named Jim Sutton who is in the business of getting things published in the military field. He used to work for Brasseys, and now he works for Brasseys and several other publishers. He's a consultant to them. I told him that I was working on this piece of work and he said, "What do you want to do? Do you want to tell the story of Max Thurman, or do you want to tell the story of the Army human dimensions?" I said, "Both." And he said, "That's what I was afraid you were going to say." I said, "But, primarily, the story is about the Army human dimension, personnel, and so on." He said, "Okay, but it would be a lot more interesting if it's through the eyes of a man who was profoundly involved with it." He said that it would be difficult to publish as just Army personnel system, a history.

My intention all along has been to talk about you and your interaction with people like Bernie Rogers, Vessey, and—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we haven't gotten to those. It seems to me at the moment—let me tell you what's missing yet. We've gone through sort of what I would view as a litany of Thurman.

Okay. Now, I'm going to tell you your business. If you're a writer, you know more about writing than I do. But, one of the things that bothered me about the Army's oral history program was that there was no comeback. It was a one way in, and the rapporteurs did not do their homework, so they could not delve into any specifics about a particular thing that went on. Do you follow me?

In other words, they didn't do any homework. All they did was come down here and do a tape recorder job.

If you want to talk about the Army personnel system, and let's take recruiting, I think it's a fascinating story, but you're going to have to interview some of these guys that I described. You would have to talk to Al Martin.

DR. KIRKLAND: These are the people whose names I make notes about.

GEN. THURMAN: I know, but Al Martin is a guy you ought to talk to. A guy named Clay Gompf you ought to talk to.

You ought to talk to Bob Phillips, who was the Director of Recruiting Operations for me. I gave you the names of two guys who were at the bottom of the pile—Zaldo who is down there in Norfolk, Virginia, and comes up here frequently, and Tom Newell lives out here in Leesburg, so he's close by. Phillips happens to be down at Texas Tech, but you might do an over-the-telephone kind of interview with him. He travels up here on the East Coast frequently.

But you would have to get a different cut at it because they saw it. Do you follow me?

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. Absolutely.

GEN. THURMAN: Another guy is a guy named Fagan. I haven't mentioned Fagan here much, but Fagan has terrific records about what we did because he was in on most every meeting of substance. He has 50 book boxes—

DR. KIRKLAND: He took notes.

GEN. THURMAN: —of stuff starting in the recruiting days going into the DCSPER days and the Vice days and even in Panama and TRADOC. So he was a guy who I asked to come and give me advice because I treasured his advice and he did work for me at West Point. He has an inexhaustible till of information about that.

But, you see, it would seem to me that if you want to talk about the recruiting story for let's say two chapters in the book or three chapters in the book about how does this thing go, then you need to get the Harvard case study on it. There is a Harvard case study on it.

Then it seems to me that after that particular research is done, you talk to those particular people there must be 20 questions that get coughed up about that that you come back and ask me. Well, okay, here are 20 questions about things that you didn't cover because you forgot about them or they didn't come up in your memory bank.

DR. KIRKLAND: Or they disagreed with you perhaps.

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, they may disagree, that's exactly right. So it seems to me, if you want to take a cut at it as saying the changes in the Army personnel system, which I think were substantial and I think I contributed a great deal of that—I think that's quite different from a biography. But I do think it's an interesting story because it does represent a major shift in the fortunes of the Army.

I mean, whether or not I had a good time as some god damn lieutenant in the 11th airplane division is inconsequential in my book.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, it is inconsequential except that what you and other people like Vernon Lewis who are a little bit ahead of you—

GEN. THURMAN: The same genre.

DR. KIRKLAND: What your all collective experiences of the Army in the 1950s and the 1960s. I think that's important because it is going to be forgotten when we are dead or whatever. The Army of now is very different, but the Army of now is not permanent. Trevor Hall told me about backsliding with respect to recruiting and selection. And we talked several times about how COHORT hasn't been institutionalized.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: And we still have powerful elements in the Army who would like to do all they can to destroy cohesion. Not for that purpose, but I think—

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, and I think the whole notion of cohesion, I think that is a terrific story, and I am only a player in that.

DR. KIRKLAND: I know you are.

GEN. THURMAN: A guy like Shy Meyer is a big player in it. A guy like David Marlowe is a big player in that. So getting that thing turned back, a guy that I would—

I think it would be interesting for you to try to attempt to get at that is to take that whole notion of infusion and ask Westmoreland or look to see what Westmoreland has to say if he did an oral history to see if there is anything in there about all of that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: Because he's going to be gone, you know. I mean, he's getting up there. He must be closing in on 80 years old now. But he comes to Washington

during these four-bagger conferences, you know, in terms of you could sit down and talk to him about his recollections on that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, I wanted to do that.

GEN. THURMAN: But if it's pointed that way, then it's not a biography of me, which I'm very uncomfortable with.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, I respect that discomfort and I want to make accommodations so that it sits right with you. If it's impossible then we'll have to back away from it totally. But this guy whom I respect said that he thought it should be through the eyes of a person, and unfortunately you've had your hands in more parts of it than anybody else.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, but as long as it's not my biography it's all right.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay.

GEN. THURMAN: See, I look at a biography as saying, well, I'm not interested in getting in the track of personal aggrandizing. That is what I am not interested in doing. I look at being asked to go out and do a job in the Recruiting Service, I think it should be reported. I've written a very good report that is in the second edition of this, you know, the 20-year edition of that, and I'll give it to you. The way I wrote that is the "I" word never appears.

DR. KIRKLAND: You must have used a lot of passive voice then.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I mean, this and this was done and that was done.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay. That's all passive voice.

GEN. THURMAN: So that is the way I feel about it. So go think about it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay.

GEN. THURMAN: So when do you want to do your thing here?

DR. KIRKLAND: Is next Tuesday—

(Tape break)

GEN. THURMAN: How's the weather out there?

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, it's beautiful. Just like here.

GEN. THURMAN: All the snow gone?

DR. KIRKLAND: No, it hasn't melted away yet. The roads are mostly clear. Not nearly as hairy as it was last week.

GEN THURMAN: Good. Where were we?

DR. KIRKLAND: We had just finished up with recruiting and if there is a transition from recruiting to DCSPER maybe we should mull that over a bit.

GEN. THURMAN: You need to leave me a fax number before you depart today. Do you have a fax for your house?

DR. KIRKLAND: No, I don't.

GEN. THURMAN: Give me your address and I'll mail you a package on the article I wrote for the 20th anniversary of the All Volunteer Force which summarizes 11 initiatives that went on in trying to bring the force out of the doldrums.

If I look back on that and we talked about it before, but if I look back on that from a point of view of 1980 was a period of organizing for combat, and for establishing a system of recruiting, and populating the combat arms of the Army so that you had a platform on which to build success in the future. You had a platform of advertisement, you had a platform of a new body of recruiters to come in from the force and recruit people, you had an alliance with both the training base as well as the receiving units of the Army.

In other words, with Cavazos [GEN Richard E. Cavazos] for example, at that time I believe Cavazos was corps commander. And I went down and told him I would ship him platoon packets of infantrymen, which we could tailor them. Get 30 guys together and ship them to him so we begin to build some. There were some initial attempts at "COHORT-itis" although we didn't advertise it like that. And, then ,when he later got promoted to the FORSCOM Commander, we tried to continue that process populating the infantry, armor, and field artillery so as to begin to get some equity in overseas deployments so people didn't have to come meet themselves coming and going from overseas—which was debilitating our noncommissioned officer force and had effects on our retention.

The targeting of people into the high schools, recruiting force into the high schools; the bringing on of an advertising program that recruiters were proud of, the Army was proud of; setting up the systems for portraying to people what it was that we would be doing in the service like television tapes and the like. So there was a series of—and not to be left out is the educational aggrandizements which began to take hold.

DR. KIRKLAND: For NCOs?

GEN. THURMAN: No, the educational aggrandizement for recruits like the Army College Fund and later the GI Bill, but the Army College Fund.

And, finally, building a consensus in the Congress that we were, in fact, turning around the personnel system of the Army, the recruiting system of the Army by all that. So, 1980 was what I call a change year, a year of change.

DR. KIRKLAND: And that was your second year of recruiting?

GEN. THURMAN: No, I didn't get there until November of '79. So I was essentially there one month in '79. And so '80 is sort of a laying down the systematic approach to achieving a change function. The results of 1980, while volumetrically were appealing, were not appealing on a qualitative standpoint. And we didn't get the qualitative change function occurring until 1981.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who were the important collaborators, not in the recruiting command but out in other agencies of the Army, to make these changes?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, of course, the principal collaborator was Vessey. It's not that Shy Meyer didn't have an interest, he did. But Vessey was the storekeeper of the Army in terms of being a Vice, and he was a patron because he listened to us every month. So he became a principal figure in carrying that on.

The second guy that became a patron of it was Jack Marsh. And he comes in and the Republicans assume their mantle of office in '81. And he gets there like in February or March of '81 as Secretary of the Army, and he immediately gloms onto the recruiting business as part of his interest functions.

Clay Gomp is the guy in the Secretariat that kept the fires burning brightly. Al Martin at OSD was very much interested in that, as was Richard Danzig, who was then the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, and he is now the Under Secretary of the Navy, currently serving.

DR. KIRKLAND: He replaced Perry, did he?

GEN. THURMAN: He worked for a guy named Pirie. P-i-r-i-e [Robert B. Pirie, Jr.].

And then in the Congress, in the House, a fellow named Kim Wincup ,who would later be in the Bush administration, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. He was the major domo at the House Armed Services Committee and was very up on that.

Sam Nunn [Senator Sam Nunn, Jr.] and John Warner [Senator John W. Warner, III] were very supportive of matters pertaining to the All-Volunteer Army, turned it about. They made a big pay raise, came along in the 1980 pay raise scheme, tried to counterbalance the fact that we were out of step with the civilian workplace.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was General Yerks DCSPER?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, Bob was the go-between. He never interfered with anything we had to take to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. So I would say Bob played a role in carrying freight to OSD, yes, sure as DCSPER.

Civilian aides to the Secretary of the Army, we used to keep them very much informed. And so they became high supporters of the volunteer service and could do things in local hometowns and in states that I couldn't get done.

DR. KIRKLAND: About how many civilian aides were there?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, nominally there's one per state, and in very big states there may be two. And then there are some on an emeritus status and some on an army level. So I think the subtotal of that is maybe 70.

But, for example, one of the guys I remember very well is a fellow in Milwaukee named French, Bill French. He was able to get me into the state board of education when I couldn't have gotten in any other way. So, there's one other thing that occurred in 1980 that we got going, which I think is important. Because of our responsibility to recruit for the Reserves, we gave the Reserves through a more direct linkage the Reserve hierarchy—we are not talking about the National Guard now, but the Reserve

hierarchy—a more definitive link between the Recruiting Service and the heads of the various major subordinate commands of the Army Reserve so that they had a direct play with the battalion and brigade commanders out in the field.

The battalion and brigade commanders had to brief the major commanders of the Army Reserve; and enlist their support, made sure we got the recruiters up to strength. And so we tried to bond ourselves more firmly with the Guard and Reserve—more with the Reserve, not necessarily the Guard.

So by the spring, let's say January to June of 1981, the recruiting advertising campaign is taking off like gangbusters. The vibes are good in the Army. People are feeling good in the Army. A colleague of mine, General Fred Mahaffey, is commanding the 3rd Infantry Division in Europe,. And on every sign in "Marne land" over there it's the 3rd ID, Marne Land "Being All It Can Be." So the thing is getting internalized inside the Army.

And there is a feeling of turning the corner coming along because when you are short 17,000 people, as we were in 1979, in recruiting, which meant most of 1980 we were short 17,000 people or more—

DR. KIRKLAND: Everybody had more work to do.

GEN. THURMAN: —the people that are short are never headquarters. Never at the Corps headquarters are you short, never at the Division headquarters are you short, never at the Brigade headquarters, never at the Battalion headquarters. People who are short are the companies in the Army. And the people that are really short are the NCOs in the Army. And then, if you are giving Europe 101 percent of its strength, the people that are really short in the Army are Forces Command.

So the people that are feeling badly every morning when they get up and go to work are the sergeants who command a squad or a platoon, unless you are in the 82nd Airborne Division. But the guy that commands a Bradley fighting vehicle or an M1 tank or a M60A3 tank and a 113, he looks around, and he's got a driver and himself looking after this piece of equipment. Divisions in 1979 and '80 were putting up vehicles on blocks because there were no pulleys.

So suddenly now when the volumetrics begin to go up, items of equipment begin to come off. In other words, divisions are reporting C3 are beginning to get to be C2; and therefore division commanders begin to feel better, the tempo of training begins to go up, and the general well-feeling of the service begins to improve. Suddenly sergeants who had nobody working for them suddenly have somebody working for them, and so they even feel better about themselves.

And that begins to feel better when they go and talk to their spouses and they look ahead. And the word comes out and says, the Army is now recruiting up to strength and all that, and people begin to feel better about themselves. And there is a general renaissance of spirit, in my book, that begins to take place in 1981. It has taken a year to get all that cooking.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's an amazing thing to do in a year.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, everybody wanted to do it. I look at it as being a good first lieutenant. That is to say, it just happened to be my turn in the barrel to do something for the Army. And we were able to get people harnessed and put them together to go do it.

So recruiters are feeling good that we are beginning to get higher-quality recruits coming in. We have made a change function. We have introduced the mission box, we've got management by objective. Inside the recruiting force the adjudication system is at work. They feel like they can beat up on the two-star general commanding. It's not as much flogging. There is more fun to it. The hemorrhage on the bad guys that were doing illegal acts at recruiting is gone; that's over with.

So 1981 is now sort of getting on a roll, and the quality is beginning to improve. One of the things you may want to get from DCSPER is statistical data that will tell you the trendlines in quality about all of that which they can get out of their files over the years. The guy to go talk to about that is the DMPM [Director, Military Personnel Management]. He can tell you about that.

So things are looking bright in 1981. There is a change of administration that wants to continue. We have jacked into the Reagan speechmaking that he wants to get a

renewal of the GI Bill. As you will recall, Reagan used to have a military person sitting in the balcony during his State of the Union speeches, and he would point to some sergeant or lieutenant or whatever it is up in the rafters up there, and everybody would stand up and cheer. So there was a general upswing that—one— things really were getting better back at the units because more people were there.

And, secondly, there was a general upswing and approbation of service as a worthy endeavor as you begin to get into that. Congress is more forthcoming in terms of its resources. There is no problem with advertising money. There has been an increase in the basic wage structure of the various and sundried ranks including the private soldier. Money for college funds are now being appropriated and people are feeling good about it. So it is time for me to move on.

DR. KIRKLAND: I wanted to ask you some questions about your perceptions of how things got to the shape they were in in recruiting command when you got there. You instituted a policy that most of the battalion commanders would be former commanders in the Army; right?

GEN. THURMAN: At least half of them.

DR. KIRKLAND: What sort of guys did you have as battalion commanders when you took over? Was it a second-string lot or totally across-the-board mix, or what?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, I think there were some very good people there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Any of them ever become generals that you recall?

GEN. THURMAN: One did. Of the original set that I had?

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: I don't know. I don't remember any. I do remember a couple that we brought in on normal rotation cycle that when I went out and started saying I want half of them to be prior battalion commanders, we had several.

DR. KIRKLAND: By then you were getting the cream of the crop? The top 10%?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. We were getting guys that really took off. There are some really good people that became the commanders of the recruiting organization. A guy named Bill Fulton [LTG William B. Fulton], who would later become a lieutenant general. A guy named Gene Forrester, who would later become a lieutenant general. A guy named Mundie [MG William L. Mundie], who would retire as a major general. A guy named Penkis, who would be a lieutenant general when he retired. So there were some good people who took command of the recruiting service as the all-volunteer system evolved.

DR. KIRKLAND: General Forrester was back in '75, wasn't he?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: He came before Mundie?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were Mundie and Forrester line officers or AG officers?

GEN. THURMAN: Forrester was a line officer and Mundie was a—both of them were line officers, Infantry.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did Ono become commander of the Recruiting Command?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Because he was unusual.

GEN. THURMAN: He was the first AG commander. They've had two of them.
He's one.

(End Tape 11, Side A)

(Begin Tape 11, Side B)

DR. KIRKLAND: The AG officers at the top of the recruiting command when you took it over, one brigadier general and the chief of staff, I was wondering if—

GEN. THURMAN: Always commanded up to that time by line officers. Let me tell you what I think. I don't want to castigate anybody in front of me, okay. I think that's not useful, on the one hand. I think the way to look at it is, when I came in, there was a commitment by the very top of the headshed of the Army to turn the thing around. And instead of adopting the previous stance of previous commanders, which was to open the size of the recruiting pool and take lesser-endowed people, non-high school graduates, high school dropouts, 17 years old, et cetera.

We adopted a different stance, which was to squeeze the marketplace to go after high quality people. I think probably the trick that made the difference was, instead of recruiting on a weekly recruiting objective, was to change to a contract recruiting objective, which meant that the recruiters did not have to bring people in next week. They could more leisurely work quality people. And we took care of the weekly placement function at the headquarters of the recruiting service. That was a major switch.

I can recall Bobby Porter coming to me and saying, "You will break the recruiting force if you do that." He said, "Why don't you just tell us what you want, we'll go do it." And I said, "No, no, I'm not telling you, I'm changing the system because I think the system we have now doesn't serve us well."

DR. KIRKLAND: Was the contract for a quarter?

GEN. THURMAN: The contract was you had to bring in three per month.

DR. KIRKLAND: Three per month, okay.

GEN. THURMAN: But you didn't have to bring them in the first week, the second week, the third week, or the fourth week. You just had to bring in three per month.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay.

GEN. THURMAN: So there was no weekly recruiting quota issued to a battalion commander or to a recruiter or to a company commander or to a recruiting station. They didn't manage recruiting by week. We managed recruiting by week by placing people in the seating reservation system. But the recruiter didn't see that. All he saw was he had to bring in three contracts. He didn't give a damn when they went in the Army. So if he brought in a recruit, Thurman, who was in high school but wouldn't come in to the Army until next summer, he still got credit for that.

Before he got no credit for that. Before he had credit for bringing a guy in this week because the guy was going to ship out next Monday.

DR. KIRKLAND: Why did General Porter think this would break the system?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, because there was such a wrench around of everybody. In other words, the recruiting service had years of experience in bringing people in by week. So, I mean, he was honest in his evaluation, but that was a big risk for me. But I had confidence that that was one of the major problems we had. We were deep bottom fishing based upon this weekly mission game, and if we could get out of that and go into a higher scale market, and therefore, we could get it on a contract basis, and we could get after a higher scale market.

That meant I had to do negotiation work with the Training and Doctrine Command for people to recruit, I mean, when to arrive down there. But that made that my problem, not the recruiter's problem.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah, you tolerated a lot of uncertainty because it's easy to manage if it's on a weekly basis if everybody is working on a weekly basis. But you were juggling the availability of seats in the schools for people to go to.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I missed some seats, okay. And you miss seats and people begin to pile up in the summer. Then I had to go and explain to the Department of the Army and to the CG of the Training and Doctrine Command. And I said, "Look at the quality I'm giving you. I'm giving you high school diploma graduates even though you are going to have to train 25 percent again as many people in the summertime because that's when high school diploma graduates are available."

So there was a big hoorah up at the Department of the Army and down in the Training and Doctrine Command that says this guy Thurman is down there wagging the Department of the Army, wagging the Training and Doctrine Command, and who the hell does he think he is?

And I had to make a sales case. There were three sales cases going on. One sales case is to my recruiters that says, "You bring me three this month and don't worry about them what week. I'll tell you what week they are going to go." Second, a sales case to the Army that says, "I'm going to give you higher quality people, not lower quality, higher quality." Which then translated into additional work for the Army in the summertime. And the third sales had to be the Congress. It says, "If you will give me additional money for recruiting, for advertising, for the Army College Fund, we will jack up the quality of people coming in the Army."

Now, the payoff in all that is tremendous, okay, in more ways than one. Let me give you at least three payoffs. Okay. Payoff number one is that you have a higher quality kid who has a better chance of assimilating the instruction on a weapon system or the devices that you want he or she to perform on as they go through the training base and into the Army. So there's a higher expectation of level of performance given the rule that, generally, smarter people are smarter than less smart people.

Item number two: if you bring on smarter people we know through statistical analysis that smarter people will stay with you longer than less smart people. They have a higher propensity for serving out the total years of service. So for example, a high school

graduate has a rate of dropout more like 25 percent before he completes his three-year term of service, while a non-high school graduate has a 40 percent dropout. So that meant that over time the sum total to be put through the training base would go down. So if I can bring you smarter people they won't get out as fast, and therefore I won't have to recruit as many downrange.

The third reason that it's good to go after quality is, high quality people don't get into trouble and they don't create the disciplinary problems that you have with high school dropouts. I mean, the data tells you that.

So one of the things that I was good at, that I brought inherently to the job, was the appreciation of data. And I understood the long-term secondary consequences of things.

If you look back at programmers—and I was an Army programmer for five years and I was a TRADOC programmer for two years, so a period of time in my Army service I spent seven years as a programmer, three as a lieutenant colonel, two as a brigadier general and two as a major general. So one of the things I learned, that a lot of people don't learn, is what is the long-term consequence of something.

So I understood that if I could get the attrition rates down in the Army that the size of the training base could be reduced.

Now, having come from TRADOC having two years on the job down there working with Bill DePuy and Paul Gorman, I understood that we had smarter people going through this that we could understand better about the notions of self-paced instruction, assimilating war tasks in the training domain and before, et cetera. So when I became the Chief of Recruiting I knew everything anybody wanted to know about TRADOC.

So it was easy for me to go down to TRADOC and talk to them in terms they understood because I had previously been the TRADOC Resource Manager. And I understood as much about the training base as anybody in TRADOC understood, having been there for two years. Yet if I went to the programmers at the Department of the Army, I could say, I'm going to save you money in the long run.

Saving money in recruits. Think about this for a moment. If I bring in 170,000 recruits, which I did in 1980, I have to size the training base to handle that number of

people. And that size of the training base and that size of the recruiting establishment means that's that less number of people that can be in tactical units.

So one of the things I am proud of in all of that is, by the time I left as the DCSPER, we had beat down the number of people to be brought into the service to 130-some thousand people. That's 40,000 people that we didn't have to bring into the Army, which meant I didn't have to give them an initial entry training clothing bag, I didn't have to put up the drill sergeants for that group of people. I didn't have to spend the money in the training base for that group of people.

And that 40,000, you have to divide that by 12 to be able to get an even—divide it by 11 is better stated for sort of an even distribution over 11 months of training gives you an average of almost 4,000 people a year. That's a brigade of troops that could be in the combat forces as opposed to being in the training base or being in the recruiting pile.

So there was a payoff for going after quality in a way which benefited the Army far beyond the aggrandizement of saying, well we got more high school diploma grads. It is a cost benefit equation that would accrue to the Army in a way that most people couldn't look at.

I looked at that that way because I had had all this time as a programmer.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. You were used to integrating dollars, cents, people, time, building—

GEN. THURMAN: Over a long period of time, so I was able to be persuasive about that to the Congress. I was able to be persuasive about that to the internals of the Army. So in these three different constituencies that I had, I was running a sales campaign on all three levels.

DR. KIRKLAND: Not to mention the guys out in the street that you were trying to recruit.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, that you're trying to recruit, that you're trying to bring in. I mean, so really you're running four different advertising programs simultaneously.

One to the people you are trying to recruit, one to the Congress to give you the recruiting resources, one to the Army to turn about its thinking about that, and one to the recruiter himself that he can be successful in this market.

DR. KIRKLAND: Now the guys who were doing this selling, primarily it was Thurman, but were there others sort of saying, in your cheering section or helping?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah. Clay Gompf, he understood all that stuff. Max Noah took over as the programmer. He was right behind me as the chief programmer of the Army. He had been at TRADOC, he understood it, so he was able to carry freight for me. Jack Vessey understood it. Guys in Congress. We got accolades in Congress.

I mean, this sounds like self-aggrandizement, and it is, but Les Aspin [Congressman Leslie Aspin, Jr.] said there were three people that were formative in turning about the Army in the 1980s. I mean, he told me this. I didn't know it until he told me. He gave the speech on the floor of the Congress, three people had turned it about. One was a guy named Abrams [GEN Robert B. Abrams] on changing about the Reserve relationship, one was Bill Perry [Secretary of Defense, William J. Perry] on bringing on Stealth aircraft and precision weapons, and one was a guy named Thurman who recruited the all-volunteer service. So we had a major change function in the Army and everybody benefited.

Now, commanders. Commanders, first of all said, "My goodness, you know, the quality of people is substantially better." You go ask commanders about that. Don't ask me about it, go ask them. Because, then, I'm not a commander, you follow me? I'm a manager. I'm not in the field, I'm in the garrison. I'm in the headshed all this time. I'm not out there in the field where the rubber meets the road.

Commanders said, "My God, these guys know how to gun tanks. They know how to act as loaders." And the commanders then looked around and said, "My God, I won't have to spend any time on disciplinary matters with these guys." Then they said, "I'm not short people. I've got full up units." So commanders felt better.

So when commanders feel better and their troops are better, then you can turn on the third leg of this stool, which is the quality stool, which is the training function, which says, if I can have really good training, which is what troops sign up for.

You know, you entice them to come into the service by showing them what kind of work you're going to do. Then they go to basic and AIT to find out the basics of that and they come out of that on a high. Then if they go to a unit that doesn't have enough people in it and doesn't have a very high quality, then their morale plummets as opposed to going into a unit that is very high in training tempo.

So now by 1981 and 1982 we've begun to change our training systems. Stuff Gorman was doing in the mid 70's is beginning to come to fruition. We suddenly have the units are filled up with people. The National Training Center is beginning to come along, and people were able to take their units and go to the field and feel good about themselves. So what naturally happens then is re-enlistment rates begin to go up.

DR. KIRKLAND: So then you need to recruit still fewer.

GEN. THURMAN: So then you have to recruit even less. So now by the mid '80s and the late 1980s we're down into 115,000, 120,000, 127,000, 124,000. So I mean, you really stabilized the Army. The Army becomes a stable platform where people can come in and serve for a long period of time. So there is sort of a snowballing effect.

Remember what I said last go-around is, the first thing I said is if we don't fill up the infantry, armor and the field artillery, we don't have an Army. Those are the people that go out in combat and get killed. So you have to fill them up. So these people are beginning to feel good. Then you begin to lard over that equality in the seed that begins to come along in 1981. Then by 1982 people are saying, "By God, we've got an Army here."

If you look now, it is Shy Meyer's stewardship in the people domain aided and abetted by Jack Vessey who is the Vice from '79 to '82. Then from '82 to '83 John Wickham comes in as the Vice and Shy Meyer has the helm all that particular time and we are making steady progress in peopling the Army. All of these going up, drugs going

down, crime is going down, training as op tempo is going up. By the end of his stewardship things are going pretty well with respect to the people side of the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: I've accepted your reluctance to be the subject of a biography. But last week you were talking about how important it was for you to watch General DePuy market his vision to the Army even though he was not the Chief of Staff.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: And as I listen to you now, it sounds like you are telling me how you had a vision of what would happen if the junior enlisted personnel brought into the Army were of a high quality and how it would spread and you understood the ramifications and the second and third order consequences and you did it. I am just feeding that back to you, sort of so you will understand why I focused on you as the guy whose perspective is crucial in telling the personnel story of the Army.

GEN. THURMAN: And I accept that. I did have a crucial role to play about that. But the point I'm trying to make is, that's quite different than being the subject of a biography.

[Telephone ringing.]

[Discussion held off the record.]

GEN. THURMAN: So I am just saying, biographically, I am not interested in a biography. I think if I look in retrospect on how were you a successful Chief of Recruiting, okay, and others may not have been—may not have been. They didn't have the access to the headshed that I had, et cetera, what I brought to it. I go back and look at my days as a major in the Army when Mike Davidson gave me free range to run an exciting interface program with the American public and the cadets at the military academy which was called a Cadet Activities Officer. And I learned a lot about how to meet the public with that and how to work outside of conventional lines of authority.

The second thing that I came across is, now, when I get to be a lieutenant colonel working for DePuy I learned how to look at actions taken today and their secondary and tertiary consequences and how resources made things dance. I mean, it was the manipulation of resources that made things happen. And I also understood how you made sales about that into the Army hierarchy. The people who don't get a chance to do that don't know how to do that.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's right.

GEN. THURMAN: The third thing that I learned working for DePuy at TRADOC, and the like, is I learned the nits and lice of how an outside commander, given that he is not on the Army staff, manipulates the Army staff and also manipulates the Congress.

So then when I get back to the Army staff, then as a programmer, I get more deeply involved in analytical details about the various segments of the Army. So I began to know a lot about the personnel system of the Army even though I wasn't responsible for putting it together.

Now, if you take Gene Forrester or Bill Mundie or Bill Fulton and some of these others, some of those guys knew some of those things that I just described. But being fair, I don't think any of them approached it analytically as I did. And that's because I had been the Army's programmer for so many years, five years of my adult life—you know, sort of my formative contribution to the Army at the grade of lieutenant colonel and beyond.

Five years of my work was spent in that kind of field looking at analytical approaches to things and what the application of resources would be about that. So putting together analytically based arguments to be persuasive to the Congress or to be persuasive to TRADOC or to be persuasive to the Department of the Army staff came easy for me. And the results of those assignments, which I had, nobody could have ever predicted that I would have been sent to the recruiting command.

But when I got to the recruiting command, I found out I was the cadet activities officer, again. The least thing that Shy Meyer wanted to do was run the Recruiting

Command so he sent me out there. He wanted to get rid of it, give it to somebody who can go run it. So I was back on my own, again, much as I had been as a cadet activities officer.

Well, I had learned to operate on my own without a great deal of adult supervision. Now I had to operate within a regulatory base and within a statutory base. In other words, I didn't break the law, and DePuy had counseled me before that when people begin to view you as a very competent person that is going to rise to higher rank, one of the things they want you to do is make sure you don't embarrass the Army and that you will run things correctly—I mean in accordance with not only the letter and spirit of the law—not just the letter of the law and regulation, but the spirit of the law and regulation as well.

So I think that I was a good assimilator. One of the things that I pride myself on is the ability to synthesize information. I can take disparate information, bring it together, and then homogenize it into some workable alternatives.

Now, this is my first major general command of anything. I didn't command anything as a brigadier general, didn't command anything as a major general, so I've been a general officer for four years and I haven't commanded anything. So, I mean, there is some apprehension that the actions that you take prove to be useful and accomplish the mission. Sure, there is apprehension about that.

And so it's not like the apprehension one would have if one was a division commander or whatever. It's a different kind. You get human life at risk about that if you have to be in combat. But here is a case where there is reputation of the unit at stake. There is the reputation of the Army at stake, there is the overall image of the Army at stake, there's the reputation of the Army before the Congress at stake, and certainly, then there is the personal reputation at stake, and there's the reputation of the people that work for you. You want the people working for you to feel good about themselves.

DR. KIRKLAND: You changed everything so your neck was out a mile.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, but it was easy. I mean, for me it was easy.

DR. KIRKLAND: I think it may have been easier for you than for others. I'm sure you must have had some anxiety.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I think the fact that the Chief of Staff said to me, "Go out and straighten it out and turn it around"—I knew what was to be done.

DR. KIRKLAND: You sure did.

GEN. THURMAN: I knew what he wanted to be done. I knew the implied mission, and I operated within the scope of authority which I had. If you look in military parlance of views today for combat forces, one of the things we say is, you've got to operate inside the head space of your commander. And you're trying to be able to use your own initiative knowing that you are in full accord with the desires and will of your commander. But you don't ask him for authority to do things unless you can't do it yourself and you have to have his authority.

Now, some people call that the usurping of authority. You follow me? In other words, there's a fine line there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Between exceeding.

GEN. THURMAN: Between exceeding what people think is your authority and what you think is your authority versus what is the authority of your bosses. And if I erred, it is certainly I erred in the notion of exceeding my authority, in every case. And I practiced that at the grade of major general, lieutenant general, and general. I always usurped and exceeded my authority. That's the nature of what happens when you hire me.

So I would say that it turns out I was a perfect fit for the job.

DR. KIRKLAND: Perfect fit, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: And whether that happened serendipitously or whether that's precalculated, certainly the Army does a precalculated assignments for general

officers. Normally they are picked up and shoved around without a proper view of their progression through ranks for various and sundry things, which is a whole other subject. But I turned out to be the right guy at the right place at the right time, happily for me and happily for the Army, happily for the recruiters.

I think recruiters who were in the Recruiting Force in 1980-'81 and '82, they think a lot about themselves, feel good about themselves. I know the battalion commanders do, most of the brigade commanders. It's tough but fun.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. It worked. You won the sergeants over with the notion that the officers would put a man in boots.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: But you also turned their world upside down—

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: —by changing who they go after and what the schedule that they're going after and the sort of working tempo—

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: —all of that you changed. Did heartburn feed back to you about that sort of thing?

GEN. THURMAN: In every case, in every one of the battalions, you had people who could not reform. And so what I did is I told the battalion commanders, brigade commanders, you know, they had the authority to turn people back to the force. And I said that is salutary and you must look at that as not punishment to go back to the active Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was this just an administrative transfer?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. You just said, “Your term is up.” And you didn’t have to put in any bad paper in. You just said, “Now let’s see, you were a tanker, Thurman?” “Yes, I was a tanker.” “Okay. We’re going to send you back to Fort Knox for a refresher.” And then you are subject to worldwide assignment as a tanker. After you did that a few times, you understand, a lot people decided they’d rather get with the recruiting program.

See, a lot of people come to the recruiting program from exactly the wrong reason.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, they come as a lifetime—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, they didn’t want to go back to Europe every 18 months. And, oh, by the way, they would sink their roots in a hometown. They thought that was a good idea. I found out they had one recruiter that was coaching a high school football team.

DR. KIRKLAND: I’m not surprised.

GEN. THURMAN: In New Mexico. And I said to the battalion commander when I found that out, I said, “I understand you’ve got this guy coaching a high school football team.” “Yeah,” he said, “he’s a terrific coach. He’s been coaching them for about five years.”

DR. KIRKLAND: And he probably was making mission, too.

GEN. THURMAN: And I said, “He doesn’t coach a high school team.” You go down and see the superintendent of schools. And the principal said, “We’re not doing that.” And I got a letter from a congressman in his area that said this guy was a

tremendous role model as a high school coach. I said, “Wait a minute guys. We don’t coach high school football teams.”

Now see, this guy had sunk into the community—

DR. KIRKLAND: He left the Army.

GEN. THURMAN: —to the point he had left the Army. He probably wore a uniform, you know, maybe once a week or something like that. You know, I mean, screwy business here. So, yeah, he had a lot of high school athletes come in, the kind of guys that want to get there. But the problem was, we had to reorient some of the recruiting force. And so you had to dig out guys like that, and when they would come to light you would say, “Hey, wait a minute, we don’t coach.”

I mean, look at your people, fellahs. This is a full-time mission. The reason it’s a full-time mission, notwithstanding his high school coaching he made mission. You understand last year we missed the mission by 17,000. So don’t give me this crap now that we have all these good things going when, in fact, you missed the mission by 17,000 last year. So get the cobwebs out of your head here guys, we’re going to work as a working operation here and get your head straight about it.

Now, in the summer of ‘80 I brought in some key figures into the recruiting game. One was a brigadier general named Olson who had come straight from the Big Red One. He was also an analytical guy. He had been an operations research guy and I know him very well, had known him very well. Brought in a guy named Bob Phillips who was a Ph.D. sociologist and business administration guy, an armor guy, and he ran my recruiting operations. Brought in a guy that looked after the ethical side. Brought in another terrific judge advocate general for my judges’ shop.

Then we were getting this influx of battalion commanders to be on normal rotations out. We were really getting some first-class people in 1980. The recruiters were coming back from the active army in Germany and all that kind of stuff. So the rollover of people coming into the service was really getting first-class.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is the Recruiting Operation guy sort of like the G3?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: And what did it amount to? Was he the chief trainer?

GEN. THURMAN: He ran the training function. He ran the everyday manipulation of the recruiting network, automatic data processing network. Phillips designed ...

I'll give you an illustration. In order to improve the tools that we had for the fellow, recruiter out on the street, we designed a one-page worksheet like as an insurance guy would work for you which would say how much money is this worth to you.

It turned out that if you used wage scale only the two years would be worth maybe let's say nominal 500 bucks a month, that's \$6,000 a year, you would be at \$12,000 for two years. But if you added on the \$9,600 you got for being the infantry, armor, or field artillery, now you're up to \$21,000. And you got your PX and commissary offset or you got your airborne allowance or whatever, suddenly you're making \$32,000 for this first two years in the service. You present that to a high school kid's parents and you say, "This is what your son has the opportunity to work for and earn for the next two years, \$16,000 a year." I mean, in 1980, that's not small change.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right out of high school, right.

GEN. THURMAN: Right out of high school, right. Bob was a very inventive guy who didn't know anything about recruiting. But it didn't take him five seconds. He's a quick-study guy, he's an analyst guy. I had this guy Benchoff that was getting his PA&E shop all up to speed and I had 15 guys from my PA&E shop, all of whom had graduate degrees in operations research. We could out analyze anybody, out analyze the Congress, out analyze the Department of the Army, out analyze OSD, you name it, out analyze anybody. So we had a terrific stable of guys in there the summer of 1980.

Then they all stayed the year after I left. So they were there through '81 and then were there most of '82. So there was continuity built in all that and it worked fine. So that's recruiting.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's recruiting.

GEN. THURMAN: Fun deal.

DR. KIRKLAND: Then you got sent to—what was the progression to DCSPER? It seems like a natural one, but how did it actually happen? Did Shy appoint you?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. This is the summer of '81 and I think between . . . now Yerks had a formative hand. He was the DCSPER at the time and he had a formative hand in recommending people to be various and sundry jobs. I would have preferred to have gone back to the force, you know, as a division commander, but by now this is '81, I'm 50 years old in '81. So I'm still in the contention to go back in command and division. I'm not too old to go command and division. So that would have been a nice job to go command and division.

Why Shy and the DCSPER and the Vice decided I should be the DCSPER, I can't tell you. They didn't confer with me about that. They said, "You're going to be promoted and made the DCSPER of the Army." So, age 50, I'm promoted to lieutenant general and put in as the DCSPER.

And there was much to do there. There was as much to do there as there was in the recruiting command, although I didn't really understand it at the moment. Not that time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Here's where you had to confront the shortage of NCOs and the fact that they were meeting each other coming and going on overseas assignment.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I think there are several things that sort of come to bear there early on. One of those is to shepherd the recruiting program. The guy that took it over for me was a guy named Howard Crowell [MG Howard G. Crowell, Jr.] who had been Shy's DISCOM commander, I believe, in the 3rd Infantry Division in Germany. He was the training officer at TRADOC. So Shy asked me, "What do you think about making Howard the recruiting command commander?" I said, "Sir, I think he would be terrific. He knows TRADOC and there's a tremendous linkage between TRADOC and the recruiting service. So I think he would be fine doing that." So he made him the recruiting service.

The first order of business was to make sure that I supported the recruiting command commander in the manner in which I had been supported because this thing had just gotten underway and the baseline had been laid. But the reaping of the harvest came in '81, '82 and '83.

The second major endeavor was to try to understand the systems that were invoked in the management of both Army officers and Army noncommissioned officers particularly which affected the density of NCOs by military occupational specialists.

The third item that came on the scene was Shy's interest in organizing the Army family business.

The fourth item that came on the scene was the COHORT item business.

The fifth item that came on the scene was the relationship of why high quality people were necessary for use in high quality weapon systems. And a term which I would use is called "manprint"—how to get the personnel people into the procurement and fielding of weapon systems.

The sixth thing that came on there was to make sure that each one of the career fields from top to bottom from E9 down to E1 was appropriately filled with the requisite talent.

The next thing that came on the scene was to find out what was perturbing the number of NCOs in each career field. Why weren't the career fields balanced?

The next item that came on the scene was the reinvigoration of the leadership business, officer and NCO leadership business. So those were some of the major domains that I applied work to as a staff officer.

So which one of those do you want to talk about?

DR. KIRKLAND: All of them.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, let's take some sort of, in some kind of order here. Let's take one. Shepherding and recruiting says do all you've been doing and encourage the guy, listen to him on a monthly basis, get him the resources, give them to him and support him in every possible. Let's set that one aside.

We were beginning to get the rumbles at OSD that, as in all cases, the last item on the list was get the GI Bill approved. We're beginning to get the rumble at OSD, "Gee whiz, we've got to cut back on the amount of recruiting money." In other words, you're doing so well that we ought to be able to cut back on the level of money that's financing recruiters, advertising, recruiter budgets, all that kind of stuff.

So you had to build an argument that having quality people—

See, I already knew that the answer was, you could reduce the size of the recruiting force and reduce the size of the training base and all that. That's the internal argument to the Department of the Army. But to the Department of Defense, you had to take on a different stance, which was, DePuy used to draw a little chart. It's a very simple chart. You bought a weapons system over its current weapon system. You bought the M1 tank over the M60 tank because it had an inherent performance capability which was greater than the current tank. Now, if you then went out and measured the performance capability of the new tank over the performance capability of the old tank, you might not get the performance curve that you thought you were going to get and the reason you might not get it is because the part of the performance curve was a dependent variable on the quality of the people.

And when you do research for weapon systems, you always give people a uniform 1.0 or 100 percent good. But people aren't 100 % good, some people are better than others. So we went on a kick, then, of trying to show and demonstrate how quality people could make the new weapon systems perform up to the standards that they were bought for.

Now this turned out to be a long and never-ending saga because it goes on for at least 10 years that I'm aware of. But now in 1981 we took as a weapon system, for example, the Stinger versus its predecessor the Redeye air defense weapon. And we figured out then that a smart guy could operate the system—

(End Tape 11, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 12

(Begin Tape 12, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: [in progress]—[Dr. Joyce Shields] ran that. She had worked with me in the recruiting service and I had confidence in her, and I tasked her to go do that in ARI. Lo and behold, she came up and produced this big study that shows we reengineered the Stinger missile system and all that kind of stuff showing what should have been done.

That led to two things. One, it takes smarter people to do it. The second thing it led to was the fact that you ought to have taken into consideration the human factors to a better degree. Not the human factors associated with height and arm reach and seat reach and weight and aberdequa(?) [ph], and all that stuff; rather, what's in the head, which get at hand/eye coordination, mental agility, the ability to discriminate tasks, send it down to the motor system, none of which had been done very well.

Now, a guy in the civilian domain picked up on that, a guy named Marty Binkin. And Martin Binkin, who is a famous guy at the Brookings Institute, made a life then for the next two years criticizing the Army for having all these dummies in the Army who had come in, in 1978, '79, '80 when Thurman brought them in and now they wouldn't be capable of handling the M1, the Bradley, the Apache, et cetera. So there was a two-edged sword for doing that. We began to lay down the base for why you needed smart people.

See, we had gone to the Rand Corporation when I was a recruiter and said, "Tell us something about smart people," and they said, "What we find is that half the people are in upper half and half the people are in the lower half, and the upper half people are smarter than the lower half people; therefore, we ought to go after the upper half people." And they charged us \$300,000 bucks for that particular survey.

But we operated on the basis that Rand Corporation says this is good stuff, we'll go do it.

Now that led, then, to us then tasking TRADOC to say, "Tell us by MOS how many smart people you need in MOS A versus MOS B versus you know 360 MOSs." So

they began to do that. They began to say, “Okay, for infantry, we need X number in the upper half and we need Y number of CAT4s,” et cetera. That enabled us to go into the computer system and put that in a computer system as opposed to saying every third man.

See, in 1980, it was every third man go into the infantry, armor or field artillery. Take your choice, give you your choice about that. But now we’re getting refined and we have tables that say, okay, we need so many people in the upper half, so many people in the mental category one, so many people in the mental category two, et cetera.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did they do that, the seat of their pants or—

GEN. THURMAN: No. We ran tests down at the infantry, armor, and artillery school and the various schools around the country and began to take in these considerations about it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Does that mean they take a CAT4 gunner on a tank and compare them with a CAT3A and see—

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. Yes. Find out he doesn’t do as well.

DR. KIRKLAND: Uh-huh. And it really worked?

GEN. THURMAN: It really works.

DR. KIRKLAND: It really happened?

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. Now, these all take several years to go do that. So you set into motion these things and they take a life of their own to get that done. But that led us then into getting the Army into MANPRINT [Manpower and Personnel Integration], which says, we’ve got to get in at the front end of combat development cycle in order to do that. Well, now there’s a book this thick on MANPRINT that goes to

every industry toad in the world. And you've got to consider all this stuff when you build in your basic weapon system.

Now out of that review by weapon systems I got very much interested in seeing to it that whenever we brought in a new weapon system, we would take it to make sure that we had the right people and the right MOSs in order to populate the new weapon system.

DR. KIRKLAND: When they came off the line?

GEN. THURMAN: Right. And I made it a credo that we would never be embarrassed by having not trained the right number of people for any new weapon systems that might appear in the Army.

Now the first FAA [Functional Area Analysis], I ran about that—which is called a Functional Manpower Analysis, FMA, later changed to FAA when I got up to the Vice because I apply it to everything, but now as the DCSPER I'm looking at people only—the first thing I looked at was artillery because I was an artillery officer and knew a lot about the artillery.

So I told the artillery commander to turn to and cough up the functional area analysis on the artillery. Tell me when you're going to bring in new howitzers, or MLRS was a new weapon system we're getting there. And I looked at a two-year time line. So we looked at that and said, "My God, you know, we're short NCOs here."

So I turned to the guy and said, you know, the chief of my personnel policy over in MILPERCEN and, I said, in enlisted matters, and I said, "Now how are we going to get this guy jacked up into getting the number of NCOs?" And he said, "Well, gee, we can't control that because promotion boards control that."

Well, you know, how do we control the promotion board? That's still on the number of points a guy gets down there, the unit commander gets involved in all that.

Now, a guy who was very instrumental at that time—two people, Don Connelly, who is now the DMPM, he had been in recruiting command with me, he now was the DMPM, the Director of Military Personnel Management; and a fellow who worked for him at that time, a colonel named Jack Wheeler [MG Jack Cox Wheeler], later the commander of the recruiting command. But Jack Wheeler ran the enlisted side.

And we sat in there and we said, “Well, gee whiz, we are going to have to spend some time now figuring out how we change the promotion system.” So I said, “Have somebody come over here and explain to me how we promote people from grade E7”—or E9, E8, and E7 were promoted by central boards for the Department of the Army. So we knew how to control that. And I said, “From now on those boards will promote against vacancies by MOS.”

I mean, I don’t need to promote any more cooks and bakers if I’m over strength in cooks and bakers. And just start issuing those orders now that the promotion board E7, 8 and 9 we control those boards, and we so did.

I said, “Look, grade E5 and E6 is different.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Was there any heartburn about this? I mean, was there anybody up in arms that said, “My God, you can’t do that, that’s unfair”?

GEN. THURMAN: No. In my notion of exceeding my authority—In fact, I picked up a piece of paper about six months ago wherein I wrote a letter to the Chief of Staff, from the DCSPER to the Chief of Staff, that said, “Effective 1 August 1981 the following procedures will be invoked for boards grade E7, 8 and 9.” You notice I didn’t say we agree, I propose that you do this, or whatever.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, right.

GEN. THURMAN: I look back on that now and I say, “My God, I’d choke a guy that did something to me like this if he did that to me, you know.” But Shy Meyer knew who I was and he put me in there to work the DCSPER. He didn’t want to work it, he wanted me to work it. And so we changed that.

When we got to the E5 and E6 boards I called over, they couldn’t explain to me how those were done. So I said, “Who runs this over at MILPERCEN?” And they said, “There are two sergeant majors that run that over at MILPERCEN.” “Bring them over here.” So I said, “Okay. How do we do that? How do we run that?”

And they said, “Well, the way you run that is you give authority to promote based upon the total numbers that are in the Army at that grade. That is to say, if there are 100 cooks and bakers authorized and the Army is an authorization-based system—if you have 100 cooks and bakers authorized and you have 100 armor guys and 100 infantry and there are 300 promotions to be given, then you would give 100 for each one of those.”

And I said, “Suppose I already have 150 cooks and only have 50 armor guys, what about that?” And they said, “No, you still give evenly 100, 100, and 100.”

And I said, “But I’m already over strength in cooks. This will make even more over strength in cooks.”

“Yeah, I know, but that’s the way the system works.”

So I said to them, “Okay, we’re going to do away with that system, effective immediately. You will go back and reprogram the computers, and what you will do is award billets for promotion by the number of vacancies in the branches, not by the number of authorizations in the branches. So if I am short 50 armor guys and I’ve got 100 medics or cooks, the medics and cooks don’t get any and the tanks get 50.”

And they said, “Well that is really going to be different than what we are doing.” And I said, “Yes, and not only that, but we are going to publish all the cutoff scores in the *Army Times* every month.”

And starting in 1981 they were published in the *Army Times* every month, and they are still published in the *Army Times* every month.

The first time that that thing hit the field, cooks, medics, some mechanics, recruiters, their cutoff scores were like 990 on 1,000 and infantry, armor, and field artillery cutoff scores were like 450. And suddenly unit commanders in the field had authority to promote people who were serving as tank commanders at the grade of E4 to the grade of E5.

Now, there was a feedback through the loop about that. That sergeants major down at unit level said, “Well these guys haven’t been in the turret long enough to merit promotion to grade E5.” And my answer to that, to all the commanders who hollered about that, was, “They are commanding the \$1 million tank and if they are no good take them out of the tank. But if they are commanding the tank, then you must have confidence in their ability to command the tank.”

“Now, which is it? Do you have confidence or don’t you have confidence?”

“Oh, we have confidence in them to command a tank. “

So don’t give any shit now about the fact that they ought to serve to the whim of some sergeant major down there for another six months or two years. If you got him on the promotion list and his point score is 450, he’s going to be promoted.

Suddenly the Army began to raise the number of NCOs. Okay?

About that time a guy comes up to me from down in the bowels of my system and says, “Hey, gee whiz, we haven’t got enough money to pay the NCOs.” I said, “What are you talking about?” He said, “Well, with all your acumen in the PA&E game, you may have forgotten that we never budgeted to pay all the NCOs.”

DR. KIRKLAND: My God.

GEN. THURMAN: We always knew that there was slop in the system down there, so we always would take out about 10 to 10,000 NCOs, so we never budgeted the right number of NCOs. We are going to budget it now, and you’ve got to figure out how we’re going to budget the money.

So we got the money and we put it in there. Suddenly, NCOs who went to Germany and spent two years on an unaccompanied tour because their wives were browned off about going back and forth to Germany all the time, and would come back the United States and go back in 11 or 13 months to Germany. Suddenly they came back and somebody said, “Gee, Sarge, you’re going to be here for about two years now.” Boy, family morale began to pick up then. People said, “I think I’ll reenlist.” So reenlistment rates began to go up and all that kind of stuff.

Like I had looked after the recruiting malpractice on Saturdays and Sundays, I looked after these kind of stuff on Saturdays and Sundays, the systems inside DCSPER. So there were notorious sessions in there on Saturdays and Sundays and I don’t like that stuff. But I always charged up work for the guys in the field.

I asked two sergeant majors later on, “When is the last time a general officer looked at your promotion system?” One guy looked at the other and said, “I’ve been here two years,” the other guy said, “I’ve been here three years,” and said, “No general and no

colonel has ever looked at it.” You know, the grinder just grinding through, nobody getting down and looking at the systems of the Army.

See, the bureaucratic Army is made up of a tremendous number of systems which operate on sets of rules that occasionally managers have to get in and say, I’m managing and the system manages the way I tell it to manage as opposed to the way somebody else tells it to manage.

One of the things I’ve learned here and learned it in the Recruiting Service is that people are 99 and 44/100 percent good. But if you don’t set the standards for them, they will set their own standards. And that is true in the Army systems business. Civilians will make the rules up, NCOs will make the rules up, a lot of people will make the rules up. If the top management doesn’t want to make the rules up somebody else will make them up. They’ve got to run them, so they’ll make them up.

So we got in there and suddenly the turnaround time began to go better. Who felt good down at Fort Hood, Texas, then? Division commanders felt good. Suddenly they looked at them. People were here for two years.

Then that brings up another deal. You know how you go out in a field and talk to a guy, go down and see Walt [LTG Walter F. Ulmer] over at Fort Hood, Texas. He said, “You know, there are guys leaving here after being here six months.” I said, “Is that right? How in the hell are they doing that?” He said, “Well, they volunteer to go.” So they would get out. I said, “Let me see if I can get this straight. Sergeant Thurman comes to work for Captain Ulmer and Captain Ulmer is a hard ass, and so I can leave the unit and escape you being a hard ass by volunteering to go overseas with only six months on the books?” He said, “That’s right.” I said, “You just gave me a monkey.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Another system.

GEN. THURMAN: So another system at work. So I come back up here and I say, “Bring me in the rules for the Army’s overseas replacement system.” Guess what rule number one is? If you volunteer to go overseas, no matter how many months you have on station, you go overseas. So a guy could have a bimbo in Korea, go over there for his 13 months, extend for another six months. The unit commander over there say,

“Gee, I’ve got to get this guy out of here, you know, he’s becoming a ‘bimbo-litus guy’ on me.” And they send him back to the United States. And the son-of-a-bitch could volunteer and be back in Korea in a year and a month because the system permitted it.

So I said, “Hey, wait a minute, guys; bring me all the rules on this system.”

And so I said, “That rule is dead.” You mean you can’t volunteer to go overseas? I mean, see the MILPERCEN felt good about letting people volunteer to go overseas because then they didn’t have to issue a levy. But what they didn’t understand was the secondary consequence of that which was, a guy could volunteer out of being in a unit. He could tell his boss to go to hell, I don’t have to serve in your damned unit, and he would be gone within a week.

We can’t have that in the Army. You’ve got to have a level of discipline in the Army. So we changed the system to say, you may volunteer after one year. I mean, this threw a lot of civilians and lower-grade enlisted guys who worked this kind of stuff in MILPERCEN, they didn’t like that. Because they were getting over on the Army about that. They would get their buddy and say, “Where would you like to go?” And they’d say, “I’d like to go to Kaiserslautern.” “Well, if you volunteer, I can grease it up for you and you can go to Kaiserslautern.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Fix it up.

GEN. THURMAN: So we got that cleaned up. So the NCO deal was a crucial deal. And getting the promotion system straight was crucial to, again, the well-being of the Army about that. And so those things have been fixed, and machinery works now, and essentially we are not short. We are short spasmodically some grades, but in the main our people are doing quite well about provisioning the Army with the requisite number of enlisted guys. But at that time we were short 17,000 people total. We were short about 15,000 NCOs.

DR. KIRKLAND: I’m sure, 17,000 total of which 15 were NCOs?

GEN. THURMAN: It's two different things. We're short 17,000 recruits, which is in the total end-strength of the Army. But in the serving end-strength of the Army, those who are already on duty, we were short 15,000 NCOs.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay. There are 15,000 soldiers who were privates or SPEC4s and the NCO corps was short that number?

GEN. THURMAN: Right. So getting that fixed was a major, major, major, major area. So once we sort of discovered this problem associated with the artillery, then we went through every one of the branches. We went branch by branch by branch by branch, and we repeated that once a year. So every month we had a new branch come up and tell us what the hell they were doing by branch in order to make sure we had the right pyramid and the right number of people coming out to be trained, the right recruiting.

See, we issued the instructions to the training base so we had to give them the right instructions, how to train X number of 98 Golfs and Y number of this, and the like.

DR. KIRKLAND: So then soldiers who were in the branches where the promotion score was 990, they would be howling like stuck hogs because they—

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: —because they would have to serve 20 years—

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: —as an E4 before they could make E5?

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. So what we did was, we said, “How would you like to transfer to the infantry?” And the howls dissipated. So what we set up then, I think it's called a Bear Program, which was a reenlistment program by MOS. So that those units that were 15 percent short you could transfer into. And if you were over —an MOS

that was over 15 percent—you could transfer out of. So we published that routinely in the *Army Times* and otherwise by bulletins that would say, “If you are in these over-skilled fields it would behoove you to take some retraining and go into one of these understrength fields, and you might get promoted faster.” And a lot of people did that.

DR. KIRKLAND: So the TRADOC had to come into the picture to put together the retraining program?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, at the NCO level. And they did.

Now, another offshoot of all that was the business of managing, on a monthly basis, reenlistment bonus numbers. So we manipulated reenlistment bonuses in order to manipulate retention of very high-skilled people like sergeants of infantry who were in demand. We needed those guys, so we would give them a higher reenlistment bonus.

I’ll give you one anecdote about that. The day that President Reagan fired all air traffic controllers I raised the reenlistment bonus on air traffic controllers. That day I put out a worldwide message that said air traffic controller reenlistments are now authorized \$16,000 for a three-year tour. I didn’t lose a single air traffic controller to the FAA in the year the strike went on.

So that shows you how you can manipulate the reenlistment bonus scheme to effectively cure problems in a given MOS. And once a month I sat down and Wheeler and Connelly would bring over the requisite people from MILPERCEN, and we would sit down and go through every MOS. And we would look at how many people were leaving, what the recruiting service was bringing into it, what the training base is turning out, what is the expected reenlistment rate.

Meanwhile I had put up a PA&E shop in the DCSPER. That was headed by a lieutenant colonel named Ron Johnston, J-o-h-n-s-t-o-n. Ron became my PA&E bird and effectively managed all that for me.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is he still on duty?

GEN. THURMAN: No. He's in the private sector now, retired as a full colonel. In fact, he and Bob Elton are in business together.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, is he over there?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. So Ron could tell you some tales about Saturdays and Sundays and all that.

DR. KIRKLAND: When I first met you was on a Sunday morning. So I know about that. When I first met you was on a Sunday morning.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, that's when we did things. We had other important business to do during the week.

Okay. Now Shy Meyer comes down—as I recall it about August of 1981—and he says, “I want to run an Army family symposium.” And I said, “Okay. What are we going to do?” He said, “We're going to let wives tell us what's wrong with the Army.” I said, “That ought to be exciting work.”

So we ran the first one, I believe, like in December of 1981, and it turned out to be a gangbusters deal. And out of that we must have generated 200 tasks.

DR. KIRKLAND: These wives, what did they do, volunteer? Where did you get the wives?

GEN. THURMAN: The wives came from every division, post, camp, and station in the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: You sent a quota around?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. They came from West Point and all kinds of places. In fact, a lady that can give you some insights to that sometime is now the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Family Matters named Carolyn Becraft. Her husband was at that

time a major or lieutenant colonel in the Army and later a full colonel. Carolyn was very active in that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was she just a wife at the time?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. She made a living out of that later. She goes in to the National Family Movement and takes an executive position with that and then she later gets appointed in this administration to that job at the OSD level.

DR. KIRKLAND: I've heard of her, yeah.

GEN. THURMAN: So 12 years later she's still making a living out of this. At that time she was a family member.

Well, we brought in the Army family thing and that set off an annual meeting. So that was the first annual meeting. We had onward a second, third and fourth. Every year the number of issues began to decline. I mean, we really began to work the issues and we put up a lady in the DCSPER shop whose job it was to synthesize all this stuff. She became the family liaison officer for the Chief of Staff, but she was lodged in the DCSPER. We gave her a small staff and she worked at hammering out these problems.

That led to the introduction of a course at Fort Leavenworth for battalion and brigade commanders' wives. And the first course that was done out there was done by then Brigadier General Butch Saint [GEN Crosbie "Butch" Saint]. He was the Deputy Commandant running the Command General Staff College. He had the responsibility for bringing in the battalion and brigade commanders. So we brought in the wives for one of those.

I recall Shy saying it was voluntary, the first go-around. And Shy said, "We need to get money to send the wives out there TDY." So that sort of reminded me of my days as a cadet activities officer again. So we issued invitational travel orders for all the wives to come out there. They all went out there and Butch took them under command and control and did a pretty good job with them. Then we codified that program. And that program is still an ongoing program. In fact, it's been copied by the other services.

Again, Shy's the leadership here, I'm the action agent for it, been jumped on by all the commanders and the like. We have led the Army into taking care of families. And Wickham, then, would follow that very nicely as a Chief of Staff and keep that going first rate, and Vuono following Wickham. So I would say to you, again, Jack Marsh's admonition that, "As goes the Army, goes the volunteer force" gave a continuing impetus to the Army working not only enlisting the right people, promoting the right people, training the right people, the Army NCOES and the like, but also in the stabilization of the family in order that the family would feel that it was a good place to live and work and their husbands, then, their spouses then would be encouraged to reenlist and stay with us. So that was a big program kicked off by Shy in 1981.

The endeavor on leadership. Shy wanted to ratchet up the leadership in the Army. And that was done as well by Jack Marsh who decreed that one of his years—the first year was the victory at Yorktown where he was trying to get a sense of victory and competency back in the Army and the like. Then the next year I believe was the year of leadership.

So again a big focus on leadership, and I was a staff officer in charge of that. Of course, I looked at my credentials, which said I was a manager and not a leader, so I had to go out and create a body of leaders to help me work that particular thing. But we did work that along with the Army War College, along with Leavenworth.

I would say one of the outgrowths of all that was the fact that we thought we were doing reasonably well in leader development with respect to officers. But, we really began to focus on leader development with the noncommissioned officers. I don't mean that all of this was created by us in the headshed. But I'm just saying the leader focus began to come up, and in so doing we began to make a considerable push on leader competency in the NCO business and leader competency with junior officers.

It then began to change the way in which we trained the people at the lieutenant level and the captain level by adding mentors at the lieutenant level in OBC, and the advanced course the same. That began to put together the real heart of the noncommissioned officer courses, which was you had to have the PLC [Primary Leadership Course] course down at the Spec4 and corporal level and a BNCOC [Basic

Non-commissioned Officer Course] and an ANCOC [Advanced Non-commissioned Officer Course] course.

And we already had a sergeant majors academy going at the time. So the leadership was a big game involving a lot of people. It was appropriately tended and cared for by people in TRADOC as well as people on the Army staff. And Meyer and Wickham and Vuono all put their spins on all of that. We are clearly an organization. And if you think your way through it, most ensigns in the Navy are not leaders.

DR. KIRKLAND: No.

GEN. THURMAN: Most lieutenants in the Air Force are not leaders. But lieutenants in the Army are. And so we have a different obligation and responsibility in the training and the care and feeding of our leaders, and we invested heavily in the pre-command courses for both brigade and battalion commanders. So the leader development business began to get a real jumpstart in that period of time.

We talked about getting the MANPRINT in the game and the hardware system. We're talking about the quality of people requisite for manning systems. We talked a little bit about straightening out the career fields. So I guess we jump into COHORT, huh?

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. When did that start? Was '79 the first?

GEN. THURMAN: COHORT?

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. For studies. Wasn't there something that went on in '79?

GEN. THURMAN: I'm not familiar with that. Maybe they did, but I wasn't involved in it. I was out recruiting.

I got into it when Shy said we really want to set up and start running the COHORT business. We had a group of people who had been working on it from many

different vantage points, I think is the best way to say that. I think people at WRAIR had been working on it, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. We had people at ARI that had been working on it. We had people at West Point that had been working on it in the Behavioral Science Laboratory up there.

So as we began to stabilize the quality of people coming in—and I had done some rudimentary work in the recruiting command by going down and doing it—the people at Fort McPherson and Fort Bragg and doing some rudimentary work about that in 1980-‘81 in the recruiting game with what I call packages or packets.

DR. KIRKLAND: So you would package, you would recruit people for a specific unit?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: And then make a deal with TRADOC?

GEN. THURMAN: Well see, what we were trying to do in ‘80 and ‘81 and even ‘82, we were trying to dream up enough schemes that it didn’t make any difference what you wanted to do in the Army, we had something that would meet your objectives. You follow me? And so, for example, we said, if you want to be in the Big Red One or you’re from Kansas and you want to be in the Big Red One, your daddy was in the Big Red One, it’s okay, we’ll put you in the Big Red One. So we were trying. If you want to go to the 82nd, we would try to get you 82nd.

So one of the early things that I did in the Recruiting Service was, I had a big poster put up for every division, had the N.W. Ayer Company publish it. And if you wanted to sign up in the . . . , go in there and look at all of the divisions. So it would be a picture of the 82nd, a big parachute, and there would be little pictures around it to tell you what they did around it. And you would look at the Big Red One, the 25th Division, German divisions, Fort Stewart, you know, anyplace, you know, so we could get you invested in that.

We went further into that and said okay, can we put a package together? Would it facilitate you Cavazos or you Ulmer if we brought you groups of 30 people in one fell swoop that you might put them in the same unit and you build a little cohesion down there? So we were talking cohesion, but nothing as elaborate or as structured as the COHORT System.

Now there had been a couple of British officers up at the Army War College and a couple of U.S. officers or at least one British officer had been up there who had written a study about the regimental system and could it apply to U.S. forces. So there was a coming together of a vector on regimental system, a focus on could we put people together for longer periods of time and build internal cohesion.

And then couldn't we build units that could be shipped off in terms of spending part of their time in the U.S. and part of their time overseas to better and more equitably do it? And therefore you wouldn't have this constant turmoil of a unit having turnover of 10 to 15 percent a month like you would in Korea, and in Germany you might have 20 percent turnover.

And key commanders were remarking that because they came out of this recruiting doldrum that recruit turnover was very high and you couldn't get the same guy on the tank to take it downrange three times in a row, you know, so how can we ameliorate turnover in units?

There were a variety of vectors that were sort of impinging.

So Shy came down one day and he said, "We'll come down to your office and get a couple of your bright guys and we'll come in there and start talking about it." So he said, "Why can't we get a thing where we could recruit guys and bring them in, send them through the training base together and then put the cadre with them, and then send them to the division;. They serve in division for two or three years, and they can all go overseas together if they want to re-up and go do that. Go work on that."

So we got a stable of guys to go work on that. One of the guys who was very formative in that was a guy named John Theologis. Do you know John?

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Another guy is a tall, chunky, heavysset guy who was out in the 9th ID with Elton, that Elton later brought into the business.

DR. KIRKLAND: Not McGee, is it?

GEN. THURMAN: No. So there was a stable of guys, but I don't remember. The guys I remember is that guy, and I remember John Theologis sort of as a principal guy—although there were a number of guys that were involved in all that.

So we began to put together some schemas for doing that. It got into an ops research game, okay. What I mean by that, meaning they got into an operations research analytical game because you had to be able to predict behaviors. I mean, how many people came in, how many would drop out of training while they were in the training phase. How many would get to their first unit? What would be the life of those people in the unit? How many would drop out by month? Would you have to reload them at the six-month period, the 12-month period, the 18-month period? All of those kind of statistical analyses—what would be the re-up rate?—had to get looked at on its effect that you made this the case in a unit.

Let's just take for example, if you took a unit like the Big Red One and said we'd do a battalion about that, suddenly you took a battalion's worth of troops that were no longer liable for overseas replacement. Therefore, somebody else had to go overseas during that period of time. So how do you burden share against other people who are not in those particular units? Are they more likely to have to go overseas?

There's an infinite number of what I call "operations analyses" in order to try to understand what might be the benefits and what might be the downsides of doing various and sundry models about that. We created several different models about it.

Then we decided to go and try it out and invoke some of them. As serendipity would have it, we began it by making some company-size units, and then we moved up to the battalion size units. And we started with units that seemed to be easy to work with, and that was the light units, particularly in the case of infantry. And we figured we could start one in battalions, let's say to the 25th Division, and we could run battalions to the 82nd, we could run battalions to the 9th Division.

And, then, about that time we created the 10th Division so we could go do that. So we began this thing with the light guys knowing that there was less drawdown on the lights for overseas replacements. And if, oh by the way, you put a battalion into Alaska or into Hawaii, that would reduce the number of overseas replacements you would have to build in. We were levying people out of units in the U.S. to go to Hawaii and to Alaska. Even though they were part of the 50 states, they were considered OCONUS assignments.

So we set up this tremendous number of models. Shy would come down and he would spend hours going through these, poking at it and all that kind of stuff. Then we would go through models and how the regimental structure could work and all that. We spent hours working on that. So he was deeply involved in all that particular stuff.

Then we had to go in and get a buy-in with the serving Army. So we took this thing on a road show down to Fort McPherson, took it to Germany, took it to the Far East, took it to the divisions, et cetera, in trying to market the strategy internal to the Army. And out of that all came the notion, let's move on with the light forces and see how it goes and then we'll transfer it to the heavy forces.

Now in all of that as we began to move it into the heavy forces we had a steering committee which consisted of the Deputy Commander of Forces Command, the Chief of PERSCOM in Europe or the DCSPER of Forces Command or our DCSPER of Europe, the DCSPER in Korea, et cetera. So we had a variety of people that we were fooling with and all those kinds of things. So whenever you would get a notion like, let's go do it in Europe, you came to the position of, it's a very difficult thing to move people around in Europe in order to set it up. So we decided we would try to go to a place of Europe's choosing to get a start on it.

As I recall, I could be a little bit off here and you probably may know more about it than I do, you've done some research on it probably—but as I recall it, I think we tried to start in maybe Augsburg and Munich trying to build up a relationship between the 2nd AD Forward and the 1st ID Forward so that we could begin to switch some units back from Fort Hood at that time into Europe and Fort Riley into Europe. Garlstedt and Augsburg come to my mind as trying to get that brewing. Then we tried to move it elsewhere in Europe.

Meanwhile Forces Command wanted to look at a variety of things—what we did at the company level, whether to do it at the platoon level, whether to do it at the squad level, whether to do it at the battalion level and the like. So a variety of those things were set in train. What worked well was the structure associated with the light divisions because they were CONUS based and could be infiltrated and managed pretty well from the point of view of furnishing the troops and doing the same with Hawaii. Hawaii was an easy fix.

When you get at the bonding and the cohesion matters internal to the divisions and internal to the companies and battalions, I leave that to different group of people. I didn't get involved in the evaluation of that. We had Marlowe evaluate that. You have to evaluate that et cetera so you guy know a lot about that. Bob Elton was involved in doing that.

I guess my view about it was that it works well in the Lights [Light Infantry], it facilitates the Lights, it ought to be done in the Lights. Particularly as you go into more CONUS based units now that the forces are reducing in size because it reduces the movement of people and, therefore, you ought to get better performance. I mean it's just intuitively satisfying that if I can get people to stay in my unit better, it will be a better unit. Turning it over 10 to 15 percent every quarter isn't going to promote effectiveness. You don't have to do any analytical work to believe that. If you know your trade, you know that's true.

So doing it in Europe was difficult because it disrupted people in Europe having to pick up a unit, vacate barracks, move from Point A to Point B, and so there was a natural resistance to it in the heavy forces in Europe. And that made the business of doing it back here not appealing to the people because they're going through heavy levies of people in order to get that done.

My own view is that's the way it ought to be done. You ought to train them, train the base together, build cohesion together, and send them out into the force together. And you ought to be able to accept the uptime and the downtime in a unit to do that because in the long run it will promote a better unit.

People got all sorts of problems with that, like, "Gee whiz, you can't promote everybody to sergeant at the same time." "That's right. Cause everybody shouldn't be

promoted to sergeant at the same time. Because one guy's competencies.... Well, he can't handle his peer group." And I say, "In that case, he shouldn't be promoted." You know, I mean E4 when he gets promoted to grade E5 he can't tell his peer group to do, what he wants to get done? Then fine, don't promote him. Promote another guy to E5.

Everybody knows if you put 50 people in a unit together, you can identify the top 10 percent pretty quickly and the bottom 10 percent pretty quickly. Everybody else is waiting for the top 10 percent to tell them what to do. So, I mean, it's not a question of peer groups. It's a question of people emerging. Leaders will emerge out of all of that.

So my general view is COHORT is good. It ought to be done. It's a cheap cost and you get higher proficiency out of it because you get people to stay together longer.

DR. KIRKLAND: What are the costs? I've heard a lot of moaning and groaning, but I've never had anybody who could spell it out. Did you do the analyses?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah. And a guy like Theologis can show you the cost, dollars and cents. It's been costed.

I'm going to tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to depart here in about 10 minutes, okay? Because I want to go see Merritt and I've got an appointment at 3 o'clock. We ought to figure out when we want to talk next go around. This time next week is perfectly okay.

DR. KIRKLAND: Good for me, too. See you then.

GEN. THURMAN: That's the 8th, right?

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. During this period... Do you want to talk for 10 minutes or what?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was ARI all you wanted it to be while you were DCSPER?

GEN. THURMAN: No, but it was a whole lot better than it had been.

DR. KIRKLAND: Tell me about its history and what the dynamics are of having an in-house...

GEN. THURMAN: Well, having an in-house thing like that which is responsive to... I think it's strictly responsive to the DCSPER. But that means the DCSPER has got to mind it and feed it. I minded it and feeded it. So, I was all over it, the whole time I was the DCSPER and so they did some terrific work for me. And they had some very good people, at the time, doing work. Jacobs and the leadership group did a lot of work for me when I was the DCSPER. Joyce Shields did a terrific amount of work for me. She did a study on the effects of people after they got out of the service, how much they appreciate the Army. She did that in a period of about three months. It blew Jack Marsh's socks off... of the wellspring of goodness about my Army.

(End Tape 12, Side A)

(Begin Tape 12, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: The Stinger. They did a lot of MANPRINT work for me, a lot of training work for me.

DR. KIRKLAND: One of the problems with an in-house outfit like that, there's a tendency to find the answer the sponsor wants rather than...

GEN. THURMAN: No, I don't think so. In fact, just to prove the case, the opposite, they gave up a lot of information at the time. When Clifford Alexander was the Secretary of the Army, he wouldn't let them publish. He muzzled ARI because he didn't like what was coming out of it.

DR. KIRKLAND: I see. He refused their output, then?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, he reviewed it. When it got in the press, it was anti-whatever he was intending to do in the Army...

DR. KIRKLAND: He didn't muzzle it soon enough, did he?

GEN. THURMAN: ...and so he said you can't publish anything unless I give you approval. I didn't give you approval so they couldn't publish anything.

Never was that the case when I was around ARI. I said you have free license to publish any damn thing you want to. Incidentally, one of the things I set up over there is I set up the S.L.A. Marshall Chair for ARI, where they could bring in a guy off the civilian market and we'd pay him a hundred thousand a year or whatever, to be a supernumerary at ARI. He had to produce something while he was there. The first guy we brought in was Charlie Moskos. So, that chair, I think, is still alive and well over there.

The other thing I did—so or interesting—is I allocated people to history—the Office of the Chief of Military History. I said you can go out and get yourself a half

dozen captains, fully gratis, I'll give you a half dozen captains a year. You can bring them in for one year internship. And from that you can begin to build some people that maybe will become historian for you; you know, down 5 years, 10 years down range. Whether that program lives or not, I don't know. But those kinds of things I was trying to do to aid and abet ARI and OCMH because you have to help them. Again, it goes back to the adage—if you don't tell them what to do and exercise them to do meaningful work, then they will go off and do something that's not necessarily meaningful.

But we were trying to get this whole thing going on aligning quality against weapons systems. That thing is still going on. In fact, they just produced a report in 1991 called "Project Able and Project Baker," which says, "Yes, that's right. Smart people do operate the Patriot, the Bradley, the Abrams tank, the Apache helicopter better than dumb guys."

DR. KIRKLAND: Is this done by ARI?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that classified stuff?

GEN. THURMAN: No, unclassified.

DR. KIRKLAND: A lot of combat commanders have complained that the people who end up in combat units are the least able and the brighter ones are culled off at various headquarters as they come tumbling down the chain.

GEN. THURMAN: That is one reason that when we put together the Army College Fund, the Army College Fund was oriented on 1 to 3As. If you were 3B or CAT4, you couldn't get it. It was also oriented on filling out the combat arms. So, we got a large number of people, mental category 1-3As, joined the combat arms for additional money, for all the Army College Fund. So, immediately, you had drivers and gunners and loaders and all that who are smart guys.

The best story I got about the quality of people is... Last year I go down to the Marshall Award thing. I really didn't want to go down there but Jack Merritt asked me to go, so I went. I'm sitting across the dining room table from a kid who's in ROTC who has got a bunch of fruit salad up here on his chest. I said, "I see you were in the Persian Gulf." This is 1993 I'm talking about now. "Yes sir, I was in the Persian Gulf." "Uh, huh, that's very good. What did you do there?" "I was a tank commander when we crossed the LD and the first tank battalion that crossed in the Persian Gulf. Crossed into Iraq in the 24th Division."

DR. KIRKLAND: This guy is in an ROTC uniform?

GEN. THURMAN: This guy is in an ROTC uniform. I said, "Where are you going to school?" He said, "I'm going to Vanderbilt." I said, "How does that work?" He said, "I came back from the Gulf, I had been in the Army seven years since 1991, the end of the Gulf minus seven."

DR. KIRKLAND: He's one of your boys.

GEN. THURMAN: That's all right. Minus seven is 1984, been in the Army seven years. And he said, "I came out of the Gulf as an E7 because the platoon sergeant was wounded and I was made platoon sergeant and it gave me a grade to E7. Retroactively it took, so I was a grade E7 at seven years of service." He had the Bronze Star, he had the Purple Heart, an MSM. He said, "When my Battalion Commander said it's time for me to get commissioned, I said, 'Well, should I go to OCS?' He said, 'No, there's this thing called the Green to Gold Program,' (which I invented when I was the Chief of Personnel). And he said, 'If you had two years of college that you'd gotten while you were in service, then you could apply and the ROTC guys let you go and get your ROTC Commission.' He asked, 'Well, where can I go to school?' He answered, 'My Battalion Commander said you can go anyplace you can get in, you know, authority to go that you can get you entry rights.'" So he said, "I applied to Vanderbilt and they took me." Vanderbilt is no slouch school.

I said, "What is your grade point average, and what curriculum are you in?" He said, "I'm in criminal justice." I said, "Don't tell me you're going to be an MP?" He said, "Oh, no, I wouldn't be an MP, I'm going back in the armor." I said, "What's your grade point average?" He said, "4.0" I said, "Are you married?" He said, "Yeah, I'm married, I've got two kids. I had to take a pay cut from being an E7 to be an ROTC cadet, but I'm making it; my wife's working. By the way, last summer I worked in a congressional intern office here in the summer. I had to do intern work so I worked in a congressman's office, helping draft a piece of legislation that's going to get approved this year."

DR. KIRKLAND: That's a wonderful story.

GEN. THURMAN: It's a terrific story. So I said to this kid, "Let me know how you do in Fort Knox when you go up there in the Basic Course." Meanwhile, I called Butch Funk [GEN Paul E. Funk, III] who is the commander at Fort Knox and said, "You've got a live wire coming up there."

So I get a call from this kid right before Christmas, and he said, "I wanted to report to you that I think I did okay here. I got the Marshal Sabre for being the number one guy in the class." And he said, "I was the number one guy in gunnery, the number one guy in map reading, compass and all that stuff. I was the number two guy in maintenance. I sort of let you down in maintenance. I'm off to Vilseck to be in a tank battalion there."

He's a product of our system. What is a product of our system? We've got good guys to go in the combat arms. Then we change the recruiting rules to get them promoted. Then we invented a system by which if they continued their education aggrandizement while they're in the service we let them transfer and go to the ROTC to get their degree out of college. We invented this program called Green to Gold while I was a DCSPER.

DR. KIRKLAND: He didn't go to college on full pay and allowances then, did he?

GEN. THURMAN: No. He went to college on the \$100-a-month stipend and his GI Bill plus an ROTC scholarship. He got an ROTC scholarship.

DR. KIRKLAND: So that paid all his school?

GEN. THURMAN: It pays all his book fees. Okay. I've got to cut it off.

DR. KIRKLAND: Great. Yeah, I didn't know about that one, Green to Gold. You've got to have two years going before you'll—

GEN. THURMAN: I think it's one now. I mean, if you're good at it, they let you drive on.

(End Tape 12, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 13

(Begin Tape 13, Side A)

DR. KIRKLAND: So you were telling me how to do my job last week. It was totally congenial because you mentioned coming back to you with 20 questions after I've talked to various other people in the field.

GEN. THURMAN: First of all, I think you only get what I recollect. And the older you get, the more you forget.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'm very much aware of that.

GEN. THURMAN: Secondly, I think that you enrich it. If you have a different view from a different guy and then you are counterpointing the view, it just seems to me that's the enrichment factor that you get as opposed to a one-sided deal.

DR. KIRKLAND: That was my plan of work from the beginning.

GEN. THURMAN: And I was just giving you my frustrations with the Center for Military History that sends nice guys, well-intended guys that have no concept of what it is they're doing and actually don't give much guidance.

I called them and told them. And I told Stofft [MG William A. Stofft] that I thought it was a waste of time. So he sent down a hand-holder with the guy the next day who did not enrich the....

DR. KIRKLAND: Really? He was just there also?

GEN. THURMAN: Physically present.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, I know the guy who is in charge of this program and I will talk to him about it. I'm not sure that—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, you see, if they want to do it, they ought to try to do it right. And so the way you would do that is you would make it a tandem deal. There would be two guys assigned to it, but they both came down here to hear what I had to say as opposed to one guy going and seeing everybody else as names were raised or whatever it may be, and then trying to push the thing together.

DR. KIRKLAND: That is a much more ambitious undertaking, and that's essentially what I intend to do. The guys that they send to do this are people who are students at the War College. So they've got a lot of fish to fry, got to go to school and they've got to—

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, but the guy comes down here and listens to me for a half a day. It essentially takes up a day. Okay. Could the guy do a telephone interview with somebody else?

DR. KIRKLAND: Probably could.

GEN. THURMAN: You know, up at Carlisle, the other guy. He doesn't have to be down here. He can read the data. I mean, it's just a sophomoric attempt at it.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's just a data dump.

GEN. THURMAN: I asked Bernie Rogers one day, what about his oral history. He said he didn't do one.

DR. KIRKLAND: I noticed that. I went and checked for his and there wasn't any.

GEN. THURMAN: Does he have any papers up there?

DR. KIRKLAND: He probably has some papers. I wasn't looking for papers. The oral history is a different office from where other things are. I got Vessey's and Kroesen's and DePuy's.

I like to use those so that I know what I'm talking about when I go to see the guy. And, of course, you're—

GEN. THURMAN: DePuy's dead, of course.

DR. KIRKLAND: I didn't know he was dead.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: I have to depend completely on his oral history, which is a very complete one.

GEN. THURMAN: There are two of them, you know. There's one and then there is an update of it, I believe.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay. They're probably together then.

GEN. THURMAN: One, I think, is in a red book, and one is in a green book.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, right. These are the officially published versions. I want to go to the unexpurgated ones. Yes, I saw those two.

I got some feedback from the National Archives on some of the things I asked them for, you know, the operational report lessons learned. I gave you a couple from your unit, but I didn't have the others. I think they've got the others. I will get those and give

you copies. Also there's a couple they have on this 5th of the 42nd, the battalion that I tentatively targeted as the one that was—

GEN. THURMAN: I think that's the one we're talking about, 155 TOW'D?

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, that's probably it. It came from Bragg, you said, as opposed to the West Coast?

DR. KIRKLAND: I forgot what I said to you.

GEN. THURMAN: Does it talk about infusion in there anywhere?

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, I haven't got them yet. I've just been notified that they have them. I've got to go get them this afternoon, but I think because of the weather I'll scoot for home and get them next week. I haven't gotten anything yet or they haven't told me if they've found anything yet on USARV-G1 infusion policy letters. That may be a more complicated—I imagine that process got started when the first unit came over there. Probably the first unit came when everybody was the same DEROS. And people probably started worrying about it. We'll see if we can run it down.

GEN. THURMAN: I told John Johns [BG John H. Johns]—do you know John Johns?

DR. KIRKLAND: I do, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: He's going to retire, I think, next summer from the ICAF [Auditor's note: Industrial College of the Armed Forces]. I think he's the Dean at ICAF. I told him that there were some things that he ought to do, you know because he's a

behavioral scientist. I said, “One of the things you ought to do is you ought to explode the game of the infusion program so that nobody else will ever make that mistake again.”

DR. KIRKLAND: What kind of a response did you get?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, he agreed. He said, “Its interesting, nobody had ever done anything about it.” He took it as some golden tablet issued from on high. It must have been a good deal. It came from somebody’s from higher headquarters. That tells you something about higher headquarters. Higher headquarters is no damned good, no matter what level.

DR. KIRKLAND: No matter what level, right. (Laughing) I wanted to follow-up on some of the things that we were talking about last week. We put aside the business of providing care, sustenance, and support to your successor General Howard in the Recruiting Command. And it may be that there isn’t a story there or there may be. It sounds like there might have been a story.

GEN. THURMAN: Crowell, not Howard.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, Crowell. Okay.

GEN. THURMAN: Howard Crowell, C-r-o-w-e-l-l. Well, let me just touch that a minute because it’s one of those things that says, the guy who is running it knows that the organization that he took over is appropriately organized for combat and that, in the main, all he’s got to do is steer the aircraft carrier and things will be all right.

Now from the standpoint of running the functional area analyses with respect to assuring that we have the right number of people by branch and MOS, that aids and abets the proper identification of the mission to be given to the recruiting command.

Secondly, we set up our own PA&E shop which then gave me an entrée—since I had been the previous PA&E, I had only been away for two years, it made it relatively simple for me to control the status of resources flowing into the recruiting service. And so

I didn't have any trouble with Vessey in his last year as a Vice nor with Wickham in his first and only year as a Vice before he became the Chief.

So, frequent visits, monthly visits by the recruiter into the building, a staff of people who knew that I was going to take care of the recruiting command, kept it going reasonably well, I think.

This guy lives up close to you, a guy named Jimmy Simon, S-i-m-o-n. He lives close to Valley Forge. And Simon had been a Recruiting advertising guy. I had gotten him out of Leavenworth, and he came up to work with us at Fort Sheridan. When he had served his two years up there, I brought him in the building. So I was moving some guys straight from the recruiting game into the building, trying to say to essentially the Washington headshed that if you spend a couple of years out in the Recruiting Headquarters, like in the PA&E shop or the advertising shop, you could come to Washington and still do that kind of work.

I brought in a guy named Bill Zaldo. He comes in a little toward the tail end of my tour as a guy who became the Chief of Recruiting in the building because he had been the head of the Recruiting Battalion in Sacramento.

So we were beginning to get people into billets in the DCSPER who had hands-on recruiting experience, which substantially improved our capability to go make things happen in the DA staff and in OSD.

Now, with respect to the Congress, I was able to go over there and testify on the personnel budget and all that. Well, since I knew all these guys based upon my tenure in the recruiting game—because I had cultivated them then I was a known quantity—whenever I went over to testify about that and testified for continuing support for the Army College Fund and the GI Bill and money for recruiting and that kind of stuff. The shepherding function at the departmental level, I would say, was much more intimate from the point of view of a lieutenant general minding that store than it had previously been under Yerks. Now, I'm not demeaning Yerks; I'm just saying that I had a vested interest to make sure it went right.

See, the mark of a successful leader in my book is, you turn it over to another guy and it works right but you still have a vested interest in seeing to it—that you put several years of your life into something, you want to make sure that it is running right.

DR. KIRKLAND: The next one I wanted to ask you about was the family programs, the nature of the problems and what was done about them. You said the first year there was a list of 200 things. Are some of them listed where I can get a hold of them and compare what the problems were with what was done about them? You said the list got shorter each year, so apparently some things were working.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, first I think that there was a substantial frustration that had been built in the late 1970s by the topsy-turvy world of the personnel system given that NCOs were meeting themselves coming and going overseas. That, in its own right, destabilized families.

DR. KIRKLAND: A lot of them, you said, stayed home rather than—

GEN. THURMAN: A lot of women, a lot of spouses said, “I can’t go back over there in 11 to 12 to 13 months. They don’t have any jobs, and we need a second income to support ourselves. It’s extraordinarily disruptive to children going to school, don’t like the DODDS [Department of Defense Dependents School] school in Germany. The medical business is for the birds. You know, can’t get the right medical field, have exceptional family members that are not appropriately being taken care of.” That’s one of the success stories of the Army right there. I’ll come back to that in a minute. So there was a variety of ... “And the services on the post don’t work very well.” Remember now, we are going through the Jimmy Carter budget years and things just aren’t going too well in funding streams. The Nunn-Warner Bill of 1980 for the first time brought pay back into some sort of harmony with the wages on the civilian market.

So here was this noncommissioned officer corps and junior officer corps that had substantial frustration and dissatisfaction—didn’t have any troops when they went down to their piece of equipment, were not doing meaningful training, weren’t paid the right wage scale. The services on the post weren’t operating to their benefit; it was operating to the benefit of whoever was running the service. Lousy medical facilities, short turn-arounds for overseas points of view.

So there was a tremendous amount of latent hostility on the distaff side. The way it was affecting us is on good people leaving and good NCOs departing because their families simply wouldn't put up with it.

For however it got started, and I'm not exactly sure how it got started. I do know that you might have to get in touch with General Meyer to sort of give the recollect of that. But his wanderings around seeing the troops in the field at posts, camps, and stations, I detect that he got enough of this dissatisfaction when talking to family members and wives and husbands and spouses and the like that it occurred to him that the best way to let that vent was to run a nationally led family symposium.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did General Meyer go around and visit units more than other chiefs of staff?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I think they all tried to do the very best that they could. I think Meyer did it very well. Meyer was advanced from the rank of lieutenant general to Chief of Staff; and he was a young man in his late forties when he was advanced to a four star. So my general view is that he was probably more in touch with younger people, and people felt more ready to dump on him than maybe some other chiefs.

While he could get irate in the building, his general demeanor outside the building was, he wasn't like that. And if I could put this into some kind of context, you see, there was a group of four star generals and he was a three star. Suddenly he is advanced over them, so everybody below him championed him as being their guy that beat out all these curmudgeons. So they would be more disposed to dump truthfully on him because they didn't fear him. He was more their age, and they felt that he was their champion among all those "green-suiters up there," you know "those guys."

And so I think that he had an unusual rapport with younger people and he was able to get out of them what was biting them. From all of that ... he had been in office more than a year by the time all this happened. In fact, he had been in office close to two years when he said, "Okay, it's time to run a nationally led family symposium."

So we did that. And it electrified the distaff side that they were going to get a chance to come to Washington and tell Washington what was screwed up—not about training and that kind of stuff, but about the amenities of post life.

So if you can imagine now that you're at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and somebody said, "We're going to select two people, one from the NCO Wives Club, one from the Officers Wives Club, and we want you to come to Washington and tell those hummers up there in Washington what the hell is going on out here in Fort Swampy"—you can see that it unleashed an electrifying, uniting sort of proposition.

So put yourself up here and sort of look down this phenomenology that's going along here. On the one hand, the units are beginning to fill up with people. The pay raise has come in and now they want to know what our opinions are of post, camp, and station life. In other words, they're sort of capitalizing on some other good things beginning to go along. Do you follow me?

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah. Sort of a "holy cow" feeling among people that somebody cares.

GEN. THURMAN: Somebody cares. Somebody took care of our pay. Somebody finally got us some troops down here. So maybe these guys do care, you know, by what's going on out there. So I would say that it was a thing that its time had come. And the fact that we did not run it through higher headquarters meant that people were sort of electrified that they would get the unvarnished truth up to the top.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. It didn't go through the chain of command.

GEN. THURMAN: It didn't go through the chain of command.

DR. KIRKLAND: And get laundered.

GEN. THURMAN: Tell those suckers off, you know. And they didn't get a chance to launder it and take out all the bitches and the complaints and all of that. So when we had that meeting we had this cascade of things that ought to be done.

If you look back at that, I would say that the material was sortable in a variety of ways. There were things that the facilities engineer ought to be doing. There were things that the DODDS schools ought to be doing, either in CONUS or overseas. There were things that the medics ought to be doing. There were things that commanders ought to be doing.

Now, you recall about this same time we were still going through these sort of the outgrowth of Bernie Rogers' organizational development, organizational effectiveness in-briefings by the new commanders, for example, at division and ADC kind of level. And where the officers were getting a chance to dump on the more senior leaders, in terms of how is this organization running, and what are we doing, and building commitment to the goals of the organization through off-sites that we were running.

So there was some pattern going on here now of how to extract from a diverse workgroup of let's say 10 to 12 spouses to draw from them the 20 items that they had on their agendas that they brought to Washington. So we had a number of workgroups, we had a number of facilitators. We brought in female facilitators, we brought in people who were organizational effectiveness guys who had been trained out at Monterey, California, in the OE school.

So I think we were able to harvest a menu, although I don't have a copy of it, but I am sure it's in the files. You can get that at the Family Liaison Office. I'm sure you could get the file on the first go at it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, there used to be a command, a family—

GEN. THURMAN: It was called the Community Support Command.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah, that doesn't exist anymore.

GEN. THURMAN: But in the Army there was an office in the DCSPER called the FLO, F-L-O.

DR. KIRKLAND: Family Liaison Office. And that still exists?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, as far as I can recall, it does. And they've probably got a file on all that stuff we did. We kept pretty good track of what it was we were doing so that we could get on with it.

Yeah, there was a gal named Whitworth. Her phone number is 695-7714, the Family Liaison Office. But I mean, the fact that we now have a command that does nothing but manage all that tells you something.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's gone now, isn't it?

GEN. THURMAN: No.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's still there?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't think so. There's a thing called a community—

DR. KIRKLAND: Family Community Support Command or something like that. I thought it was phased out.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, let me look here and see. Community and Family Support Center, U.S. Army and 325-9401.

So the first one was an overwhelming success. In addition to cutting it by some of the things I just described, there were what the people on post could be doing for it. They were sort of asking, what could you do at the local level without getting it all the way to Washington. Well, the school thing at the local level operates under guidance from Washington or the docs operate under guidance from Washington. But the facility

support business is largely decentralized, and that could be taken care of, a lot of it could be taken care of at the local level if they would just get off their butt.

What it brought up was that there were local commanders who didn't pay any attention to this kind of stuff, who could change the ways they did business. Then there were some Department of the Army regulatory matters that needed to be changed in order to facilitate families. Then there were even statutory functions that needed to be changed. This led, for example, to a burgeoning cry for family childcare centers and daycare centers, that kind of stuff. So that led to additional staffing, which got into budget allocations and the like. We put high on the agenda money for childcare facilities. I mean, they went from nothing to a lot. We were able to get the chaplains energized working on some of the 200 items on this list. There was something there for everybody.

About that time the Department of Defense, largely through the Army's push, also hired on a lady to be the family liaison person of the Department of Defense. And the first lady that I recall taking that job was a lieutenant general's wife. He was a lieutenant general of Signal. I have a blank on his name, but his wife became the sort of pusher and shover up there and now is a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense.

DR. KIRKLAND: For family matters?

GEN. THURMAN: Uh-huh. And Carolyn Becraft, who cut her teeth down in the stuff we were doing, is there. So that was a terrific initiative.

Let me just give you sort of a sense about that. One of the things that came up in there was we are not adequately caring for people who have exceptional family members—dependents, either children, wives, or parents in overseas locale. As a matter of fact, we weren't doing a damned thing about it.

So I called in the lawyer and I called in the docs and I called in the DODDS School guy and I said, "It seems to me that we are under a federal law," which we were, "that the Army had to provide overseas the same care that was provided in the United States," which is done here by counties and states but it's a federally financed and mandated program. So I said, "Do we have a regulation on this?" So we were in violation of the law.

So I called up MILPERCEN, and a MILPERCEN guy, Elton came over and I said, “Bring me the number of people who are in our Exceptional Family Member Program.” This was the fall of ‘81.

DR. KIRKLAND: So there was a program?

GEN. THURMAN: There was a program, but nobody knew anything about it. I mean, if you were a MILPERCEN guy you knew something about it, but nobody else knew what the hell it was all about. And I said, “Okay, how many people do we have in that?” “Eighteen hundred.”

Now we had at that time an Army of about 780,000 people, and there were 554,000 married couples; and we had 750,000 children in the age bracket zero to 14 years old. In the civilian domain, about 11 percent of our families should have declared an exceptional family member. Which nominally would say 10 percent of 550,000 we ought to have had 55,000 people registered in the program. And we had 1,800.

So I called the Surgeon General down and I called in the MILPERCEN guy and the DODDS School guy and I said, “We are going to”—that gal’s name is Jean and I’ll get her last name in a minute, the retrieval system works slowly. I said, “We are going to comply with the law. We are going to register people.”

And I said to the Surgeon General, “Surely you’re able to recognize an exceptional family member when he or she is brought in for medical treatment.” “Oh, sure, we know that.” I said, “Yes, but how come you are not picking them up as members in the exceptional? “Oh, we don’t. That’s a parental thing.”

Surgeon: “If you pick somebody up like that they will think you are intruding on your right of privacy. And, oh, by the way, they perceive that the Army will screw them in their next duty assignment.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay. That’s the psychology that existed when you became DCSPER?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, that's right. So we said, "Okay, fellas, we are going to fix that because what we are going to do is everybody—"

And, of course, what happened then is people were getting off orders overseas, which put an additional burden on others back here in the States to go overseas. I said, "No, no. If we go into the business of sending people to Europe, everybody goes to Europe."

Knowing everybody can't go to Europe, profile is another deal. I can talk to you hours about profiles, but the whole notion was, provide for people like the law says and that means you docs got to get your act together. You've got to put specialists overseas, you're going to have to put shrinks overseas, you're going to have to get the facilities engineer come in and modify houses for people, put ramps in instead of something else. So you are going to take care of all these people.

Big hullabaloo. I mean, big hullabaloo that said, you're going to cost the Army money and we can't do that.

MILPERCEN said, "It's better not to assign them over there."

And I said, "Like hell it is, because you're screwing somebody else. Somebody else has got to go pull that assignment."

I checked about a year ago, 1993, and I believe that the number we had enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program was like 27,000. Now, what does that mean? Here's what that means. It means that people have confidence and trust in the management of the Army and the leaders of the Army to take care of their families no matter where they are posted in the world because they voluntarily have now identified themselves as a person needing this kind of care. And the government is furnishing it overseas and at posts, camps, and stations nearby.

Now, that took a year to drive that into the Army. It took years for people then to develop the trust and confidence that you won't get screwed. In other words, if you're a Hawk sergeant in a Hawk missile system and we send you to Germany, then we sent you to a site that was within 20 miles of a hospital facility if your child needs hospitalization care, or the DODDS School had to have a special facility for you if your child happened to be a dyslexic or had multiple sclerosis or whatever children may have. So that was a good news ...

One of my friends was a major at the time, lieutenant colonel. He said, "I'm not enrolling my kid." He had a youngster with a condition. He said, "I'm not enrolling mine. I'll get screwed out of command, I'll get screwed out of a variety of things." He's now the DCSPER of the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, this is a selling job again.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. It's an internal marketing to the Surgeon General, to the engineers, to the MILPERCEN people.

Then there's another, S1 market. There's another market to the serving soldiers and their families that we are going to take care of. There was a market upward, OSD, that said, "You've got to fix the DODDS School over in Europe to take care of all of that."

We didn't own the DODDS School, it was owned upstairs. Hilsman is that gal's name. She was the first gal, Jean Hilsman, H-i-l-s-m-a-n.

That is a good news story because it put life to a commentary that we always say, which is, "The Army takes care of its own." So we were doing it and people recognized it and they didn't fret about it. But when they went overseas they knew that they would be satisfactorily accommodated.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's a tricky business because if you start with 1,800 and you provide facilities and care for that number and it quadruples, you need that many more people involved in caring for it, so it gets more expensive. And the more people get cared for and spread the word around by mouth, then—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we knew where we were going. I mean, if you use the sample of the civilian climate you knew the truth. Ten percent of your families have an exceptional family member. So we knew that it would be an ever-expanding population.

But having said that, that was just one of those things that bubbled out of the family symposium. And there were hundreds of items that bubbled out of it.

The second year we ran it we didn't get as many items, but the thing began to take on a life of its own. And so you were then confronted with, "Gee whiz, if we ever cut this sucker off, it will send the inclination to the field, we don't care about you anymore." So it took on a life of its own.

DR. KIRKLAND: You couldn't stop it.

GEN. THURMAN: Right. Finally, when I was a Vice, I went to Wickham and I said, "I think we've gotten about all we want to get out of this by calling it a national symposium, and we want to change the format of it and once every two years have a group of people come in from the field and tell us what it's all about.

But, meanwhile, I'll give an example. One of the elements that was into it was, the commissaries don't do what we ask them to do and the PXs don't do what we ask them to do. This is the famous story of Jack Merritt when he was the Commander of Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The Officers Wives Club there and the Enlisted Wives Clubs got together and said that they wanted to have Pendleton clothes stocked at the PX.

Pendleton is not a modest-priced line of clothing, you know, all wool. You know the stuff I'm talking about? Pendleton are those very nice-looking plaid shirts and ladies skirts and big heavy jackets. It's high quality goods. Jack was the Commander and a major general, and he called in his PX guy who was a civilian and he said, "The ladies would like to get Pendleton clothes stocked at the PX." And he says, "We can't do that."

And Jack said, "Well, they're stocked in the PXs in Washington at Cameron Station. How come they can't be stocked here? It's not as if you're not buying it."

"The clientele here won't buy it."

Jack said, "Well, why don't you get me the head of the PX system on the telephone." So he called up this guy, a two-star general in Dallas and said, "We would like to get Pendleton clothes here but your branch manager says that's not possible, it's too pricey for the clientele that we have here at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. I would really like to get that stuff stocked here. There's enough women here that would like to get it stocked."

The two-star PX guy said, "I'll review it and call you back in a couple hours." So of course the pipeline was going down there to Dallas said, "Don't do this," and the

buyers in Dallas said, “Don’t do that.” So the guy calls back up at Merritt’s place on a Thursday and said, “We can’t do that. We appreciate your interest in bringing it to our attention, but we can’t do that.”

So Jack said, “Well, in that case I’m going to padlock the PX on Monday morning and put an MP on the front door. We’re closing the PX because you won’t put the goods in there that people want.” And the PX guy said, “You can’t do that.” Jack said, “I’m the Commander of this post, I can do any damned thing I want to on this post.” So he said, “I’m padlocking it on Monday morning.”

Saturday morning the two-star general was at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and he brought a raft of Pendleton clothes with him and they were installed in the PX on that Saturday. And they’ve had Pendleton clothes at Fort Sill ever since.

Now we went through all this with the women in the feedback sessions and all this kind of stuff. You don’t have to take any shit off the PX. You don’t have to take any shit off the commissary. You tell them what you want in the PX, you tell them what you want in the commissary, and it’s their job to go get it. Nobody ever knew that before.

So we began to, and we bolstered this with the information that was put out at Fort Leavenworth in the battalion commanders’ and the brigade commanders’ routine. We bolstered the notion that it was perfectly okay to place demands on the system.

I recall going to Fort Sill one day. Merritt was no longer the Commander there, but I was there at Fort Sill visiting. And, as the DCSPER, I always made myself available to an officers wives or an enlisted wives symposium. I mean, it was standard fare now when the headshed went out as a result of this thing; that is, when you went to visit the post, camp, or station you set up a time when the distaff side could come in and tell you what fort. So this whole thing was sort of opening up the dialogue of them changing the guard.

So I went in there one day in Fort Sill and a nice group of ladies says, “General, is there any chance that we could get a light put up at the PX?” And I said, “Tell me why you need a light put up at the PX.” And they said, “Well, there’s a housing area across from the PX and kids are going to the PX all the time, the only thing is—”

(End Tape 13, Side A)

(Begin Tape 13, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: ... That sounds like a pretty reasonable request?

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, I'm surprised that it came to the DCSPER.

GEN. THURMAN: The visiting DCSPER. So I call. I went down to see the Post Commander and I was doing my gig, doing my little stuff, and I said, "Is it possible to have a traffic light hung there within the next two days because I'm going to be on this post for two days doing business." So he got the traffic engineers out and all that kind of stuff and they began to put the light up within two days.

So then I said to this guy as the post commander, "Would you tell me why it is I have to come in here from Washington to figure out how to put a traffic light up here to please the natives? There is something wrong in your listening modality. You are not listening to people talk to you." In other words, you've got a constipated upward dialogue that somebody is cutting it off. Because you seem to be a reasonable guy.

Another group of ladies from a different part of the post said to me, "I wonder if you could persuade the Post Commander to keep our children from walking in the streets?" And I said, "Tell me some more about that." And she said, "The problem is that there is no sidewalk on either side of the street in our housing area. So you have to tell the children to either walk in their neighbor's yard and beat down a path or to walk in the street. And they do that at rush hour because it's the same time that people are going to work."

So I go back and see this same guy who hopes I'll leave the post quickly. And I say to him, "You know, you really need a heart-to-heart with your post engineer. You've got a dumb post engineer." And if you think you're on life in the Army, my general view of post engineers was they were very old men, you know, always gray-headed old men and they did what they damned pleased. And, oh by the way, the post engineer facilities were always the nicest place on post.

But, here's a common thing like putting a sidewalk down that the people who lived in the housing area couldn't understand why top management didn't know that they didn't have any sidewalks, and didn't give a shit.

So I think this family thing that we got going really did unleash an opportunity for people to believe that they, too, were enfranchised, and their spouses were then enfranchised in trying to better build their lot as decent, law-abiding citizens on the post.

Now out of all of this comes family action programs at the post, camp, station level, family action programs in the educational school system because we did the Leavenworth bit. We began to authorize travel by senior officers' wives at the grade of major general, which we never did before, to let them go and visit. For example, if the lieutenant generals had jobs at various places, the wives were permitted to travel.

Later on I'm the TRADOC Commander and when I have my TRADOC Commanders' Conference I also have a wives conference along with it. So the post, camp, and station commanders' wives came up and gave my staff a dump on things that ought to be done down there in order to improve the lot of the people at post, camp, station level. I think this also served us well.

We got into things like teen suicide, teenage alcohol abuse, teenage drug abuse, a variety of things that because we invited it, it happened. And so it released frustration and made people believe that things were going to be better.

Guys like Donn Starry, for example, pioneered mayoralty. He started that out at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and everybody took that on; and it became commonplace to have a mayor.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were mayors elected or appointed?

GEN. THURMAN: It started out getting appointed and later on they got elected. And it may vary from one place to another in order to make sure you got permanence. But I would never have thought going to a post as the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army that I would be meeting with the mayors. So it turned a base switch from off to on.

DR. KIRKLAND: It certainly did, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: And when you turned it to on, you've got to expect the current to flow. You have raised expectations and you have to meet them.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's right. Because people have to change their behavior and way of doing business, and money has to be available.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. And the other thing is, see, the post commanders knew that there was a referral mechanism to higher authority. There were hotlines established in the FLO office. Some lady at Fort Swampy wanted to talk to the FLO lady at the Department of the Army, so be it. Pick it up, call her. In fact, we advertise it.

DR. KIRKLAND: In this way you empowered wives.

GEN. THURMAN: Very much so.

DR. KIRKLAND: And meanwhile there still is a sort of fear that you mentioned in connection with exceptional family members. The soldier figures if he gets too high a profile, he'll end up getting screwed. If he makes waves, he'll get screwed one way or another. So this, then, ties back in with the OE business, which is something else I wanted to ask you about. Did that start before you got into the headshed?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. That started with Bernie Rogers as the DCSPER. So if you look back in the time sequence of that, Rogers was the DCSPER in the mid '70s before he went down to be a FORSCOM Commander. So I guess he was the DCSPER like in '74-'75, somewhere back in there.

DR. KIRKLAND: So did he cook it up on his own or did he have—

GEN. THURMAN: I don't know the circumstances of that. That's one of those things that needs to be written up, but I don't know all about it. My hypothesis, he kept a very close relationship with a gentleman named John Galvin who was the Chairman of the Board of Motorola.

DR. KIRKLAND: They were kids together, weren't they?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. And Motorola pioneered a lot of human resource work. Whether or not he was influenced by that, I can't tell you. My notion is that he was. But at the same time you recall there were some studies at the Army War College on— this was following the Vietnam War like in '70, '71, '72, about the moral bankruptness of the Officer Corps.

Lieutenant colonels thought all generals lied. And Rogers knew a lot about that. And guys like Mike Malone, guys like John Johns—John Johns came in and was the human behaviorist; and he and Walt Ulmer were sort of successive guys running that stuff for Bernie Rogers.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who did it first, Walt?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't recall. I don't know the order of march.

DR. KIRKLAND: So they were in the DCSPER shop?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, and they were in the HR shop, human resources shop.

DR. KIRKLAND: Which is where OE had its home?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: So was that shop still in existence when you became DCSPER?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: And it disappeared after a bit?

GEN. THURMAN: It did after I left.

DR. KIRKLAND: You kept it alive?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I think it disappeared when Ono took it over. The guy that ran it while I was there, let's see, was formerly the commander in Berlin or went from there to be the commander in Berlin. I have to think about who he was. He's a retired major general. Then I think Ono abolished his job after he came in and took Elton's place.

DR. KIRKLAND: He founded the school and all that?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, the school went out probably about the time I became the Vice.

DR. KIRKLAND: So it's gone, but it left the legacy of the after-action review. What I am seeing here is multiple channels of empowerment of subordinates and opening communications across echelons.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: And was that an idea that was growing in a lot of people's heads. Or was that one of Shy's—well, no, Bernie came before Shy.

GEN. THURMAN: I think that there was a group of people. I think Bernie was one of them, and I think Shy was one of them. I think Donn Starry was one of them. In

fact, I know he was because he spent a considerable amount of time on living [systems] theory. There's a guy at the University of Louisville who Donn had met when he was Commander at Fort Knox. A guy wrote a book on living theories about this thick. It's one of these tomes and a terrifically difficult book to get at.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is about theory or about living?

GEN. THURMAN: It's about the theory of living. And you had this coterie of guys who had been built in the OE domain who were actively at work pushing and cajoling commanders to go through this business of listening to their subordinates. That "forced" listening to your subordinates, which became the mode; that is to say, you will within 30 days after your arrival take your principal subordinates off and do an offsite and gain insights into how your command works. And, oh by the way, there is an OE facilitator available to help you at the division level or at the brigade level or whatever. That directive way was to be put into a unit's life. And I knew that as a colonel down at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

DR. KIRKLAND: It was there then?

GEN. THURMAN: Yep. And we did an annual retreat. We went over to Southern Pines or Pinehurst or whatever it was and rented an inn over there, and spent three days figuring out what we were going to do and listening to people.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have your battalion commanders?

GEN. THURMAN: No, it was battalion commanders and brigade commanders and we were doing business with the division commander. So I remember Jack Forrest was involved in that. Jack was a guy who was intimately involved in these kinds of matters. Jack was busy running that particular program for Fritz Kroesen as the Division Commander.

DR. KIRKLAND: He was one of Fritz's staff officers?

GEN. THURMAN: No, he was ADC. He was a brigadier general at the time. So this thing was going on all over the Army, and there was this coterie of guys, and a lot of them had been in the Behavioral Science Department at West Point, who had persuaded a number of senior leaders such as Rogers, Meyer, Starry and others to empower people.

See, Donn Starry's mayoralty business at Fort Knox, when he's a major general, is empowering people. And I remember when I was the Resource Manager at TRADOC, he called me up on the phone and said, "I want you come down here and spend three days with me and I'm going to show you how to run a post because you never ran a post. But you are providing money to run posts, so therefore you ought to find out how to run a post."

I went around and met all the mayors and listened to all the bitches and gripes and complaints and good stuff and bad stuff, and I saw things I never saw before on a post. And so that was going on in the years '73 through '79. So there are seven years of this going on in the Army. I am meeting it when I go to take a brigade level command.

So a group of colonels, like me, going to the meeting with my Division Commander and my ADC, who have been told, this is what you're going to do. When we get to be generals, it's okay. That it was a piece of cake and so it's not a problem. We can listen to anybody bitch, gripe, complain, or whatever it may be, and make sure you do that. It makes you do it without worrying about it.

It sort of says, "I'm open for business." You know, you can tell me any damned thing. I'm not going to get mad because you tell me something. Even if it's bad news, I'll listen to it and we'll get on to it.

So if you look at a post, there was this group of people that lived on the post; they're called family members. And then there was a group of people who were the civilian workers on the post who provided the services for the people that lived on the post, but they didn't live on the post. Then there was the group of people who were the soldiers that lived on the post whose duty it was to go train hard, forget the families, and

leave the families in the care of this disinterested group of civilians who didn't live on the post.

So this OE mechanism began to radiate from how to improve the unit, per se, about its training program, its goals, its ambitions as a unit. It began to move out and take into consideration what did the family have to say about it because we began to perceive that the family was in a volunteer system, and the family tells the spouse whether he is going to reenlist or not.

So there was a natural progression and evolution from the cataclysmic days of '78, '79, '80 when people were meeting themselves coming and going to Europe and the like, that the forces set into motion by the OE system, in terms of trying to improve unit performance, began to extend to family performance and to post, camp, and station performance. And then releasing that family deal through the family program became an empowering association.

Then there were two groups that beat up on the civilian population that didn't live there anymore, which were the families that beat the hell out of them and the management that beat the hell out of them. So then you see later when I get there as the DCSPER, one of the things I find out is we're not paying enough attention to the civilians who are the people who manage all these things for us, make it nice for us and all that kind of stuff.

So, as an example, one of that things we did is we created a system of gongs, medals—I mean actual, tangible medals that have bits of ribbon and round circles on the bottom of it that mirrored the active component medal system—so that commanders could give these things out to tell civilians that we thought a lot of them.

Later, as we began to put out things for bid (under the infamous OPM regulation or not OPM but the OMB regulation that was signed into effect that said you have to bid various and sundry things for a civilian competition to bid on) we then said, "My God, we've got to have the contractors rolled into our family." So the Army family narrowly described in a draft era is being soldiers, and as we move into the volunteer era it becomes the soldier and his family. As we progress in the 1980s it now begins to include the civilian workforce, and pretty soon it also includes the contractor workforce.

I can recall a chart which I used that talked about the Army family, and it had at the top of it “active component.” Then below that it has the National Guard; and below that it had the U.S. Army Reserve; and then it had the families of those in terms of marrieds, spouses; and then the children of the Army—the Active and the Army Reserve; the Active, Guard Reserve spouses and children. And then it had the civilians and their spouses and their children. And then it included the contractor population we had working for us on the post. It’s a zillion people.

And they’re all part of the Army family. And we’re supposed to be taking care of them. So this spilled out into the Guard and Reserve because pretty soon their spouses had a Bill of Rights that they thought was important to them.

All of this is what I would call “maturation” of the understanding of who it is works for you. And I think we understand that probably better than any civilian guy going in a comparable business.

I mean, if you ask the Chairman of IBM how many people in his firm were married and how many children do they have and all that, I’m not sure he would know that right off the top of his head.

DR. KIRKLAND: The General Motors Exceptional Family Member Program.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I’m not sure they would know. So to sum all that up, I think that the Army Family Program that Myers started, I just happened to be the first lieutenant about it, really got something going. And it made the spouses of the Army feel like they were partners in what it was we do.

I think what happened, then, as a result of that, when tragedies occurred like in Gander, when Somalia occurs, the Persian Gulf goes, we had very strong families and very strong institutions inside the Army to safeguard the families. If it is World War II, you don’t have to worry about it; it takes care of itself because everybody is involved in it.

The notion today would be, the smaller the Army gets now, the more resilient it will be if its families are well taken care of. That’s more than you ever wanted to hear about families.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, I think it's a—

GEN. THURMAN: It's a chapter in your book.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, it's a very important component of this whole personnel story. I had never really thought about it before in multiple currents working in the same direction.

GEN. THURMAN: One of the guys who was very good at that is a cavalryman named Jack Woodmansee [LTG John W. Woodmansee]. Jack was a commander of a corps in Germany. I recall even as the Vice Chief he invited me to come over there one time and speak to his group of people. He had taken the whole corps command staff up to a German resort sort of north of the Fifth Corps. He brought in all kinds of people from outside, religious figures, behaviorists, that kind of stuff.

Now, Jack is a terrific soldier. I mean, he really is a terrific soldier. But he had this personal personnel side to him. So I think a lot more people became personnelists than before. Things that you see now in the Army where we use words like, we want you to take some storyline through the chain of command as its dissemination means. It gives you some notion that people are more comfortable with being able to rap with their subordinates, rap with their spouses and the like.

I mean, the fact that we have spouse support stay-behind groups—if some unit goes out and deploys or when it goes to the National Training Center or when it goes overseas to Somalia—all those things are oiled up so that there is an adequate, robust family support activity back here. The other services were slow to follow.

DR. KIRKLAND: Even the Navy submariners?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, Navy submarine is maybe a separate case, but I'm talking about the major part of the Navy was slow to follow. Now the Navy is big in this because they realize they've got bigtime problems with families with separation and all

that kind of stuff. So they've got some real nice, formal programs come up, but it took them a long time to get into it. They took their lead from us.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, it does seem like the Army is on the leading edge of most of these.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we are people-intensive and, therefore, we ought to be on the leading edge.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. Well, in the COHORT story, one of the things that I've been feeling for, and maybe I should feel for it with people other than you, is what is it that is different about a mechanized infantry battalion or tank battalion as compared to a light or airborne or infantry battalion that makes those armored units less amenable to COHORT? Is there anything, or is it simply the fact that there's a lot of them overseas and there's not very many of them in the States, so there wasn't much chance to rotate the people?

GEN. THURMAN: I think the resistance was driven more by the Army's readiness system.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, really? They didn't like having a Unit PC3 for four to six months?

GEN. THURMAN: Well if you think about it for a moment, in an infantry, let's say a straight-leg infantry like 7th ID for example, the amount of equipment in that unit is small indeed. In the case of the tankers, four men get a tank. And in a Bradley or in an armored personnel carrier you've got nine guys running an APC or a Bradley. Now there is a tremendous amount of work that goes on every day by keeping that stuff maintained correctly.

So I think one of the problems in the mechanized forces was the fact that on the 15th day of every month you had to report status of equipment, status of the people, and

the like. So, to say that there were any restrictions going to be put around about the mobility of people in the units, moving them from one platoon to another, moving them from one squad to another, moving them from one company to another to level it out so that you could take care of all this maintenance and the like was perceived to be unnecessarily restrictive on battalion commanders and brigade commanders and division commanders.

Secondly, except for Korea, which was pulling light forces to Korea in the 2nd Division, in the main the heavy units in the States were on a treadmill with the heavy units abroad. Therefore, people were constantly coming in and going out of the units; and therefore if you began to say, we're going to fix one of these units at Fort Riley, that meant that you couldn't levy that unit at Fort Riley. So that meant that everybody at Carson, Polk, Stewart and Hood would have to pick up the slack.

So that would grate on people.

My own view about COHORTing was that we ought to be able to line up the Big Red One to support the Big Red One in Germany because there was a brigade of the Big Red One. So here you had a case of two brigades in the States backing up one brigade abroad. So the relationship is pretty good about that, two to one. In the case of the 4th, they didn't have one abroad. The case of the 2nd AD, they did up at Garlstedt. So you could take certain units and get them sort of on a rotating basis with their corps buddies abroad. But, getting a company or a battalion located at the Big Red One ready to ship it to Augsburg or Goppingen or wherever the hell that thing was down there, Ulm, I guess. They said, "Well, gee whiz, when these people come in to Ulm we will have to displace half the people that are already here in order to make the facilities available for the new battalion to come in.

And that grated on various and sundry people because there were waiting lists for people to get quarters at various and sundry places.

So it just became a big-time problem to organize effectively how to do it with the mechanized units and the Army units. As a matter of fact, in the Army units you were exactly tangent in numbers of battalions overseas and number of battalions in the United States. So you didn't have this luxury of that two-to-one ratio.

DR. KIRKLAND: The COHORT unit doesn't need replacements except periodically.

GEN. THURMAN: It needs the initial replacement. It has to have the first load. In other words, you've got to send the first battalion, which meant somebody is going to get discombobulated at the other end because there's an existing battalion there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Start-up is a son-of-a-bitch.

GEN. THURMAN: Start-up is a son-of-a-bitch because nobody liked the start-up function.

DR. KIRKLAND: The start-up killed it then?

GEN. THURMAN: Start-up killed it. See, a lot of this was an operations research schema. We must have looked at a hundred different ways to do it—when the start-up point was, when the reload point is, what the attrition rate will be on average, whether you have a two-two-one, or a one-two-one, or a two-one-two; you know, 100 different ways to look at getting it started up and keeping it supported.

One of the things that I look back on that I probably shouldn't have done, I let anybody that wanted to look at a way to do it. We put it in the grinder and said we were trying to build acceptance by the people below.

But, I think in the end, the 220-1 report caused people to have trouble. And that is, nobody wanted to report a unit C-5 while it was going through this "getting to know Europe" game. Navy does this all the time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Navy does it with one-third of its aircraft carriers. It costs \$3.5 billion for the boat and \$3.5 billion for the aircraft and they think nothing about it.

DR. KIRKLAND: They shut that bugger down for a while.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. But the Army has a psyche about the 220-1 report.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. Do you know the history of that? That's something that has never been written and that's one of the things that—

GEN. THURMAN: The history of the report?

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I mean, there is a JCS requirement you have to report on readiness. So the Army can't bring itself except when you are changing out equipment to when you're going from the 113 to the Bradley, the M60A3 to the Abrams tank. The Army has a history of saying then any other time if you're not C3, C2 or C1, you're a dirty bird. Therefore, you are going to break your back to make sure on the 15th day of every month that you have a very high readiness factor.

So if you get a bunch of personnel weenies coming in there and telling you what to do about protecting this company, you can't take anybody out of this company to cross-level the battalion to make the battalion better.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. So you've got one C1 company and all the others are C3 or 4.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. And you can't take anybody out of this battalion if it's a C1 battalion and make the other two sister battalions who are C3, make them C2. Oh, by the way, they've got work to do every morning. They've got to take care of all these tanks and all these Bradleys and all. So you see it had some baggage with it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Which because of what I believe is the heavy equipment industry associated with the mechanized forces and the difficult start-up time that made it not a salutary thing that the mechanized leaders wanted to get into.

DR. KIRKLAND: In doing the crunching of the various kinds of units and various systems, what sort of training- depressed readiness times were you getting? For example, suppose you shut down a unit in Germany and reloaded it with people out of OSUT [Auditor's note: One Station Unit Training], and it would be a training level very depressed for a certain amount of time. Was there heartburn about that, too? I mean, one battalion out of every division would probably be in a noncombat-ready state for four to six months?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, and the division commanders, corps commanders and USAREUR commanders in Germany didn't want any part of that.

DR. KIRKLAND: They wouldn't tolerate that. Apparently the units come up fairly fast. Maybe one of the problems in Germany was finding training areas to bring units up.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, you had a discombobulated training area. You know, you are not worth a damned unless you go down to Table 8 over here or Table 12. Therefore we've got to screw around the range scheduling. We think we've got this all locked in place for two years and now you're going to insert this battalion, and we've got to make more room for them. You know, you name the obstacle—

DR. KIRKLAND: They came up with it.

GEN. THURMAN: —and they raised it. Now the first time that we made a major move on changing it was when Carl Vuono in getting ready for Desert Storm made a decision that he would take 100 tank crews and 100 Bradley crews and 100 artillery crews and stockpile them in order to send them into the battle should we have taken a

large number of casualties. So we did begin the notion of unit replacement at a very small unit level in Desert Storm.

DR. KIRKLAND: None were ever sent, were they?

GEN. THURMAN: I think they were stockpiled in Saudi Arabia.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, they were there?

GEN. THURMAN: I think so.

DR. KIRKLAND: They actually were deployed?

GEN. THURMAN: I think so.

DR. KIRKLAND: So what they did, then, was deplete the strength of other units, mostly back in the States, I guess?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I'll give you an example. A good friend of mine was a battalion commander at that time in Germany. He got levied for ten squads. I'm making that up, okay. He got levied for ten squads as replacements. Then he received from the United States, while he was tank battalion commander, 10 tank crews out of 56 in his battalion. He then got 10 Reserve tank crews which had been the RT12 who had gotten out in the last year; they were called in. And he did very well, by the way.

They were sent to backfill this tank battalion. Then when he got his crews back from Saudi Arabia he then released the Reserves from his battalion that came back to the States and were demobilized. They were members of the Individual Ready Reserve, and they'd gotten out within the last 12 months.

DR. KIRKLAND: That sounds like a workable proposition. The next thing I wanted to ask you about was the business of balancing MOSs that you did on the

weekends. What happened? What would you do and what would other people in DCSPER and MILPERCEN do?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, what you did, you had some manipulatable tools which, if exercised, you could change the number of people in an MOS in a reasonable period of time—say, what could you do in a year, for example. By manipulating the bonus system, you could cause people who were teetering on whether to stay in or get out, if you ran their bonus level from \$3,000 to \$10,000, they might teeter in as opposed to teeter out. So that is one way you could manipulate human behavior.

The second way you could manipulate human behavior is, you could lower the promotion points to grade E5 and E6. And you could change directions to the boards for E7s, 8s, and 9s.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did the directions to the board tell them how many people in each MOS they could promote?

GEN. THURMAN: By MOS. They didn't before, but we invoked that. So the next time the E7 board came up, you could say, "Okay, we want to promote 500 more infantrymen to grade E7, 300 more tankers and only 10 mess stewards, and 10 thises and 10 thats."

I recall going over to Walter Reed one day and I knew most of the MOSs, and I said this guy over in Europe, he was working on me. I said, What are you, a 95 Juliet? some esoteric thing. He said, Yeah, I am. I said, "What is your cutoff score; isn't it 990?" 870. I said, "When do you anticipate getting promoted?" He said, "I don't anticipate getting promoted for several years." He said, "We're way over strength in this MOS."

So then you could appeal to the guys in the over-strength MOSs that you would give them a reenlistment bonus if they would agree to reenlist and take a new set of training in a new MOS. And a lot of people did that.

Well, what were you playing on here? You're playing on the economic man.

Now there are people who don't know what they are talking about who would say, Well there's no place for the economic man in the military. That is just utter bullshit.

There is every place for the economic man in the military. You find it in a pilot crews today, you find it in the people who are serving in the doctors ranks; you find it in skills that take a long time to train—let's say intelligence skills or linguistic intelligence skills, or whatever. You want people to stay for a long time, so you are willing to pay them money to stay for a long time.

So, oh by the way, you're willing to pay another group a higher college fund or whatever it may be in order to get them to serve in the more hazardous MOSs like infantry and in Korea. Plenty of room for the economic man in the paratroopers. We pay them \$110 a month and \$55 if they enlisted. They've been paying them for years. We think nothing about paying submariners more money because you're going to have to stay under water for six months at a time. We think nothing about paying deep-sea divers a hazard pay for doing that kind of work.

(End Tape 13, Side B)

Faris Kirkland–Maxwell Thurman Interview Tape 14

(Begin Tape 14, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: The mosaic of all these MOSs, at the various and sundry grades, where you can't control the number of guys that get promoted to Spec 4, that's done by the local commander. But you can through varying the scores, you can control the number of people getting promoted to grade E5 and E6. You can manipulate the bonus and you can control the re-up rates; you can manipulate the re-up bonuses for transfers.

So there are a whole variety of tools in a tool kit that you can manipulate, but it takes a staff to understand the synergy between all of these pots of resources. Call up their recruiting command, tell them to put in another hundred guys in MOS "X," but you won't get them out for a year.

So there are some things that work immediately: change a bonus overnight and people will sign up. So there's a variety of things, tools in the tool kit.

DR. KIRKLAND: I understand the tools, but what I was wondering about was how could you do one on a weekend when there's so much? Not only the synergy interactiveness of the tools, but also the MOSs themselves are interactive in that if you're short in combat arms and over in certain support specialties, to bring down the support specialties you offer incentives to transfer into the combat arms or disincentives to stay in the Army, or whatever.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, MILPERCEN is an extraordinary place. In the bowels of MILPERCEN, there are people who have made their life there that can tell you an enormous amount about human behavior. So, for example, they can tell you the elasticity of support people migrating to combat arms if the right amount of money is put into it.

Who does that? Who does that is principally the guy who migrated out of the combat arms into the support ranks, for some reason way back yonder, when his wife told

him it was time to get out of that racket; or he got tired of it or ran into the wrong group of people or spent too much time in the field. Now he's two grades higher, and he's not pulling the tracks on the tank anymore; he's going to be a tank commander. And he says, "I know how to do that, so I'll go back and do that."

What is important in that kind of work is data. You have to know how to use and manipulate the data. Now the neat thing about it is, you can meet the next month, and if you had more takers than you estimated you'd know that automatically the next month, and you turn the valve off.

DR. KIRKLAND: Turn the valve off, yeah.

GEN. THURMAN: So by doing this repetitively once a month, instead of sort of being a dilettante and dropping in once a year, you've got a feel for what worked and what didn't work. One of the things about it is, it was an extraordinary learning curve about how the systems of the Army work.

DR. KIRKLAND: So you'd do the whole gamut of MOSs once a month?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: Rather than just one MOS?

GEN. THURMAN: We did one CMF—one career management field like Artillery or like Infantry or like Armor. We did one of those a month in order to see how it was going to be two years down range—

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay. So it's a long-term.

GEN. THURMAN: —for the weapons systems, and that kind of stuff. Issue orders to the training base, et cetera. But for the manipulation of the bonuses, et cetera, we did that once a month, did all of them.

DR. KIRKLAND: I gotcha. That makes sense. In the leadership department, you told me things/actions that has been taken, schools being set up and so on for NCOs. Was the behavior of leadership targeted for change? Was there some new way that you, or you and Shy [Meyer, Chief of Staff of the Army], at that time, or the headshed, wanted to move leadership? Did you want to teach people to be empowering leaders, for example, or open communication?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I think if you look at leadership, the first thing is you have to have what could best be termed as a leadership development model. The Army has a pretty good model. One of the things we did was codify the model. Intuitively you know what the model is, but if it's codified you can begin to study it, embellish it and help it to fruition.

The Army's leadership model is sending a person to a school to prepare that person, he or she, him or her, to discharge the duties they're about to undertake in the force. That educational opportunity says that you are now qualified to be a platoon leader or you're now qualified to be a company commander or you're now qualified to be a battalion commander.

Then there is a practicum where you get a chance to go and be a company commander. Let's just use that illustratively for a moment. Then the model continues based upon the counseling you get as a company commander; while you are in that particular, responsible job and then you're evaluated to see whether you should be given additional schooling to prepare you to command, to be a leader at a higher level. Or, conversely, based upon your practicum as the company commander you are determined not fit to command at a higher level, you may therefore be either relegated forever to staff work or you may be deselected.

That model then begins to put demands on the system that you teach the right leadership in the residence phase, and it puts pressure on the institution of the Army itself because now it says you must be given the opportunity to do that before you can go into command. So from that flows orders, which came down after we looked at them, is, we, don't want you putting into command anybody that hadn't been in the advanced course.

Used to be, nobody gave a damn about that; they just put you in command. But since the early 1980s, I think the codification and understanding of our system has said essentially, we want captains to be in command, and it will be the very rare lieutenant that does that. We expect the captain who's in command to have been a graduate of his company or battery school at the advanced course level so that he has the theoretical undergirding necessary to prepare him to be a commander at that level.

We are uniquely, as opposed to American industry, we are willing to deselect people out of the Army so that they can't inflict their lousy command qualities on other people because in our profession we believe that the soldier has a bill of rights. And the soldier's bill of rights is that, among other things, the soldier has a right to good leadership. So we don't tolerate lousy leaders.

So the codification of that model, simplistic though it may be, begins to give you the capability to say how will we construct our residence training program. What shall be the evaluation system we put into the field, the counseling system with a form up front that tells you what it is you're supposed to do?

There's a participatory nature. You've got to fill out a poop sheet to report to your commander what it was you thought you did well and how you thought you performed your mission while in the rating period.

Then finally the rating system itself. You try to reduce the inflationary notion about it, and we've been pretty successful at that. Then first leg of the stool is the schoolhouse; the second leg becomes what is the responsibility of the commander in professional development while he is the commander for his troops that are below him. Whether it be for noncommissioned officers or soldiers themselves or the officers. So we teach that in our school system—that there has to be a professional development school and that you as the leader are responsible for running it.

The third leg of the stool we teach, have codified and thought about and put on paper, is that the officer, himself or herself, has a responsibility for self-education. So if you look at the—it's a three-legged stool has residence education and leadership, self-education in leadership when you're not in residence, and the practicum of leadership combined with the professional development that you've encouraged in your unit, those become the three hallmarks of our professional development and leadership gamut.

So getting all that codified. I'd say we started that in 1981, and it's 10 years in the making to get that pretty well nailed down as to what it was we were doing. Meyer contributed to it, Wickam contributed to it, and Carl Vuono certainly contributed to it.

While the DCSPER remained the staff agency responsible for it, in the period that Carl (Vuono) was the Chief of Staff, he put it up at Leavenworth. We codified at Leavenworth a leadership sort of institute out there. And we put a group of people out there to make sure that there was a refurbishment of leadership and connectivity with the schoolhouse and that kind of stuff. I think it's still out there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Now it's not to say leadership was discovered in 1981. I mean, it's no intent of mine.

DR. KIRKLAND: No, I was just wondering if you tweaked it to go in a certain direction.

GEN. THURMAN: What I'm suggesting to you pertains to Jack Marsh's Year on Leadership, people who You can go back and look. Shy taught leadership at Fort Benning when he was a lieutenant or a captain. As I recall it, he had been to Korea, fought in Korea, came back and was put in the leadership department. So he brought with it a reservoir for leadership.

But, it's not to say we haven't been practicing leadership for a long period of time. But the focus on the Year of Leadership sort of said, "It's the time to pull up socks and try to do better."

Again, some of this is in the aftermath of the Vietnam escapade that says that a lot of middle grade and young officers were disillusioned with the caliber of leadership they got in Vietnam in combat—for a variety of reasons, ticket punching and every other damned thing. But they were demoralized about that in many respects. Therefore it was time now to begin to juice up leadership again.

I guess one thing that comes to mind is that I used to use in the recruiting command, I used it when I was a DCSPER, used it when I was a Vice Chief, used it when I was in TRADOC—it was a little less appropriate in the Southern Command, but I used the "one-a-month brand" that's what I called it. In other words, every month I had a different focus of activity. So that the subordinate elements focused on that, not to disregard everything else, but to learn more about the one-a-month brand, whatever it was we were doing for the month.

Paul Gorman had sort of put that in my head. Paul was the Division Commander in the 8th ID. And that was sort of like in the late '70s. I'd visited with Paul as both the Chief of Recruiting in the TRADOC and the PA&E. I would go over and visit him on occasion.

One thing he did was have an annual training program. In January it was TAC in a built-up area of MOUT [Military Operations in Urban Terrain]; next month it was river crossings; the next month it was delay, and the next month it was attack. He had a group of activities ... and he persuaded me ...

Then he had a monthly call-out of a battalion. For example in the month that it was river crossings, every battalion commander in the division knew that one of them would be called out to make a river crossing. Therefore, everybody studied river crossing.

Now, if you go to the National Training Center, today, you will find units who will not do well on certain basic military skills. The reason they don't do it is because they presume that everybody knows how to do that, and therefore it doesn't require study, rehearsal, review, after-action report, adjust, et cetera.

You follow me? In other words human nature is what human nature is. So in my own book I came up with a one-a-month brand and carried that on for all of my executive leadership decisions so for a period of not only 10 years I did that. It was a technique I used both in a staff context and in a command context.

What I learned out of Jack Marsh's work of the annual yearly program push—whether it was the spirit of victory, whether it was leadership, whether it was physical fitness, whether it was values—if you think about values for a minute, and, I ask you to talk to me for an hour about values at the departmental level, an hour about values at a major command level and an hour about values in the acquisition process, an hour about

the level of values in behavior in organizations, you might struggle with that because talking about values is not a simple task to talk about, is it?

DR. KIRKLAND: It's not.

GEN. THURMAN: It is esoteric, and it requires some thought to put a squeeze on it in order to be able to articulate what it is you mean by all that. So, when Jack ran these annual programs it caused people to stop and sort of consider: what have we been doing in the past, what is our history about this, have we learned anything? Is it time for a renewal: a renewal of commitment, a renewal of resources, a renewal of techniques, et cetera? So as we looked at the leadership program, these things began to pop out.

Let me take that down now through the four years—two years as the PER and four years as the Vice, and now I'm the commander of TRADOC.

One of the things that I internalized through all this process is that you want to replicate in the schoolhouse everything that you can in order to enhance the qualities of the soldier coming out of the schoolhouse to carry out his duties when he returns to his unit.

I got a hold of Ralph Hallada [MG Raphael J. Hallada] and I said, "I want you to have the BNOCs get with the recruits, and the last week of BNOC-ery the sergeants in BNOC will take out a gun crew of recruits and conduct shooting operations with them."

DR. KIRKLAND: These would be guys who were in the OSUT program?

GEN. THURMAN: Guys in the OSUT program. They will be in their last week. The BNOC students will be in their last week. What is it a sergeant is supposed to do in the field artillery? Supposed to draw Howitzer, take it to the field, train his gun crew and shoot bullets accurately.

DR. KIRKLAND: So that's what they do for the last week?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: They'd be in charge of one crew, and they'd have the same guys every day?

GEN. THURMAN: Right. Now guess who was against that?

DR. KIRKLAND: I think the whole schoolhouse would be against that.

GEN. THURMAN: The whole schoolhouse was against that, particularly the noncommissioned officers. "We don't have to do this. We know how to do this."

DR. KIRKLAND: Do you mean the guys who were in BNOC or the running the BNOC?

GEN. THURMAN: No, the guys in the BNOC. The guys in the faculty who were running the BNOC, et cetera. So I just said, "This is what we're going to do." So we started this program. In the case of the artillery, and we normally did this on 105s and 155s, he had to draw the prime motor with all the billy on board. He had to draw the howitzer, inventory it with all the billy on board. He had to draw ammunition and inventory it. He had to get his 10 people who were going to be his gun crew and had to check them out to see which one was going to be the number one man, the number two guy, and the gunner. All that stuff. He had to put them through cannoneers hop to figure out who was talented about that.

He had to run through and make sure that the guy who was cutting charges knew what he was doing, the guy who was cutting the fuse knew what he was doing. Are these the jobs he would have to do if he was a gun chief in an artillery unit in the force? You bet.

Was he able to get this as sort of a free good inside the schoolhouse? Yes. Did it also demonstrate to him the quality coming out of the training base? Yes, because he was immediately tacked on to this group of people, and he realized then what they knew and what they didn't know. He realized what he would have to teach them that hadn't been

taught in the schoolhouse—if in fact that was the case. All this was under the supervision of the schoolhouse. So if he made some dastardly mistake, he wouldn't kill anybody as he might if he was in a real live unit someplace back in Fort Swampi.

DR. KIRKLAND: Might he flunk out of the course?

GEN. THURMAN: He could get recycled. We wouldn't flunk him on that. We might recycle him, say you've got to do some work here.

But think about this a minute from the point of view of putting pressure on the BNOC student, but doing it in a non-pejorative fashion which says that he's not hurting anybody's life. We had safety officers, people around to make sure it wasn't bad.

So I called up Ralph. Ralph Hallada [MG Raphael Hallada] was a guy down at Sill. I called him up about two weeks after the first demo and said, "Okay, give me a dump." Oh, by the way, they had to draw the M-16s and they had to draw machine guns. And they had to fire the M-16s, fire machine guns. They had to fire the weapon, zero it, and get ready to fire it in the field against targets, and then they had to fire the machine gun out in the field. So I called Rafe two weeks later.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's a big week.

GEN. THURMAN: Big week. What duties are they doing? They're doing the duties you do in the Army in a Howitzer unit; that's what they're doing.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. And they're doing it in sort of a protected environment.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. So I said, "What about it?" He said, "I've got all the cadre in and they gave me a dump." He said, "They have never seen the amount of studying going on by the students in a BNOC." He said "They were up all night for the week ahead of time, practicing with each other, going through the drills with each other, reading the manuals. Terrific. Best training ever been done in Fort Sill, Oklahoma."

So I said, “Now you do know what we’re going to do next, don’t you? “Ah, I don’t know what we’re going to do next.” “We’re going to take the ANOC guys, because the ANOC guys are supposed to have a platoon. So now we have a ANOC guy, take two BNOC guys”—

DR. KIRKLAND: And two sections.

GEN. THURMAN: —and two sections. And he’s got to lay the battery, he’s got to shoot the bullets, and he’s going to be the safety officer.

Two weeks after that I said, “What happened?” He said, “Never have we ever seen the ferocity of studying going on with the manuals by the ANOCers.”

Now, how does this get back to the leadership model? Leadership model says we’re going to prepare you for your job in the unit in the schoolhouse. So we’re going to teach you how to do that. And you are going to get a chance to demonstrate that in the schoolhouse. Oh, by the way, you don’t cut that then we’ll have to recycle you to make it better. Obviously, you could flunk out later, but that’s the case.

Now we did that in the infantry, we did that in the artillery, we did that in the engineers, we did that in every one of the activities in TRADOC—which then says, we’re doing the leadership training task inside the schoolhouse to further the leadership skills of the guy outside. In other words, we’re putting a practicum at work inside the schoolhouse to reinforce the skills that you would do outside.

So the Year of Leadership continues on in the Army.

My view is, you may have to juice it up again in the mid-1990s in order to make sure people haven’t forgotten what it is they were supposed to get—15 years, so it’s time to rejuice it. Once a year having a “thing” go on in the Army in my book is not bad. I applaud Marsh for that. I am convinced that Tailhook would never have occurred in the Army with that.

DR. KIRKLAND: It might have occurred in 1955.

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, it might have occurred in the mid '70s. But after we went through our value year, review of values, after Wickham put out the order to stop drinking on duty in 1984 or 1985 he came in one day and asked me, "What would I think about abolishing Happy Hour?" "Right on."

DR. KIRKLAND: Revolutionary. I mean, you've got some cronies who have guts, willing to change things.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. And everybody says, "Well the clubs will go belly up." He said, "Fine. If they go belly up, if they've been operating on the basis of catering and pandering to peoples' immorality, we're going to stop it."

So my view is that really the Tailhook would not have occurred after all that. We simply deglorified and deglamorized alcohol. We also said, "We're willing to take the consequence of not doing it."

The AUSA things got pretty tame after that. It used to be they ran around on the floors and all that bullshit, but they don't do that anymore. It's gotten to be a serious, professional kind of session.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's a very different Army than the one—

GEN. THURMAN: And is anybody not liking it? No. Most people who liked the Army still like the Army. It reminds me of the days in which I was the pay officer in 1954 when I finally got to a unit. And I used to draw the money in cash and pay the troops, and the battery commander gave the money out to the troops and all that.

I remember when somebody came along and said, "Check the bank." I remember people saying that. "You can't give checks to the bank. The reason you can't give checks to the bank is because if you don't pay a guy across the pay table, you will not build up that response to leadership that shows he knows that he's working for you." Do you remember hearing that?

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, yes. Face-to-face, company commander.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Unless I pay that guy, he won't know who he's working for.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who his boss is, right.

GEN. THURMAN: Think about that for a minute. If you think that that is leadership, you're just out to lunch. But people absolutely, sincerely believe that if you actually sent the money to banks, then it would demoralize the unit, the unit wouldn't be worth shit, and we'd be out to lunch. Nothing could be further from the truth.

So you get some mistaken views about things and you have to go back and sort of refurbish them and burnish them. It's like polishing brass out there. Every now and then you've got to go out and take a blitz cloth and go polish brass if you're going to keep the brass cleaned up. So the leadership thing was sort of giving a twist to it again, jump-starting it again, saying it's time for us to take a review of how we're doing in the leadership.

It started with Shy because Shy had been a leadership teacher before. Remember now, Shy was the Assistant Commandant at Carlisle when a bunch of that shit hit the fan up there about officers, the famous panel of officers who came up and said that senior officers were no damned good and they were lying, cheating and stealing.

DR. KIRKLAND: It was almost like a strike among the students.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. And he was either during that period of time or right before it or right after it. So he knew a lot of these guys, a lot of guys like Mike Malone and other people who made their living in leadership and had studied it and understood it and were talking about it, writing about it. And that became a good deal. And Starry had started a thing called the Delta Force down at a famous downtown—

DR. KIRKLAND: England, or something like that?

GEN. THURMAN: No, he started it down at TRADOC. Which was a group of people on living systems theory about leadership and how you run large organizations and all that kind of stuff. And then I got this group of people to come in. Julius Becton [LTG Julius W. Becton, Jr.], for example, is one of the guys we brought in because he was a respected leader. And we sort of got started, got fired up on leadership. And then Jack Marsh took it up as one of his yearlong endeavors.

And we made some money on it; we made some headway on that.

DR. KIRKLAND: But watching the guys run around in the woods at Fort Hunter Liggett, I got the impression that being a leader—sergeant or lieutenant or captain or colonel—in a COHORT unit was a great deal harder than being a leader in what you might call an old-fashioned or authoritarian unit because the accessibility of the leader, the expectation of accessibility that subordinates had for their leader was higher. The expectations of competence of the leader were higher. And this, in turn, then made every leader more dependent on his boss for support, advice, manifestations of downward confidence, that sort of thing.

There are hints of this in the white paper that came out on leadership. There's a lot of it in a manual called 'Soldier Teambuilding.' It's one of the sub-manuals under the leadership series. I wondered if that kind of manual, a product of the consensus within the Army, or just a small group of people who wrote the manual? And I wondered if there was—

GEN. THURMAN: More of the latter. Most manuals are written not with the consensus of the Army; it's written with people in Leavenworth or elsewhere who are writing a manual. And it's vetted. But, essentially, it's not necessarily the consensus of the Army. The notion of it is to try to perpetrate it to become the consensus of the Army.

Let me talk to you a little bit about why I believe the need for leadership is different in a COHORT unit. I was in a COHORT unit.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, you were.

GEN. THURMAN: Now I was not in the same battery for five years, but I was in the same division, artillery for five years straight, at home and abroad. I believe that when you are in a unit for a very long period of time you could go one of two directions. You could either get very good or you could get very bad. I think a lot of it depends upon the relationship between the command chain and the noncommissioned officers that are doing business and what your mission is.

Now, when you go to a place like Europe, you have a very definable and clear mission. There's a series of maneuvers you've got to go on, and there's a series of competencies you've got to do and go to the training areas. You've got to prepare your general defense plans, et cetera. So there's a whole panoply of things to do. And then the technical competency within the unit is one of those things that has to be highly maintained.

When you are in a unit for an extravagant period of time like five years, many things become easy to do. Getting a unit out of a "kaserne"—to use the European model for a moment—into its local training areas, moving it from there to some place, loading the rail cars or driving the convoy operations going to Grafenwoehr or Hohenfels—those things become pretty routine because you're doing it all the time.

And, oh by the way, you've got the same chain of command doing it all the time. The battalion commander may change every two years or 18 months in those days, but two years now. You get pretty skilled at that. Same sergeant, same first sergeant, falling outside the company street for five straight years. We're comfortable.

Now in the 7th Division COHORT, we had a different phenomenology going on there. First of all, we brought people directly from the training establishment into the division, and we appended to them the noncommissioned officer and officer corps. We thought we had a model for doing that. Obviously models are to be adjusted, and therefore if we'd stayed long enough in business—we might adjust the way to do those models. And that's what we did.

Now from a human behavioralist standpoint, the model would tell you that the group that goes through basic and advanced individual training is going to have a substantial amount of internal cohesion in that unit. Therefore, the new NCO and new officers that are appended to it are going to have to establish and break into that group

and get the loyalty of the group. So every sergeant that is appended to that group, every first sergeant that is appended to that group, platoon sergeant, squad leader, sergeant major that are all appended to that unit have got a substantial amount of work to do.

DR. KIRKLAND: They've got selling to do, right.

GEN. THURMAN: Now meanwhile this unit was a different unit, so it had a new mission. And therefore the interpretation of how that mission was to be performed—there were no real guidelines at that particular time, just making them up as you go. And, oh by the way, in this particular case for that particular division we disrupted the conventional non-airborne, non-ranger life of the infantrymen sergeant.

What had happened over time in the '70s was that the infantry divisions had been burdened with substantial amounts of equipment. And since we did not have enough troops, many of the sergeants had to go and take care of this equipment. Therefore, they had become less competent and atrophied in their skills as soldiers moving through the woods with that equipment.

Now, the 82nd was still up at 100 percent strength, and units in Europe were full up in strength and the like; but in the main the divisions in the United States were not at strength. And with an extraordinary amount of time, being spent in the motor pools, taking care of equipment. Then many NCOs had lost their fieldcraft; it just hadn't been practiced in a long time, so they weren't even thinking about it. So now you're taking away your vehicles and now you're saying your vehicle is your feet, and, oh by the way, we're going to spend a lot of time in the field.

So I think there were two adjustments that were under way there. I think there was the cohesion factor trying to get lined up with the COHORT group that came in from the OSUT at Fort Benning. And I think there was also re-acclimation of the noncommissioned officer leaders to their new lot in life.

DR. KIRKLAND: There was a lot of that, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: And many of them didn't like that. We knew going in that we'd have some problems with them. So we tried to seed the 7th with some Rangers and guys that knew their fieldcraft. But I think, and I haven't looked at all the data, but my horseback judgment about it is that you had two tasks ... you had three tasks, three tasks. You had the getting inside the cohesion and bonding game. You had carrying out the missions of the new unit and deriving the missions to the new unit and going through the drill and proving the worth of the new unit. And then you had the acclimation of an NCO Corps that had been a long time away from its fieldcraft. And the soldiers were probably closer to the fieldcraft than many of the non-commissioned officers, excluding the Rangers and the Airborne that had been sent in there.

So there were some powerful forces going on inside that battalion organization. Some noncommissioned officers measured up to that, some captains measured up to that; some lieutenants did, some didn't. And people believed that ... uh ... That's one reason we put together the Light leaders course is to try to break through that in order to re-acclimate some people who had been away from it and run them through the school to make sure that they were up to speed. That was a good program at Fort Benning.

So I think that there was a considerable amount of pressure on the unit. One, there was a Hawthorne effect at work. And then these other three effects were at the same time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Then they took on a readiness mission, short-time deployability mission.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, which everybody ought to have. Everybody in the U.S. Army now as a contingency operator, and what we were doing is telling them in 1983 is "Yes, you are, too," which up to that time, nobody had, except the 82nd.

DR. KIRKLAND: It really keeps people on their toes.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. I think the proof comes when the 7th goes to Panama and they do quite well. They loaded out fast; they were able to do quite well. They were very good fieldcraft.

DR. KIRKLAND: Very adaptable also. All different missions.

GEN. THURMAN: See my view was, the U.S. Army ought to have the world's finest infantrymen. When I talk about infantrymen, I'm talking about a dismounted infantryman. I'm not talking about a mech infantrymen in a mech vehicle. I'm talking about a mech infantrymen outside the mech vehicle and all other infantrymen. It's the dismounted infantrymen. He's got to be able to live on the land, move on the land, fight on the land, take advantage of the land.

DR. KIRKLAND: Tall order because not many of our people are raised on farms in Kentucky anymore. And a lot of people in other countries are raised on farms. Yes, it's a big training order, but the guys in Panama, they rose to it.

GEN. THURMAN: I recall watching a guy who had a rucksack, with a gigantic ruck on it in Panama, a 7th ID guy. So I said, "How you doin' trooper?" He looked at me and said, "Piece of cake." He said, "You know your guys are the luckiest people born." I said, "How is that?" He said, "You have the new MREs down here." He did not tell me how hot it was, how big a load it was, or any of his buddies got shot or any of that stuff, he just had a big gigantic ruck, doing his thing in the field. Had terrific discipline. I mean in terms of ... We just didn't have any incidents with him with Panamanians or whatever. Had one incident. Terrific group of guys and it was inscribed—one of those things, this is what we prepared for and we're good at this. Fight at night, fight in the day and come in quickly and get on with it, move out rapidly and all that. Cavezza did a terrific job as division commander and the troops were spectacular. Knew their field craft.

DR. KIRKLAND: They had a fair number of NCOs who were graduates of previous COHORTs incarnations. Fantastic payoff because they really knew how to take care of soldiers, they really knew field craft. And even some of the platoon sergeants from the old Army but had been through a COHORT incarnation got the message and stayed for a second COHORT. That was really exciting to meet them after Panama

having met them when they were up to their eyebrows in the organization of the COHORT system. And they survived that and then they were real masters of it in the second iteration. They were tired, they worked awfully hard in the light infantry.

You feel up for going into the beginning of your years as the Vice and the problems that you dealt with there or do you want to break it?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, let's see if there is anything else in the personnel game . . .

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, one thing I wanted to ask you about was profiles. You said you had one or two words on it.

GEN. THURMAN: Oh yeah, on profiles. One of the things we decided is that—you know that when we took an inventory of each one of these branches—we found out that we had a zillion profiles in the infantry: profile 3, which meant they weren't deployable. We said wait a minute, these people are profiled 3 and they are in the infantry; they expect to get promoted and they can't go into combat. How can this guy be put in the 10th Division, 7th Division?

DR. KIRKLAND: Or even the 3rd Infantry Division.

GEN. THURMAN: How can they be advancing in rank but they are not deployable? Can't have this. So, we put out a little policy there, which said we are going to take a hard view on profiles and we will have a 100 percent screen of all profiles. And if a guy is in the combat arms and he has a profile that is not temporary in nature, then that individual will be transferred to one of the service support industry but he won't be in the [Auditor note: Changed sides of tape resulting in part of interview lost].

(Begin Tape 14, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: . . . Class 3 profile, you weren't on orders to Europe and all that other bullshit. So, there was a lot of profiling going on. So pretty soon we suddenly discovered profiles had been reduced drastically. Cause you weren't eligible to reenlist with a profile, couldn't be promoted with a profile and you were going to be reclassified out of the combat arms. So miraculously a large number of profiles disappeared.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did you know about profiles, do they come through in a report or something?

GEN. THURMAN: We looked at each one of these branches, CMFs and then one of the elements of information we added then was how many people have a profile. Which means they are not deployable. I mean they have to look at deployability here to see if they could go fight or not, and you know, the system coughs up and says you got "X number" of people have profiles.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay, so it's in the system.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. One other policy that came down in the DCSPER days that's worthy of talking about, it had to do with the famous downtown drug policy. We had a rather high rate of drug abuse and the like. Jails were getting crowded and so Shy said to me one day, "Why don't we put out an order that if you are—we already had strict regulations on soldiers—picked up as a drug abuser as a noncommissioned officer, you will be separated from the Army." Cause you are supposed to be setting the tone. Looking at our statistics with regard to separations of folks in the grade of E1-E4, and talking to my staff as a personnel chief, there was a period of hand wringing by me and my personnel chiefs as to what would be the likely number of people that would be bumped off as a result of it.

DR. KIRKLAND: You'd just built up the number of NCOs to an adequate level.

GEN. THURMAN: And finally I went up to him and I said, "We may lose 30 percent of our NCOs. I've got no way of predicting what will happen. He said, "Write the policy for NCOs, you will be rehabbed once and if you fail rehab, you will be canned and if there is a second offense, you will be thrown out." And we invoked that policy and we didn't have anything like 30 percent, we had 10 percent, or 5 percent or 6 percent. Something like that, I don't have the data on that but some startlingly low numbers and then it drifted to nothing. Which reinforces what I already knew from our Recruiting Service, which is the Army is a place where standards are to be imposed. People in the Army expect standards. If you don't impose them, they will impose their own; therefore, you impose the ones that pertain to good order and discipline and you'll be perfectly alright. Now I don't talk about doing illegal orders or anything else, but if you don't establish the terms of reference, people will, in fact, not because they are malicious, but because it is human nature.

DR. KIRKLAND: They want standards . . .

GEN. THURMAN: They want standards and if you don't have them, they drift. And then they drift into, as my mother would say, "Idleness is the Devil's workshop." The point to be made about that is, we have quite a good news story in the Army about drug and alcohol abuse, and I'll give you this whole wad of papers here.

I got called over by the national drunk driving folks, and we talked about the Army's programs, sort of a 10-year thing. So here we got a de-glamorization, and this is by Shy. Then in January of 82 this is when we revised this thing. And although this is about alcohol it is also for—

DR. KIRKLAND: Alcohol rehabilitation used to be sort of a social worker kind of thing or a bunch of drug and alcohol—how did the commanders get into it?

GEN. THURMAN: We got into it because if the commander doesn't get into it, it doesn't work.

DR. KIRKLAND: What does he do? What was he supposed to do?

GEN. THURMAN: He was supposed to instead of sending him over to the guy off-post, you know on post there and—this is when the Wickham order went in 1985, midway into Wickham's tenure.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's the end of happy hour?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. This is the alcohol story, but there's an equally interesting one on drugs. So here, for example, in '85 on drugs—

DR. KIRKLAND: On the failures, that is.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. Fifteen hundred people failed that year. In previous years, we had many more than that. But it begins to really bump down. Do you follow me?

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: It takes a while to get in there, but it makes a big headway. We had sort of a bump that year in the way you explain it. But at any rate, when Shy promulgated that order, of course he did that with the approbation of—but there's a similar story on that one; Tom Carney has got that; there's a big handwringing about that. But when we went through that window everything turned out fine. That was January 1992.

So here again, if you look at these levers, we've recounted. I don't know how to even go back and summarize them, but you probably can as you look at them. But there is sort of half a dozen things are going on here now with respect to leadership and

downturning and our squeezeplay on drug abuse and the quality of people coming in. A formative advertising program is being launched through the force, and we're curing the NCO crisis, the pay rates are going up, families are being aggrandized, and we have a lot of good stuff going on.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, I know. That's why I want to write a book about it. I think it's sensational and very complex.

GEN. THURMAN: It's changing the dimensionality of service in the United States Army. What it's doing is, I think it is the preparatory phase for the training program which will forever change the Army. In other words, if you'd said to yourself, "I've got to lay down a base, pour the foundation in order to be able to build this house." We are in every human dimension, building a base on which will rest a highly modernized, highly trained armed force, which will prove itself out in two actions later on in the decade.

This is not to say training was denigrated to that time, but it hadn't reached the zenith that it reached in the mid and late '80s. But there's a metamorphosis going on in the human dimensionality of the Army that will stand us in good stead to have the capability to absorb and train with the weaponry that is being produced and brought here.

So I think it's sort of an exciting period there. Shy retires, Wickham comes in—Wickham and Jack Marsh. Art Brown [GEN. Arthur G. Brown] was the recorder; he was the Director of the Army Staff. He was the recorder. And I met at Wickham's house over at Fort McNair I believe the 5th of August in 1983. I had assumed my job on the 22nd of July, thereabouts, and Wickham and Marsh are trying to get their ducks in a row on a game plan for the first year in office.

It's a new team, the Marsh-Wickham team, not a new partner in the team and trying to get our sights set for what it is we're going to do the first year. You might sometimes get a debrief out of Art Brown. He'd give you a jump on that particular thing.

One of the things that came out of that was the light division, the notion—improving our ability to deploy rapidly and to create the world's finest light infantry.

See if you recall there in the late 1970s we had been scoffed at by the Germans, and the fact that we couldn't win the tank competition, we couldn't win the Boeselager Competition or win anything except skydiving.

DR. KIRKLAND: What's Boeselager?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, there's a tank competition, and then there's a scout competition and an infantry competition. We weren't doing well in all of that; we were sort of scoffed at by the Europeans, the Brits and the Germans, both. So this coincided with the National Training Center is about ready to go online, so it looks like things are cooking right along here so we can really begin to make some headway in our mechanized forces, but with respect to the light infantry, infantry we needed a push. That's the push we came up with, world's finest infantry.

Now Shy Meyer, when I was a DCSPER, he called me in and asked me how high could the Army go in its recruiting and its strength without sacrificing quality. I told him about the best we could do was 846,000, which would have been a raise of another 65–66,000 people in the Army. We made a conscious decision not to do that, to stay at 780,000, 781,000.

This was the time when Lehman in the Navy was talking about the 600-ship Navy. So one of the things that was chaffing under Jack Marsh's saddle blanket was that we were not increasing the number of divisions. So we talked that day about raising the number of Army divisions by two and raising the number of National Guard Divisions by two so that the Army would, instead of 24 divisions, have 28 divisions.

So, essentially we came to a notion that we would try to do that. This notion of having a 10,000-man division that could be transported overseas in 500 C-141 sorties with its gear—since most infantry divisions were on the order of 15,000 to 16,000, we thought we could scarf up enough spaces to make two more bobtail divisions.

DR. KIRKLAND: Transforming one of the 15,000-man divisions into two bobtails.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, you had the 25th Division, which is already a two-brigade division; and the 7th was three, I think.

DR. KIRKLAND: It wasn't anything like full-strength, was it?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I figured we could trim the 101st and the 82nd down, and we could get enough spaces to build the 10th and the 6th. So raise two divisions there and raise two divisions—one in the National Guard in the state of Virginia, the 29th, which was the Virginia, DC and Maryland division, which had gone into D-Day. I believe the other National Guard division was the 35th, as I recall, which was in Kansas. It was a three-state division—Kansas, Missouri, maybe Nebraska. Pull the three brigades together, and call it a division.

Meanwhile, we were harvesting the fruits of the decline in the training base because people were staying longer, less attrition. And as I told you in the last tape, we were making some spaces on that as well.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. Recruiting too, right? You had to stay up-strength. I think they came down a bit, didn't they?

GEN. THURMAN: They came down a little bit, and the number of recruits came down; so that meant more people were available in the pipeline. So we dropped from 170,000 to 130,000 or 127,000; so we dropped 40,000 to 45,000 people. And divide that by 12, you have 4,000 people to go into that as well.

So the upshot of all that and one of the other items we embarked on was, okay, raise the number of divisions. I won't say to you that on that day we decided everything, but we decided some thrust lines. Do you follow me? Wickham never issued me a charter. He had been the Vice for a year and had been in the ADCSOPS before that, so he was pretty familiar with the duties of the Vice and he was well acquainted with that. So my natural proclivity took me into continuing to manage what I'd call the internal side of the Army, and he did the external side of the Army. I'm not trying to say he didn't

manage the internal side, but on the day-to-day internal stuff, that's where I spent a considerable amount of time.

One of the things that I had decided that I would make sure that didn't happen was, I didn't want the Army to be embarrassed by the fielding of a new weapons system and then have it go belly up because of some malfeasance on our part. We had a lot of equipment coming in, and there'd be a lot of turmoil as that stuff got strung through the system.

DR. KIRKLAND: A lot of unknowns.

GEN. THURMAN: And all of these systems had not yet passed all the hurdles and the corners. So I became the guy who ran, along with Jim Ambrose, the acquisition business for the Army in terms of holding the necessary reviews for the Army to go into production on a variety of things.

I began to do the functional area analysis, which got brought about by an interesting telephone call I got one day. I got a call from Howard Crowell, who by now had left the Recruiting Command. He had been my successor of the Recruiting Command; he's now commanding the 3rd Infantry Division, and they were the first unit to get the Bradleys in Germany. He called me up and he said, "You know, there's something screwy going on here with the TO&E." I said, "What is that?" And he said, "They are taking away all of our night vision devices that belong to the crewmen in the division because they say that the night vision devices that are integral to the Bradley is what we get for night vision work." And I said, "Thank you very much."

DR. KIRKLAND: They're blind as soon as they leave the vehicle then.

GEN. THURMAN: Right. I said, "Thank you very much." And I think Jack Woodmansee or Lou Wagner or someone down there was at that time the RQ guy at Knox. And I said, "Okay, what I want you to do is get every person that has anything to say about the TO&E of the Bradley in one room, at one time, and I'm going to come down and talk to them and I want you to have all the TO&E documents laid out." So he

said, "When do you want to do that?" I said, "You know, like three days from now; so get the project manager from the acquisition side, get people over here from AMC, get TRADOC up here, the manufacturer TO&E; bring up the chief of infantry from the infantry center; get everybody in the Army from our various and sundry staffs."

So I went in this meeting and I said, "Let me tell you what the allegation is. The allegation is that the night vision goggles, which are currently resident in a 113 battalion for dismounted infantrymen who are fighting on foot in Germany, are being policed up by the Army as we bring in a new Bradley set of equipment because the night vision devices are integral to the Bradley Fighting Vehicle." I said, "Is that true, Mr. Infantryman?" And the guy said, "Yes, that is true."

DR. KIRKLAND: This is the chief of infantry talking?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I said, "Now let me see if I can get this straight. Right now, 113 pulls up in the Fulda Gap, goes into position, troops dismount, fight on foot in the middle of the night, and they have night vision devices so that they're able to protect the defiles and all that kind of stuff. But, when they get out of the Bradley to go do that, they won't see anything at night anymore."

Dead silence.

I said, "Okay, TRADOC, you approved the TO&E. What's your concept for fighting at night with the Bradley fighting vehicle? Do you intend for troops to dismount and fight on foot?"

"Oh, yeah, we do."

"Do you intend them to do it without goggles?"

"No, we don't intend them to do it without goggles."

"Project manager, what do you have to say about it? You've got to bring in new sets of equipment." This guy said, "That was the first I've ever heard of anything like that."

What it turned out was that the project manager was doing his thing, the infantry was doing its thing, TRADOC was doing its thing, Headquarters, Department of the Army was doing its thing. Everybody was doing their thing and they're stovepiped. And

many of these people had never, ever met one another face-to-face. They had dealt with people on the telephone. And there were a tremendous number of cards being passed around.

DR. KIRKLAND: Call me, right?

GEN. THURMAN: So what I got out of that was that the Army system, I had already spent two years on the DCSPER systems, but the Army system for fielding wasn't very good. So I said, "Okay, we will begin to do one branch a month, artillery first."

"So meanwhile, night vision—amend the TO&E. The TO&E is hereby amended today to keep the same number of night vision goggles as they currently have. And DCSOPS, you publish a TWIX tonight saying that that's done."

I called Howard Crowell later that day and I said, "Keep your goggles; you will get a message in the morning."

Now, there was an action by me by the Vice on that particular item that foretold what would now go on in these meetings associated with each one of the branches—because they were decision meetings to cut through the labyrinth of sending all these maze of documents through the various systems.

And so the FAA, the Functional Area Analysis, began to take on a life. And I ran those every month for four years.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were some of them on specific systems?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, when you took armor you took the tank, you know, M-1 tanks. When you took artillery, you took howitzers and MLRS, the new rocket system. When you took the aviation you took the OH-58, C model and B model and the Apache helicopter, et cetera.

DR. KIRKLAND: You'd do all of those in one setting?

GEN. THURMAN: You'd do the artillery, then the next month you do the armor, then the next month you do the aviation. One-a-month plan, the famous one-a-month plan. Every two years you did it over again because there were 17 branches. So you could get it done in a two-year period of time, then do it over again. And you did it for the next two years. So you could actually influence things.

I'll give you another little vignette that points this out. A bunch of guys came in early '83 in the infantry one, FAA. I said, "How many rounds are we issuing the SAW, Squad Automatic Weapon, and how many days of ammunition do we have for the SAW?" And they said, "Three, and that's being issued with the weapon to the troops that are getting it."

"Who's getting it?" "The 82nd Airborne Division." "How many rounds of ammunition do we have in war reserve?" "Zero."

"Let me see if I get this straight here. We go to combat now, and after three days we throw the weapons away because there's no more ammo? Is that what you just told me?" "Uh, yeah, that's right."

I said, "Okay, stop issuing the weapon and take them back from the 82nd Airborne Division. Put them in storage until you can get more ammunition. When you get 15 days, let me know and I will turn it back on, but not until you get 15 days."

How much money is it today to get 15 days? Some guy in AMC says it costs \$5 million, whatever the hell it is. I said, "Okay, move \$5 million to everybody in the Army—move \$5 million and go buy the ammo."

It was being issued to the Rangers and the 82nd. Later the Rangers and the 82nd went to a place called Grenada.

DR. KIRKLAND: Not that much later, actually.

GEN. THURMAN: So we had enough ammunition.

DR. KIRKLAND: So they took the SAWs?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, but we built up ammunition by that time. Factory working three shifts a day to get enough ammo, because they were working one shift a day at that particular time.

The same thing happened with a new M-1 A-1 tank round, the 120 tank round. I was sitting there looking at the data one day, and I said, “Okay, how many rounds of ammo do we have for the first battalion going to Germany?” “Thirty days, sir.” “Okay, sounds great to me.”

“How about the second battalion?” “Well, ammo won’t keep up for the second battalion; we’ll be down to 28 days.” I said, “How about the third battalion?” They said, “We’d be down to 15 days.”

I said, “No way.” Bernie Rogers would have a conniption fit—he’s the commander of SACUER—if we had to go to war with our brand new tank and we had only 15 days’ worth of ammo.

Meanwhile, there’s M60-A3s that have got 45 days’ worth of ammo.

DR. KIRKLAND: In the whole Army?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, whole Army. So what was happening is, every tank battalion they issued brought the number of days down. Do you follow me? So I called up the ammo guy—who wasn’t at the meeting; he’s in Rock Island, Illinois. And I told him to commandeer the nearest airplane and we would keep the meeting going until he got there. When he walked through the door, by that time he had four hours to work on it, flying in from Rock Island, Illinois, and he said, with \$8 million bucks we can begin to churn up the line and go from one by eight by five, to two by eight by five and we can recoup. And we’ll have 30 days’ worth of ammo by date “X.”

So we held up the distribution until we had 30 days’ worth of ammo. But by doing that we were able to keep the Army from getting embarrassed by fielding a new weapons system, the ammo that goes with it, the people that goes with it, et cetera.

Now those things also formed another function, which was all these people that had to get together, got together before they got in the room. So the liaison net began to work in a way in which it hadn’t worked before.

Now one of the other things I discovered about all that is, there is a question of how the Army runs was not well known to people—what a BOIP was, what a TO&E was, what a conflict was, what a TADUP was, what various and sundry systems in the Army were. So we started a course about them. If you were a general or an SES, you had to go to the course. The course ran for quite a while. It's still going on, as far as I know of.

You'd go in there and find an officer that didn't know a damned thing about the systems of the Army and how to make them run.

One other thing I didn't talk about in the personnel game is, we started the Army Management College for civilians.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, yeah, I've heard of that.

GEN. THURMAN: So we started that, brought them in for, I think, four weeks to start with. It's now about a nine-week course. That's been running happily ever after since then in the school down here in Belvoir. The reason I brought that up is because what we were finding out here is this civilian group that we brought on knew their niche very well, but they didn't understand everybody else's niche. So we were trying to build that particular thing. So we started the "How the Army Runs" course, and that thing is still cooking.

We kept up with the personnel business, so we wanted to make sure that was running right. The "Association of Personnelists," which we had started up from recruiting onward, continued. The business of transporting the functional area assessment about people into all the systems of the Army in order to make sure that it was going.

We started a major system with the LOG functionary side of the Army, support side of the Army. We met every six months down at Fort Lee, Virginia, to find out about water purification and ammo hauling capabilities and ways to repackage ammunition, et cetera. So we got a big impetus going with that.

Then we had a major business going with the Army on the acquisition game. We still had to go through major tests and evaluation of major items of equipment, like the

Bradley and the M-1 tank and the Apache helicopter. And all of those things had to be fought through the OSD.

We stopped the production of the Patriot missile system because it wouldn't pass its test. And we called in the then-president of the company, and told him that we were shutting down the Patriot for a year, in which time he was going to fix it on their money, not on the government's money. We cut off their payments from the government, which had endeared me of course to that particular guy. Then he was fired, and they brought in a new guy. The new guy is now the chairman of the board.

Picard [Dennis J. Picard] came to see me one day and said, "You know we've got this capability, we believe, that if we do some work on this thing we can actually shoot down missiles." So I said, "Proceed on that. Shoot down missiles." Did some of that in the Persian Gulf.

DR. KIRKLAND: The guy's name is Picard? Two "c"s?

GEN. THURMAN: One "c." I became the interface guy with industry. The President of the LTV Company in Dallas, Texas, came in, brought in this missile that fit on a MLRS launcher. And I said, "What is that missile you've got there?" He said, "Well this thing will fly out there and will do 150 kilometers." I said, "Then it sounds like a great idea, but it looks like this launcher here is bigger than the launcher in the regular vanilla MLRS launcher." He said, "Yeah, it's two feet longer." I said, "Is that to accommodate the missile?" "Yeah."

I said, "We're not going to buy it. You have to redesign the missile and make it fit on the current launcher so we can confuse the enemy."

DR. KIRKLAND: You'd have to buy all new launchers; wouldn't you?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I mean, we'd have to buy them. I can't even afford new force structure. And, oh, by the way, I don't want the enemy to know which one is which because this is a silver bullet here and we want anything to do with it. And he said,

“You’re not serious, are you?” I said, “Yeah, I’m dead serious. We’re not buying it like it is.”

So he went back and about a month later he came back with a new design on the missile. And he said, “It fits right on this launcher, fits right in the same can as the six-pack.” Instead of two six-packs up there, you’ve got two missiles. So you got two ATACMS on there. So that saw service in the Gulf.

DR. KIRKLAND: One hundred and fifty kilometer range ML rocket?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: Do those have any guidance?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. It’s a guided missile. But at least two of the weapons systems that I got behind saw service in the Gulf.

Then I had to do a lot of testifying on various and sundry weapons systems to make sure that they passed the Congress and we got it. I had continued to testify on the personnel side of the Army. So those are some things.

I didn’t spend much time thinking about Vice days. I could go home and look at my notes about it.

A couple of things I did, that may be of some use to you. I produced some volumes of speeches and that kind of stuff, which may be of some interest to you.

DR. KIRKLAND: It would be, yes. I was interested in speeches and efficiency reports, and this is more in the biography end.

GEN. THURMAN: But the speech side tells you what things we were doing. Clues to the—

DR. KIRKLAND: Who the actors were, what the problems were, what you had to overcome. That’s really the woof and the warp of this story.

GEN. THURMAN: I recall, in testifying on the Bradley, we had a problem on the Bradley. And I was in Munich on a Friday, headed to Garmisch on Friday night, got to Garmisch on Friday night and my warrant officer was over there. I had a warrant officer steno. And I got to the place where I was staying in Garmisch and the snow was gently falling and I said, do you have my gear? He brought over an aviation bag full of snow gear, no boots and skis, no cloths. And he said, "I left it in Ramstein; do you want me to go up there and get it?" I said, "Forget it."

"Call up the Special Service over here and see if they can get me outfitted." So in about an hour they brought my shit over there. I got fitted up and got a pair of boots, got my skis organized. The next morning at 7:00 I went down for breakfast, and he said, "There's a message that came in to you overnight that says, you are to be back in Washington to testify before the Congress on Monday morning."

I said, "Testify about what?" He said, "Testify about the Bradley Fighting Vehicle." He said, "They wanted the chief to testify and the chief has designated you to testify." I said, "You're trying to pull my leg again like you did on the gear you left at Ramstein, and you're trying to tickle me now, right?" He said, "No, I'm dead serious." I said, "In that case, get the car, get me some tickets on the next available flight out of Munich."

So as I drove out of Garmisch about 8:30 in the morning, I bade farewell to the ski slopes there and headed back to Munich to get an airplane to get back into Washington. So I got back into Washington about 6:00 on Saturday afternoon, and all day Sunday I started prepping up on what I was going to talk about on the Bradley.

So I called Burba [GEN Edwin H. Burba, Jr.], who was down at the infantry school, and I told him to get his butt to Washington prior to Sunday and bring two sergeants, both of whom had to be combat veterans of Vietnam who had served in 113 units and were now serving in Bradley equipment. You know, the school got the equipment. So he did that.

So when I got there the next day I said, "Here's the status of the program and I recommend to you we get on with it. But I brought three people with me that you should know about. One of them is the chief of Infantry who is a distinguished combat veteran

from the Vietnam War, and two sergeants who were sergeants in the Vietnam War in the grade of E-5 and now are grade E-8. They were squad leaders with 113s and now they are platoon sergeants and first sergeants with the Bradley Fighting Vehicle. They will answer any specific questions you have on the Bradley and the relative merits between the two. I am a field artillery officer, and I can only tell you what I think but not what I know.”

Sailed right through that thing. No congressman would ever take on a sergeant or belittle him in any way, shape or form. Piece of cake.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did they ask the sergeants any questions?

GEN. THURMAN: You bet. I mean, they asked the sergeants a lot of questions, sergeants all answered. Even, would you prefer to be in this vehicle or 113?

DR. KIRKLAND: There was a lot of stuff on the television about Bradley being a disaster.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. About it being a tinder box.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that what it was?

GEN. THURMAN: The aluminum would burn and all that kind of stuff. We had a guy in the Air Force who was located at OSD who made a name for himself on insisting that we go through a bunch of live fire tests with the Bradley, which we did do. And I must say, they helped out. We fired TOEs and we fired tank rounds, we fired all kinds of stuff at the Bradley, and we made some adjustments in the way we stowed loads and provided protection in there. Obviously a tank round would go through a Bradley. It's not a tank.

DR. KIRKLAND: TOW would go through it.

GEN. THURMAN: A TOW would go through one.

DR. KIRKLAND: Do they burn easily?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, they will burn. You can have a conflagration in one of those things.

DR. KIRKLAND: You'd have to get the temperature up pretty high.

GEN. THURMAN: Very high. But if you've got 10 TOWs located on board, you set them off you get a little high temperature.

DR. KIRKLAND: By the time the tank and the hull starts to burn, everybody's dead inside anyway if one of those gets through.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. So I became sort of the acquisition guy, along with Jim Ambrose [James R. Ambrose, Under Secretary of the Army].

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he the Army Materiel Command?

GEN. THURMAN: No, Jim Ambrose was the Under Secretary of the Army. Then in September of 1983, I had been there about a month and a half, the captain came to see me. The captain says, "I have a bad story to tell you, General." I said, "Shoot, tell me a bad story." He said, "There has been a mismanagement of funds in the black community, Special Forces black community." Not black Americans, but black programs.

DR. KIRKLAND: Secret programs, yeah.

GEN. THURMAN: Classified programs. So I listened to that for about an hour and then I called in the toughest, hardest-nosed major general that I knew. I told him to go out and do an Article 32 investigation to see whether or not we had grounds for a

major problem. He came back in about 10 days and he says, "We have a major problem on laundering of money, malfeasance of money, absconding with money."

DR. KIRKLAND: People were bringing it to their own?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, diverting it for a large number of uses. Some were governmental purpose, but some were not authorized by the Congress and clearly illegal. That became the famous "Yellow Fruit" investigation.

DR. KIRKLAND: I've never heard of that.

GEN. THURMAN: There's a book written about it. I think it's called the *Yellow Tree* or he called it *Yellow Fruit*. But if you look in LexisNexis, you will find it. *Yellow Tree*. That thing took two years to come to resolution.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were the proceedings classified?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I mean, it's in the open literature now because we had to call in the Justice Department. We had a trial, we had a couple of trials down in the federal court in Alexandria about it.

Then, I guess in '83 when Grenada went, October of '83, about that time? The Grenada operation took place and there were some problems with that on communications and all that kind of stuff. After all that was over, I called in Jim Lindsay [GEN James J. Lindsay] who then was the Commander of the 18th Airborne Corps, Carl Stiner [GEN Carl Stiner] who was the JSOC guy. I told Lindsay that I never wanted to have that happen again, meaning miscommunication between the Airborne and the Rangers and the JSOC.

DR. KIRKLAND: Joint Special Operations Command.

GEN. THURMAN: Command, JSOC.

DR. KIRKLAND: Are they Green Beret type people?

GEN. THURMAN: They are Rangers. The Delta Force belongs to them. I said, “I want you to set up a continuing exercise that starts with a takedown of an airfield long enough to get a JSOC team aboard—that’s a ranger group—in order to get a JSOC team to make a snatch for some embassy employee or local national or whatever it may be. It then escalates into the need to bring in the 82nd Airborne Division. I want you to rehearse that at least once annually to make sure we don’t have any screwups in communication between JSOC and greater forces and all that kind of stuff, Navy and Air Force.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Did they physically not net with each other?

GEN. THURMAN: They didn’t talk very well to one another. There’s a famous story of Schwarzkopf sending some trooper up on top of the mast of a ship to get the satellite terminal hooked up right in order to be able to talk to somebody while he was onboard the ship off coast.

So we got that all started. Little did I know, we’d use that in Panama.

DR. KIRKLAND: Little did you know.

GEN. THURMAN: But one thing we weren’t going to do was screw that up again. One of the things that was screwed up in all that operation was the COEI, Communications Electronic Operating Instructions. When I got down to Panama, before the operation, I said, “Bring me the COEI.” And they brought me something as high as this desk.

(End Tape 14, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 15

(Begin Tape 15, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: We got it down to a volume no more than an inch thick. There were 27,000 people and 500 airplanes on an inch thick communication protocol. I came back to Colin [GEN Colin Powell] later on and I told him at a joint staff, I said, “You better fix this for good. The only reason I got it fixed is because I’m a derivative of the Grenada operation. I know about it. Somebody else comes along, doesn’t know a thing about it, and it will all get screwed up again.” They had time to fix it in the Persian Gulf because they had six months to do it, to sort it out. But those are some top of the mind things.

I’ll try to do a little more research about that. Let’s talk a little bit about next week. Chances are probably 90/10 I’m going to turn into the hospital on Sunday. And I’m going to be in there for 10 days getting a dose of chemo.

DR. KIRKLAND: Johns Hopkins or Walter Reed?

GEN. THURMAN: No, Walter Reed. So they will permit me to do some work depending on how I’m feeling. So at the moment the Under Secretary of the Army wants to see me on Tuesday at 12:30. So you can either come earlier or you can come later on Tuesday, that’s the 15th. But the period of 11:00 to 2:00 o’clock is not available.

DR. KIRKLAND: When you’re going through this, do you feel like doing more than one thing in a day?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I mean, you can come over and sit the tape recorder up over there in Ward 72; we’ll just go up there in my room.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is there a phone number that I can call to check and see if you feel like doing it?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. What you can do, one is, I'll call you on Sunday and I'll tell you what I'm doing. Then I can give you a phone number. Phone number at Ward XX is XXX-XXX-XXXX. Then you can call Ward XX [Auditor note: Ward number and phone number removed] and I can tell you yeah or nay.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'll be happy to show up at 1400 if . . .

GEN. THURMAN: I should be back by 1400, but I've got to see the Secretary at the Pentagon. What they have to do is they have to give me a shot in the morning and a shot in the afternoon; then I have to watch what I eat and all that kind of stuff because it begins to kill off my white cells.

DR. KIRKLAND: How are you doing?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I'm doing fine, except for the platelets are crashing, so this will be another rescue operation.

DR. KIRKLAND: Will the white cells eat the platelets?

GEN. THURMAN: No. They're all on different cell lines. But when you get a chemotherapy, it kills off all the lines. There's something eating up the platelets. So we're trying to kill off the platelet eater. But meanwhile when you kill off the platelet, you kill off the whites and the reds. So then, obviously, you end up on your transfusion routine.

DR. KIRKLAND: How are your veins doing?

GEN. THURMAN: They're fine. Healthy veins.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's wonderful.

GEN. THURMAN: They get shot full of shit, and they just keep on trucking.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's great.

GEN. THURMAN: Not a problem.

DR. KIRKLAND: You're doing a fantastic job with this.

(The current session ends.)

DR. KIRKLAND: General Thurman called on Monday night before our appointment to say that he couldn't meet on Tuesday at 2:00 and that I should come at 10:00. I arrived at 10:00 and he had already left. There was no note or explanation. I called him several times through the day and when he finally had come back in, we agreed to meet on Wednesday at 1:00.

(End of the current session.)

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes, sir. Did you say you had written an article that tells about the second ten years?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. It's an article that says what we did. There was sort of the notion when all that went down that we could not achieve what it was we set out to achieve. So they asked me to give a presentation to the 20th anniversary group. And, what I did was I took the eleven managerial . . .

See, economists believe it's all an economic function, supply and demand, use of monetary incentives. While there's a great deal of that, there are also managerial and leadership data gathering research, automatic data processing, truth in lending; there's a

lot of other things that go along with correct advertising program and all that stuff which go along with it.

So what I tried to do in this article was capture the eleven leading things that we did, which caused this stuff that they said couldn't be done to come to fruition. It was widely accepted in the community that you saw, economists and the like, that it couldn't be done.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that article published somewhere?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I have a copy of it. It will be published. It has been turned back in to Annapolis for the purpose of codifying the results of the 20th anniversary thing. So when they'll publish it, I don't know. I don't know how long it took them to get this one out.

DR. KIRKLAND: It came out in '86.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay. So that's three years. I'll get you a copy of it ahead of time. I'll get you a copy of it now. Some of the guys that were here, Richard Danzig, for example, Marty Binkin is the guy that's made a living in all this stuff on the Brookings Institution. David Chu was the PA&E for the Department of Defense for ten years. Richard Danzig is now the Under Secretary of the Navy. Bill DePuy is now dead. Herb Greenberg is one of these guys that has been on and on in the business. Bob Hale[Robert F. Hale] is a CBO guy now. Larry Korb, the infamous Larry Korb that has an opinion on everything.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who's the CBO? Bob Hale, used to be a tops in naval research, I guess.

GEN. THURMAN: Charlie Moskos, you know well. Bob Murray is the head of CNA today, the Center for Naval Analysis. Phil Odeen is the Chairman of the Board of

BDM Corporation. Stan Resor, retired Secretary of the Army. Bernie Rusker is a big functionary at Rand. There's a guy named Weinberg.

DR. KIRKLAND: I've heard of him.

GEN. THURMAN: John White, who was the author of the plan for Ross Perot's economic plan for America. So, I mean, it was a fairly rich group of people who gathered on that thing in terms of putting their intellectual competency at work on the vexing matter called the all-volunteer service.

DR. KIRKLAND: Danzig in particular, seems like he's one of these guys who sees through the core of things. He worked pretty much with you; he was in the DOD, was he not?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, he was. He was a deputy in Manpower and Reserve Affairs at the time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Since I saw you last, I got some stuff on infusion in Vietnam.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay. Good. What did you find out?

DR. KIRKLAND: I found out that the 54th Group got very interested in it in the early summer or spring even of '67.

GEN. THURMAN: Was it unique to that group?

DR. KIRKLAND: No. But they got a jump on things because the first regulation came out in June of '67.

GEN. THURMAN: There's the USARV regs.

DR. KIRKLAND: USARV regs. And unfortunately, there's no copy of the original reg, the 21 June '67 reg, in the National Archives. You may find one somewhere else, but there's none there. Apparently it was permissive and they said, this would be a good idea essentially, if you do it for the division commander or artillery group commander or something, to swap people back and forth so that no more than 25 percent of a battalion rotates in one month. That goal was to be achieved within six months after arriving in Vietnam, and get it down to 15 percent within a year a year and a half.

The reg that came out the 26th of July, but which obviously there have been some TWIXes or advanced notice coming to the units in July '68 when the reg came out. There must have been—

GEN. THURMAN: You said '67 to start with.

DR. KIRKLAND: '67 to start with, that was the permissive reg. In July of '68 the mandatory reg came out. But it's evident from the reports made by 54th Group that they anticipated a mandatory reg well in advance.

GEN. THURMAN: They did it in the 5th of the 42nd or whatever? What's the number on that?

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, we think it's the 5th of the 42nd. I've looked at their ORLLs throughout their first year, and they never mention it. In the first quarter, they had a turnover of 45 people or so. In their second quarter, they had a turnover of 115. The second quarter was May, June, July, so they came in April.

The second quarter, that May, June, July quarter was a turnover of about 40 people and the turnover was 110.

GEN. THURMAN: Which means that they all didn't leave country; they moved someplace else.

DR. KIRKLAND: They got switched.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Because 110 people gone in that period of time would have been astronomical.

DR. KIRKLAND: They did a job on your battalion in the spring of '67.

GEN. THURMAN: That's before I took it over.

DR. KIRKLAND: Before you even got there. There was a great deal of concern about that one. There were 105 people that were infused in May, June and July—

GEN. THURMAN: The summer of '67.

DR. KIRKLAND: The summer of '67. The hump was March, April and May, 17 percent. The other month they had 38 percent rotated. So they felt they pretty well achieved their objective by then.

It's interesting to see how enthusiastic, back even before the USARV reg was written, the 54th Group—

GEN. THURMAN: Is this still John J. Norris was commander?

DR. KIRKLAND: It was before him. When he came in, he decided that the infusion program wasn't worth a damn and he became more enthusiastic about doing it.

GEN. THURMAN: He thought it wasn't worth a damn, then he—

DR. KIRKLAND: It wasn't strong enough.

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, I see.

DR. KIRKLAND: He said he had five complaints when he took command, and one of them was that the group had no infusion plan to cope with excessive personnel rotations, particularly in the 7th of the 9th and 7th of the 8th. Five things that he had to complain about the group when he took over, two of them had to do with this, the other was the staff effectiveness as a group level was shattered by the DEROS of all the primary staff officers in the group during the period 8 through 24 August.

GEN. THURMAN: Sounds exciting. No wonder I got no orders from him. But there was a USAEV directive.

DR. KIRKLAND: There was a USARV directive and the other thing, it didn't reference anything from MACV, and it referenced a couple of ARs, which I have not yet looked up. But I suspect that they will be just something that—

GEN. THURMAN: Bland.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yeah.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay. Hump reductions. There will be no humping in our units.

DR. KIRKLAND: One of the interesting things in the third incarnation of the USARV reg was we were not to infuse people who have already been infused once.

GEN. THURMAN: So no re-infusions. That's called stability. That's called infusion stability, which is an oxymoron.

DR. KIRKLAND: I have a couple of operational report lessons learned for your battalion during your period of command which I didn't have before.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay. Good. 1 February '68 and 1 May '68; must be a quarterly report.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's a quarterly report, yes. One of these is the one where you described one of your batteries working in the Delta. Apparently there's quite a pioneering going on there.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. All right, sir.

DR. KIRKLAND: One of the things that seems to be really crucial in the renaissance of the Army that struck me is the transforming the group of senior enlisted people into a real NCO Corps, and such things as the NCO education system taking charge of promotions, making promotions in the MOSs where there were vacancies rather than across the board, and paying attention to families and the rotational turmoil that these people went through.

It sounds like a lot of people were into this. There was a lot of training involved, there was a lot of action by local commanders, and there were a lot of personnel changes. I wondered what sort of battles had to be fought and what sort of coordination did you have to do with the results? This took place over a long period, it seems like it took place about a 15-year period of the first emergence of the first NCO academies to the '88, '89 period. I've read in the *Army Times* that there was a lot of opposition among NCOs to going to school. I wondered if there was any, there probably was some opposition from people in over strength MOSs to running the promotions—

GEN. THURMAN: I think ... if you sort of look at ... Maybe we can hit a couple points. One point would be the establishment of NCO schools, let's just talk about that for a minute. Even as far back as my days in the 11th Airborne Division as a lieutenant there was a post school system. There was a post NCO academy and a post officer training system that we do the kinds of training that Wayne C. Smith wanted to get done. So there's a long heritage of post NCO schools, which took on a life of their own in that they could be tailored for the needs of the specific post. So a lot of them had

post or divisional unique curricula. So there was a legacy of a substantial amount of autonomy for the NCO school that was run on a post, camp and station.

Now, by the time in early '70, when I'm down at the 82nd there was a full-up going post NCO school, there is a school where corporals were sent, you know, people who were getting ready to be sort of first gradation of NCO school.

But, meanwhile, in the same time in the 70s, Paul Gorman and Bill DePuy and later Donn Starry at TRADOC were beginning to look at a certain amount of standardization of material that would be taught in various and sundry post NCO schools. At that time it was not envisioned that you would have the NCO school, BNOC, what we now know as BNOC, Basic NCO Training School, or the ANOC, the Advanced NCO school. They weren't in view yet. The fact that they would be lodged at the service schools, branch schools, was not yet operative.

So you had this corpus of responsibility where division commanders thought a lot of those schools, spent a lot of energy into them, put a talented staff of NCOs that they may have dragooned from various and sundry units to go down and do special duty down there.

DR. KIRKLAND: They had to do it all out of their hide, didn't they?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. But the upshot was, there was a lot of local pride in the particular school because it serves our particular needs and the like. When Gorman and DePuy come along, and later Starry--

And then try to put an umbrella program called the NCOES, the Non-Commissioned Officer Education System into being, then it runs headlong at the beat-up on the post, camp, and station guys who are running their own fiefdoms down there. So it was to be expected that a certain amount of resistance would come up and say, gee whiz, we know what we're doing.

Then there was a struggle for resources about that, that said, well if we're going to do these things at the TRADOC school systems, then you don't need to do that down at the local post, camp and station. Therefore, we can rip off the spaces that may be for that or the spaces that are being sucked out of units can be returned to normal duty. Then you

would get into such things as, well, but the merits of the training that you're going to do at the NCOES, at the TRADOC schools is not relevant to our mission and we've got a relevant mission down there.

So the compromise about all that started out with well, you continue to do what you're doing down there, and we'll set up the advanced non-commissioned officer school. And that would be oriented on platoon sergeants and the like. You guys down there do the basic NCO stuff, which is sort of map reading and weapons firing and all that kind of stuff.

Then as evolution will, the second iteration of all of that said, all right, even the NCOs who come to school at a grade of E5 will come to school at the service school, branch school, as opposed to being done at the post, camp or station. Because that way you don't have to tie up Bradleys and Howitzers and tanks and all that, because we already have all this equipment at the various and sundry service schools—which then brought up, well what do we do with our NCO school out there, what do we teach?

That's when we came up with the primary NCO course, the PNOC. And we said the PNOC would be run at the post, camp and station. It will work out of the corpus of the previous all-powerful NCO school. So that left some local autonomy, and guys and gals who would go to that would be people who were coming up on promotions or had been promoted to Spec 4, and sort of would be assistant squad leader kind of folks and section chiefs or number one guys.

So every time you made one of these rip-offs of installation people, you would get a donnybrook going. So those things had to be solved by work by TRADOC on the one hand, endorsement by chiefs of staff on the other, and by negotiations with the Forces Command and Europe. Invariably that became a major issue to be considered in one of the semi-annual Army Commanders' Conferences. That subject would be put on the table, and the Commander of TRADOC would get up there, and the rest of the commanders would beat up on the Commander of TRADOC. You'd make certain decisions about it, the Chief would decide, and you'd go on down the road about that.

Now, all of that is building up the corpus of TRADOC; it's getting bigger because it's got all of these institutional schools that's been put together there.

DR. KIRKLAND: It has more of a grasp on the mind of the Army, too.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, but everybody was perfectly understanding about it with officers. But if you said, I had to send NCOs to that, then the question was, who pays the TDY cost? It costs a lot of money. So a division had to cough up the money.

Well, previously if it was the NCO school on the post, they didn't have to cough it up. The guy just went over there and did his duty. So there were additional costs now about trying to go to a more standardized structure about that time.

Then you get into the question, well how many weeks is it? How many weeks can we afford TDY and the like? So if a division got scrimped, it wouldn't send anybody; it wouldn't meet its quota. Then you'd get quota problems going. Well who's issuing the quotas? Well, TRADOC didn't issue them; they were issued for MILPERCEN. So you'd issue a quota from MILPERCEN down to FORCOM and they'd farm it out down below. And then you'd say, "Well, gee whiz, the people didn't show up at the school." So you'd have a compliance problem of getting the people where they're going.

DR. KIRKLAND: Because MILPERCEN didn't have any vested interest in it happening.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, MILPERCEN would complain that earmarked people who were supposed to have gone to school didn't go, and therefore their records were incomplete because they hadn't been. And you'd find that, well, we couldn't afford the TDY to send him someplace because somebody comes down and issues the rule, you've got to cut your TDY count by 20 percent. So it's this mixture of activities that breeds some reluctance on the part of post, camp and station commanders to give up their own organic NCO school.

The next leg in this saga comes in: Is it required for promotion? If you believe that paradigm that I gave you before about training people in the Army, you educate them or train them for a job, then you let them do the job in practicum. Then you measure them and see how successful they were, and you give them more education to step up to the next bat at the plate.

So the question then came, well, can you hold people accountable that a prerequisite for promotion to grade E7 would be having completed the BNOC? Then you'd get the complaint, well, it wasn't my fault I didn't go to BNOC, we didn't have enough money or my commander didn't send me or whatever.

So then the question came down, well, who's in charge of all this? Is it the unit commander; is he obligated to do it? Is it MILPERCEN to get the money lined up so they can do it? And why do we have to send them off to TRADOC when we can do it locally at a cheaper cost?

So I think you're right. I think that there was a considerable amount of agony to get it all pieced together.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who were the daddy rabbits of this thing?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, there were a variety of people about that. I would say to you that Gorman and DePuy started it out. Certainly Starry started the master gunner program down at Knox, so he was interested in it. Bill Richardson was heavily involved in it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he a TRADOC Commander?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, Otis followed Starry and then Richardson came after Otis, then Vuono, then me. So constant amount of turmoil on who's in charge, who issues the orders, does it count for promotion, who's got the money. You were issued the billet. You Thurman were issued instructions to get to the school Monday week, and you didn't show up, why didn't you. And the unit commander said, "Because I needed him here in the unit." You know.

So there was a considerable amount of consternation about that, and then I think, and I can't remember what year it was, we took to Wickham a decision that would say, if you haven't been to the school you can't get promoted. That put the final teeth into it that said, we do mean that we're going to educate our NCOs. And we got very rigorous about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is this when you were Vice or DCSPER?

GEN. THURMAN: That latter is when I'm the Vice—the last point where it says, okay, now it's tied to promotion, if you don't go to school you don't get promoted. But that didn't occur overnight with Wickham. I mean, he had to be persuaded and cajoled and all that because he remembered his days when famous downtown Fort Campbell with 101st when he commanded it. And he looked at that as, I've given up prerogatives that a division commander ought to rightfully have.

Then you had problems—if you had people in Korea, you had people in Germany, you'd send them back from overseas, can you afford all the TDY?

DR. KIRKLAND: Enormous costs.

GEN. THURMAN: Big costs, big problem. But I think we've got it under control now, reasonably. It is a requirement for promotion. It has some degree of central management in terms that there's money set aside at the departmental level to take care of that—as opposed to whipsawing the unit about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Has it been worked into the PCS process?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. If you're trying to get them on the PCS process going home or coming back, one of the two—although neither of those is very satisfying for the family.

DR. KIRKLAND: No, it's true.

GEN. THURMAN: Because you don't want the family put up in a motel for six weeks at Fort Dix, New Jersey, waiting for their husband to get through BNOC so they can go overseas.

DR. KIRKLAND: I guess it would be better if he's already stationed somewhere.

GEN. THURMAN: Right.

DR. KIRKLAND: Meanwhile, another leg of that stool was through bringing in smarter people that might not be as frightened of school and who might be able to handle it better.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, you had a two-fold thing going on there. One is, you had smarter people coming in who could absorb faster; and then unit commanders would say, "Well they don't need to go to NCO school, they already know things, they don't need to know that, already got it." But we persisted in saying, "No, there is an NCO rigorous training system."

So, yeah, it took a long time—mid '70s to late '80s.

DR. KIRKLAND: So that was quite an operation.

GEN. THURMAN: When I was down in SOUTHCOM I brought a couple of my colleagues up to TRADOC. It blew their mind how much money we invest in noncommissioned officers that they don't. We have the finest noncommissioned officer corps in the world. That's because we spend money to train them.

DR. KIRKLAND: They are extraordinary. Of course, the privates are extraordinary now also.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: There's another thing. I don't know how to drive the agenda here on what you did while you were the Vice. You were pulling so many things together. One of the things that intrigued me that I read about in the senior officers'

outbrief was, your having the results of performance of units at the national training centers evaluated and also—

GEN. THURMAN: I did that more in my TRADOC days.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you do that in TRADOC?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. What I learned as the Vice was that we were not getting enough data out of the many, many, many replications of attacks and defenses at the National Training Center and plowing it back into our combat developments or our training system. That originally got sort of boilerplated when Shoemaker was the Commander of Forces Command and Starry was the Commander of the Training and Doctrine Command. He said, “At the NTC we’re not counting scores with one battalion versus another because we don’t want any bumper numbers, and we’re not trying to impugn the battalion commander. We’re trying to learn how to do things.”

But, having said that, one of the things that would mask is, what are the really good officers and who are the head units and what units need work in specific lines of work? And, then, how are they handling the weapons systems which we paid a fancy price for, and are we getting the most out of the weapons system?

So having come to know that when I was the Vice Chief, when I got down to TRADOC the first guy I sent to the NTC was the infantry guy, turns out it was Bill Hartzog. He was the Assistant Commandant at Fort Benning, Georgia, at the time.

But I took one CMF or branch like Infantry, Armor, or Field Artillery, took one a month, and I put together a team of guys under the assistant commandant. And I said, go out there and inspect the data, because we had tons of it at the Army Research Institute in Monterey. And I want you to look at the data, any way you want to look at the data and I want you to tell me what are the top 10 things we’re not doing well in your branch, so we’ve got something to work on.

So they’d come down and they would list for tanks that it may be river crossing operation or whatever. In the case of Infantry, which the first thing was about, the number one item on the agenda was the fact that TOWs were not killing up to the max range on

the one hand or up to their weapons' probability of kill at which we'd bought the weapons system.

So there were steps we had to take to go cure that. Part of the steps, we had to go out and make a fix on the bore sighting devices associated with the laser guided system that we were using here, the MILES System. We had to create new ways for them to communicate in order to get quickly from one position to another if you wanted to get your counterattack going or bring in your other forces so that you could measure the rate of response of a commander issuing orders and getting the vehicles moved from one place to another. We had to take into consideration that the bore sight apparatus itself was not very well done on the Bradley. So we had to go repair it.

All of this was to build confidence because the opening ranges were 1100 meters when they should have been 3000. So having gone through every one of the systems, whether it was engineers on demolitions or engineers on covering obstacles and the like—appropriately, we found out that only three in five obstacles were covered by either direct or indirect fire.

Then when we actually probed the obstacle, you'd find that you couldn't get the artillery concentrations dumped on the obstacle, which is something everybody knows. I mean, you think everybody knows that.

But it came down to what/where you told the platoon leader to go into position, what he did with the organization decision, what the artillery guy did to put a goose egg around it if you're going to final protective fire or anything of that nature.

So none of the things I have said to you sound very spiffy or anything. They're common, ordinary attributes that you would perceive that any unit would have, but you find out they weren't doing it. So you had to train them to do it in order to get more efficiency out of the system. So, we worked every one of the commandants through each one of their systems in order to try to get a fair shake at what the problems were. Our one-a-month plan.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did Signal get into the picture? So many things are now.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, I think the Signal guys got into it, but I can't recall anything startling about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Does the MILES System take into account the fact that the Miles, that the TOW gunner has to maintain lock on his target for 10 or 15 seconds?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: So it would be terrible if the equipment lied because if you had what looked like a lock, you better get out of that—

GEN. THURMAN: Worse than that, it had to do with the fact that you had a dissipated laser beam at extreme range, 3000 meters—because at the lower ranges you were unable to make things come to an agreeable combat outcome.

DR. KIRKLAND: That MILES system, was that one of Gorman's ideas?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. It changed the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Changed the Army, major change.

GEN. THURMAN: Instead of bullshitting about it, you actually had troops saying, I got shot. Why did you get shot? Not because it says bang, bang, because I actually got shot. And they said, "Well, I got up from behind the log too quick. Well, let's go back and do it again, and you stay behind the log longer." Very effective feedback.

DR. KIRKLAND: There are ways of cheating it though, I think. Taking the batteries out, things like that.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I'm sure there were. But principle pertained, and most people are reasonably straightforward about that. They were motivated to save their

lives, so I think most people—I think the cheating aspect is slim. I don't know; maybe there's more than I suspected, but I would think it's slim.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, it all depends. It's the Vince Lombardi thing— is winning everything or is learning everything? Perhaps that mindset shifted over time during the time the NTCs were set up to now.

As the Vice you were involved in procurement also.

GEN. THURMAN: I had a regulatory function in the Department of the Army to be the co-chair of the Acquisition Review Committee, so every weapons system that was brought forth for a milestone review I co-chaired that with the then-Undersecretary of the Army, Jim Ambrose. So we would spend days on certain weapons systems, looking at the guts of what the program was all about and trying to figure out whether or not they were ready to do any tests or not.

So some we won, some we didn't win. Like we did okay on the Patriot. Ultimately, when it came in it did very well. One we didn't do very well was the KILA Program, which was an unmanned aerial vehicle which finally had to be killed because it couldn't pass the test.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was that a reconnaissance vehicle?

GEN. THURMAN: No. It was an aerial reconnaissance vehicle. Actually, it's a pretty good vehicle, but it just had too many bells and whistles on it; so then the testers didn't know how to test it, so they killed it. Then we had the DIVAD in there; we killed the DIVAD. That took up an enormous amount of time.

DR. KIRKLAND: You had a very finely grained bullshit screen to filter out what the contractors were telling you, didn't you?

GEN. THURMAN: Well these briefings in the main were conducted by the project managers, so they were all Army guys. Now, both Jim and I made room, not at

the ASARC, Army Systems Acquisitions Review Counsel, but privately we would hold sessions with the vendors and they could tell us what they thought about it. I used to have a meeting with the vendors about once every two months.

(End Tape 15, Side A)

(Begin Tape 15, Side B)

GEN. THURMAN: They want to do well. So one of the things you have to do is provide a mechanism for them to come in and bleat to top management. As I've tried to indicate, with our relationship between the advertising agency and the head of the recruiting command, you had a team built up. So in like manner, you want a team built up in the industry tank team, you want a team built up between the infantry school and the infantry fighting vehicle. You want a team built up around the helicopter capabilities and the vendors who put the helicopters together.

All of those things you're trying to stimulate the industrial people to come forward and tell you what's right or wrong. Is the government screwing over the company, or is the company unable to meet its objectives, hasn't got enough time? We have sort of a policy of no surprises is what you're trying to stimulate there.

So I had an open door to contractors. There are a lot of people that don't. My view was, you're trying to get the contractors on your team, make them produce stuff on time, quality, no overruns. But in order to do that, you've got to make sure you listen to them.

DR. KIRKLAND: I've never known a project manager, never talked to one. When I was a lieutenant I knew a Marine captain who was a project management team member on the Lacrosse missile, and the Lacrosse was dying. And as the Lacrosse died, so did the morale of the military people who were involved with it.

GEN. THURMAN: Sure.

DR. KIRKLAND: That would sort of build in a kind of a leaning-forward-in-the-foxhole attitude among contract managers instead of even from the military people.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, the contract PM becomes an advocate for the system he's bringing on. You may say, well, he ought to really be the disassociated, disinterested

viewer of the contractor's work. But let's suppose I made you the project manager for system X and you can't bring it to market in the Army. In other words, you can't produce it and bring it to the Army. Then I look at you and say, "How come you couldn't get your defense team put together so you could in fact whip up on the contractor well enough to get him to produce an adequate piece of gear? There must be some ineptness on your part as the project manager."

So the project manager quickly became a salesman for the system. You had to cut through the bullshit of the sale when you're in the Army Systems Acquisition Review Council, the ASARC, in order to find out what the real facts were about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was there anybody in between the colonel who was the project manager and the four star general, the Vice Chief of Staff and—

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah. You had all kinds of people that told that colonel down there and the project manager what to do. That's one of the reasons they have had a recent review of the law that cuts out review mechanisms, in order that the project manager has a more direct shot at the very top of the Army and the top of the civilians in the Civil Service branch. They call that reductions in the layering of the bureaucratic maze, over these people; although these people are actually trying to bring items of equipment to the field that were under their jurisdiction.

Cutting out these layers of management has been something everybody has said they want to do. The only thing is, you still have a Title 10 responsibility as a service chief to get into it. So in recent days there has been a statute put down that says there shall be an acquisition executive, and then under that there shall be project PEOs, Program Executive Officers.

So a program executive officer might be a guy that had all of tactical missile ballistic defense. Then underneath him you may have some project managers who are, one guy is what's going on in my particular weapons system. And if I'm bringing that up to a decision cycle, then does the CG of AMC get involved in that? Does he have to review the papers that are associated with that, or is that directly between the project manager and the acquisition executive who is a civilian?

There's been a lot of attempt at acquisition reform to reduce the layering of decision making on bringing a weapon system to fruition faster than has been the case. Imperfect reform.

DR. KIRKLAND: Sounds like a very complex process. Difficult too.

GEN. THURMAN: It's very complex. You are bringing it up, and you're getting people who have various levels of competency to review things about it; and everybody has got what I'd call a negative vote and very few positive votes. So, people can always bring up problems associated with any weapons system, particularly a new one.

So you're trying to listen to that. On one case, Ambrose and I killed the system on the spot. It happened to be the AKILA; we spent several billion dollars on it and hadn't got anything. It wouldn't meet the criteria of tests and all that kind of stuff; finally had to kill it.

Same is true in the DIVAD air defense game; had to kill that. In the case of the Patriot, we stopped payment on the Patriot. I told the vendor, he's got to go back and fix it before we'll ever pay him another damn nickel. He didn't like that, because it's coming out of his capital.

DR. KIRKLAND: His hide, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Now that is invested in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research and Development. You can get a guy saying to bring a decision in and ignoring the requirement, which the green suits have put down as saying this thing has to have an A, B, C or D requirement. So you want the military to stay in it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Because ultimately the military is the user of the item of equipment, and turning it all over to civilian functionaries is not necessarily going to get

you the right equipment. It's become a continuing opportunity for excellence to streamline and make more effective the acquisition systems.

Bill Perry is trying hard to go do that. He's got a bill now before the Congress to do that. The only thing is, you will find that, you would see that, guys in a particular weapons system would become an advocate for their system getting on the docket. But you wouldn't have the ancillary wisdom of the TRADOC Commander or the force in the field and all that because it's coming straight up through a stovepipe into the Department of Defense.

All of that smacks of ultimately going to a civilian acquisition corps, which would be located at the Department of Defense. We in the services have fought strenuously against that because it would take away the military judgments about the application of that particular piece of equipment, so we don't want to do that.

The French do that. The French have an acquisition corps. The people in it come essentially from their *École Polytechnique* and they're outside the chain of command of the Department of Defense.

DR. KIRKLAND: You send the Army a tank.

GEN. THURMAN: You give them a tank.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's it. Here's how it works.

GEN. THURMAN: Here's your tank, go fire it up. And fire it up.

DR. KIRKLAND: Get some tactics that will make use of it.

GEN. THURMAN: So it's not very salutary, from our perspective, green suit perspective; although there are plenty of people in Congress who believe that that's the way it ought to go.

DR. KIRKLAND: While we were talking about the National Training Center and not looking at the bumper numbers of units as we looked at the results, you mentioned in passing that that makes it impossible to identify which commanders did well and which ones didn't. Of course, the corollary is, how do you grow good ones? Was that an area that you are able to tackle?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we never tried to, in public presentations, identify that Lieutenant Colonel Ziggy Belcher was better than Lieutenant Colonel Thurman in his tank battalion. The reason we didn't want to do that is because FORSCOM had a long-time notion that if you began to do that, then people would look at the NTC as a make or break proposition and therefore, it would lose its utility as a learning center, as opposed to a test center. Now clearly, if you run 100 battalion commanders through 100 battalion attacks and run 100 battalion commanders through 100 defensive operations, you're going to find that the normal Gaussian Curve pertains. They're going to be 10 percent in the top 10, there's going to be 10 percent in the bottom 10, there's going to be 80 percent in the middle.

What we try to do on occasion is get ARI to again do that by wiping off the Social Security number of the top 10 percent. Use the Social Security number to get in and find out who that is, but once you get the data about it, erase it so that all you have are the characteristics of that guy who is the number one guy at the NTC. Then see if there's any pattern analysis between who the top 10 are and who the bottom 10 are.

One of the things you'd come out with and one of the things that we found out about is that commanding a battalion, a maneuver battalion at the NTC, is a lesson in space management in your head. That is to say, you're trying to compute the advance of the OPFOR, you're trying to compute how fast it will take your own counterattack force to get into position, and what will be the operation outcome if I can understand the interrelation of all these things.

So we designed the tactical commanders training program out at Fort Leavenworth, which can be given to all battalion/brigade commanders and is given to them out there. That puts a JANUS interactive solution on a cathode ray tube display, lets a guy load his force, and he can actually fight the force; and then if he wants to commit

the Reserve, he commits the Reserve. And he finds out later whether or not he got whacked about it or whether or not everything is okay about it.

So he can play this war game enough times to become adept at listening to the audio tapes of people reporting to him from the front, because they're wired into the system, and then taking responsible action about how to reposition his forces or counterattack or do whatever he's going to do. Then if he has an outcome which is not salutary, he can back it all up and do it over again. He would do that in a matter of an hour. That has become one of the most popular courses at Leavenworth.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that done during the command charm school?

GEN. THURMAN: It's being done at the pre-command course and the command course. It's also being done in Leavenworth at the Command General Staff College level instruction. I had an aide I sent out there that had been with me in Latin America and he went to Leavenworth. And I told him the system would be up and operating. He called me back and said, "It is the finest training system I've ever had."

DR. KIRKLAND: Sounds terrific.

GEN. THURMAN: One of the things you're trying to do here, again, if you thought about it in chess terms and you looked at playing chess at the NTC as being a once-every-two-years endeavor, then you would want to get as many chess bouts under your belt as possible before you went to the NTC so, one, you wouldn't embarrass yourself and, two, you'd stand a chance of whipping the guy that you are pegged up against.

So it is with this analysis of data and giving people the opportunity to adjust their mental warp of how you employ all these dissimilar forces.

It goes back to the old thing—normally the first time a guy commands a battalion is the first time he commands a battalion. Therefore, he has to learn that he is no longer commanding a company, he's commanding four or five companies. He has got to learn to maneuver them simultaneously, not just one company, but all of them. You go out on the

desert floor and you could see an armored column stacked up along the desert floor because the commander couldn't make a decision about what to do with it—whether to bypass, fight where he is, break the ambush by some other means, call down air strikes and drive on it. You know, he'd sit there and agonize about how to get his combat fire in the fight. He's not facile with it.

So in a chess match game, you play hundreds of chess matches before you go up against Karpov, or whatever the hell that guy's name is that plays chess in the Soviet Union.

The question is, if the average guy who goes to the field as a battalion commander in the Big Red One or 2nd AD or the 1st CAV, or whatever, if they only have two hours a day in confrontation, you're trying to maximize the number of repetitions a guy can get before he takes his troops in the field. We estimated that you'd get two battalion attacks and two battalion defenses in a two-year tour as a battalion commander. That's no preparation for going up against a chess master; you'd like to have 100. So you give it to them vicariously on the scope of a TV tube.

So my aide is out there. He's been away from the troops, so he takes his course and says it's the best course he's ever had at a place like Leavenworth, because it makes you back up and understand time and space relationships between when you hear that the enemy is coming until you tell your Reserve to mount up and move out, and how much time is taken between that. Then you can visualize it on a tube and say, "My God, I didn't tell them early enough to get them in the fight." So back it up and do it again so it becomes comfortable with you.

Again, it goes back to my view which is, the more you are comfortable with tactical drills and the more that you become comfortable with the hardware yourself, the more time you have to be innovative about the tactics and techniques using the drills and the hardware.

The Army artillery and the Army armor do more drills than the infantry. Therefore, in the main, if you talk to an armor guy he will tell you, echelon left, echelon right, or whatever. And that means something to armor guys. And so they know how to line the tanks up and move in a formation and use their hand and arm signals to get in that thing, to minimize communication traffic.

But it means something to you. And it means, what does the fifth tank or the fourth tank in the echelon right do, and which tanks does he take under fire first? Is he firing direct ahead? No, he's protecting the right flank maybe, or the guy in the number two tank up there is protecting the left flank. He's got it direct ahead, and the two in the middle are going on the flanks.

You can improvise from that. If you're busy trying to think your way through that formation kind of stuff and how to order up the Reserves and all that, then that's wasting valuable time when you can get beat by the OPFOR or the real enemies.

So we put this up as a vicarious learning experience at Fort Leavenworth, and it's gang busters.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that the only place it exists?

GEN. THURMAN: Like that? That's the only place it exists. Now we're giving JANUS computers at the moment to every post, camp and station that has tactical units, so you can play your own tapes down there at Fort Bragg or Fort Hood or Fort Carson, or whatever.

DR. KIRKLAND: While one student is at this thing practicing, does it take any people to support him?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. And that's paid for out of the money in terms of setting up a sim center, simulation center at each one of the posts that have tactical equipment. So yes, there is some set up time, but minimum.

DR. KIRKLAND: Are these things good enough? You said you could back it up and do it again. If you back it up and do it again, are you always going to get the same results?

GEN. THURMAN: No. You back it up and do it again; you vary.

I'll give you an example. Suppose you're in the defense and the enemy comes down; and you calculate that he is going to do X, and he in fact does X. In other words, he comes on your left flank, his main attack is on the left flank of your unit, and sure enough he comes down there. And you say, I've got my counterattack poised to go. And I call up the guy and say, attack. And the machine spins up the attack. The only thing is, you misestimated the difference in distance that he has to go to make that, and you didn't give him enough time to get fired up and move out. Therefore, the main body of the OPFOR has come through and your counterattack is three minutes late.

DR. KIRKLAND: So you try it again.

GEN. THURMAN: So you back it up, and you see the results on the scope because it blows up all of his tanks. Then you can say, I want to back it up again. And I'm going to counterattack from a different direction to see if that makes any difference.

DR. KIRKLAND: Or faster.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. So it gives the guy some facility; no penalty, because troops aren't involved. So you're not harassing the troops. And, oh by the way, it operates in minutes, not in hours to back them up and start them over again. So now those JANUS things are being sent out now to each one of the posts, camps and stations.

There's a colleague of mine, a young fellow, took all of his people over to Leavenworth and run his battalion commander, himself as a battalion S-3, his four company commanders through all of that—he's got a Mech infantry battalion—before they went to the field, so they don't soiree the troops when they go to the field.

So advances in simulation, I think, will materially assist the Army in carrying out training objectives and make it more meaningful, than the experience of the NTC. Also, at ARI you try to go out to the NTC and see if they could take these Social Security numbers and do profiles from these guys, then erase their Social Security numbers so you didn't know who it was, get enough preliminary data to find out what was his background and had he been a battalion three, or a battalion XO, had he been to the NTC before, had

he been in combat before, how many times had he been to the NTC. Go back and look at his efficiency reports and find out what people thought about him.

You can begin to piece together what kind of mosaic you would like people to have before they become battalion commanders. Now, getting the Army to go through and select battalion commanders on that is a different matter.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, really?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I mean, they read the reports, but there's no way to put in the report file that, given the ARI template, we would predict he would be a dynamite battalion commander. I mean, that won't sell.

DR. KIRKLAND: The ARI findings are published, aren't they?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I mean, they give you what I'd call aggregated data on 100 battalion attacks or 100 battalion defenses. They wouldn't tell you, and we purposely didn't ask them for, well, is this guy black or white or an Asian or that kind of stuff.

DR. KIRKLAND: No. But you did ask them about what his experience mosaic would be?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: Now, that's published. Is that available?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't know whether that's published or not, and I can't tell you that. I can tell you, they can do that.

In other words, what we were trying to do is correlate experiential data in a way with job assignments in the individual to find out if there was any predictiveness about

that. The answer is, there is. The question is, would the Army use that in its promotion system. The answer is, it won't.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who controls the promotion system; doesn't the DCSPER and the Vice do that?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, the DCSPER controls the promotion system by writing instructions to promotion boards. The least likely thing you would do there is write down, use the ARI template in order to determine what people ought to be promoted. The reason you wouldn't do that is because we've already made the statement beforehand that says, we will use the efficiency report as the measure of whether or not people should be promoted or not.

Now maybe in the year 2025 you can do that, in a different way. Right now, culturally, the Army isn't prepared to accept what ARI says about that, although there's plenty of data that would suggest you can identify ahead of time before they ever become battalion commanders.

DR. KIRKLAND: It could be sort of slipped into the culture through articles and *Army Magazine* and so on.

GEN. THURMAN: It could be.

DR. KIRKLAND: But did you not want to change the culture?

GEN. THURMAN: On that one, no. It's too much of a political football. See, one of the things you are trying to do is to get conceptually what people will use to affect promotions, schoolings and the like. I guess, in my own right, I think you would have to be the Chief of Staff for a while to do that. You would have to be THE Chief of Staff to do that. You'd have to be persuaded that this, indeed, was the way in which you wanted to structure the promotion system and the like about that. Most Chiefs won't touch it.

In wartime, you could get away with it. In peacetime, it's very much more controversial. Behaviorists are going to say, by virtue of what you have done as a major and a captain and a lieutenant, we can predict your success as a battalion commander in combat. That's really hard.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's hard, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: That is a bullet that people will say, no, we'll use the efficiency report because it reflects the opinions of a wide number of raters and endorsers and senior raters; and, therefore, that is better than any system ARI could come up with. I'm just telling you, there is inherent baggage in behaviorists issuing orders to the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. I can see that, but I accept it all. If you as DCSPER, you probably did this, task ARI to do the bean counting and do the number crunching and tell me, to tell you, as DCSPER what are the sets of matrices of characteristics that seem to appear most frequently in the most successful commanders at NTC, what you are doing is using a behaviorist—that's what they do; they analyze numbers and so on.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, and all I'm saying to you is, the culture of the Army says that we want to observe it first-hand rather than apply some mystical matrix over this guy. I mean, I look back in my own right, and I think I was a pretty good battalion commander. And so somebody had said, "Well, you can't command in Vietnam because you haven't been a battalion commander before, you haven't been the S3 of a battalion before; you haven't been in a fire-support-coordinated division before, and you haven't commanded a battery. So the matrix would have kicked me out."

DR. KIRKLAND: That's right. Okay. That's the sort of thing that ARI wouldn't have.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. They would have looked at what jobs you've had and how well you did the job, what was the degree of arduousness of the job, and how your ratings fit in with that, and how you were rated by your senior rater and your other. But they also have looked at defining what your ability was to do problem solving at higher levels of management and they would count that in.

Now, a guy who can talk to you in some detail about that is Owen Jacobs and Steve Clement. Both of them have done work about all that and believe in it thoroughly. There is a project at the War College to do just that. They can tell you right now of the sitting War College people who will be a general and who won't; and who will make two stars and who won't; and who will make three stars and who won't. But to go in then to the promotion board and say, select only these guys for brigadier general, I think you would agree the promotion board would have a hard time having Owen Jacobs, who is a distinguished guy, tell them who to promote. It's just not possible.

DR. KIRKLAND: He never met a payroll. Who is doing that at the War College?

GEN. THURMAN: Owen Jacobs is running the study out of ARI. See, I gave a pitch up there you may be interested in reading some time. It's also published in a book about strategic vision, and how do you get a person to think and to lead strategically.

DR. KIRKLAND: You're talking about CINCs now, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, strategic leaders in the Army are all four star generals and a few lieutenant generals. A lieutenant general would have strategic vision would be the DCSPER because actions he takes today will have ten-year consequences.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: DCSOPS would be one. The Chief of Engineers, because what he's involved in is long-time horizon. The Chief of Medics, Surgeon General, not an Army Commander at Fort Meade. Not the DCINCs at various and sundry places. So, there are certain lieutenant generals that have to be strategic thinkers. Well, the question is, how can you go about determining who those people are if they're in an academic setting at Carlisle?

One of the things you can do—in the article I wrote or the pitch I gave up there that was given in 1991, it was in a leadership symposium; they've published the book now and you might want to get a copy of it. Again, Owen Jacobs had a hand in that, but the book is published at Carlisle. If you set a set of criteria that are attributes that a strategic leader ought to have, then you can configure the curriculum to either enhance those attributes or to test them on any one of the individuals in the schoolhouse.

You would, then, perforce be required to write a report on the guy at the end of the War College that says he did or didn't. Most reports coming out of the War College are innocuous, bland, everybody's a winner because everybody was a winner to get here. Well, of course everybody knows there's a Peter Principle, and everybody that got there isn't a winner in terms of they're winners to get there but it doesn't make them winners five or ten years later.

The question is, how can you distinguish people? Well, one of the ways you distinguish people like that is you give them tasks to perform that are beyond their rank. I've already told you one—I had this lieutenant colonel. Paul Gorman did the same thing way beyond his rank on training. He's doing a four star general's level of work as a brigadier general.

Donn Starry did the same with work he did as a major general. He was doing four star general work.

DR. KIRKLAND: Does that mean you're skipping the armor school?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, in armor tactics and techniques and that kind of stuff. So I believe and I so codified in my article that there is a band of attributes and that the

War College can measure them and you ought to write a report about it when you get done. If an officer cannot create a strategic vision, then he can't be a strategic officer.

I was down lecturing there today at the National Defense University to a bunch of generals in all the services. And an Army general said to me, "You have said that we don't do civil action and civil affairs after major operations like we ought to do." She said, "In 1991 you said the following; can you connect the two for me?"

I said, "Sure, if I can't envision the end state that I want Kuwait to be in after I get through with my takedown and standup with the government, and if I cannot envision the end state I want in Somalia, which we haven't envisioned what the end state is, then we will not be able to apply the necessary resources in the right manner to steer it to accomplish the end state."

So you are connecting the strategic vision by defining what the end state is to the methodological way in which you apportion resources to get there. So, can you teach a guy to do that at Carlisle? Yes, we have techniques for doing that. You have to be able to speak strategically. So can you measure a guy's speaking or writing abilities? Yes, you can do that.

So there are ways, and Owen Jacobs could tell you, he's got a list of them. But in my own view, I came down with what I would call the attributes a guy should have and then how many of those attributes can you—one of the attributes I think you should have is having worked—

(interruption)

I think there's a substantial amount of prediction you can do about all that. I'm a believer.

DR. KIRKLAND: We talked about the War College some time ago and you were telling me about your classmates there and what you learned and so on.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. One of the things you should say about that I need to say. I've used some things which I would say could be misinterpreted as being derogatory. I don't mean to be derogatory.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, spades have to be called spades. What I am trying to do is describe the changes wrought in the Army that you had a hand in and General DePuy had a hand in and General Meyer had a hand in, Starry and there's a number of you, not a very big number.

GEN. THURMAN: Richardson.

DR. KIRKLAND: Richardson. There will also be associated with this a kind of a look at the future of what remains yet to be done and also battles lost that should have been won. People can disagree without one of them being a bum, you know.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I'm just saying that if I said, "I might have amounted to something if I had had a decent battery commander that's something that I wouldn't want to read about in print because one of the battery commanders is living, you know."

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. If you had been a battery commander, you might have amounted to something.

GEN. THURMAN: That's true too. If I had been...

Dr. KIKRLAND: With the direction we are headed, as much as not, it's not nearly as focused on—

GEN. THURMAN: On me as the systems, right.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right, right. Were you expecting me yesterday at a time different than I showed up?

GEN. THURMAN: No, I was expecting you at AUSA. So I went over there. So I was there and you were here.

DR. KIRKLAND: I didn't know you went to AUSA yesterday.

GEN. THURMAN: No, I know. I found that out after I got there.

DR. KIRKLAND: In your time as a Vice you mentioned the family thing. Did you continue to work on that?

GEN. THURMAN: I think we continued to work on it. I think Wickham became a major player in promotion of quality of life for the members of the Army. You may recall, he put out his four Cs—candor, commitment, courage, and whatever the fourth one is, commitment.

DR. KIRKLAND: Communication.

GEN. THURMAN: He has posters up and that kind of stuff. He was very much a supporter in fora up at OSD and in fora in the Congress about quality of soldiers, quality of family life and the like. He was unrelenting on safety, and he made me sort of the big safety officer in the sky.

DR. KIRKLAND: Apparently, there was realism in training.

GEN. THURMAN: He felt, for example, that he couldn't tolerate the accident rates that we had.

DR. KIRKLAND: This was car accidents?

GEN. THURMAN: Car accidents, aircraft accidents, and that kind of stuff. So we had stand downs of the Army in that, and I became one of the major players in the safety game in terms of getting after industry. I called in, for example, the chairman of the board of every one of the aircraft companies and made them institute safety

monitoring. An aircraft part has an hour life ascribed to it. It will operate 500 hours or 5,000 hours, whatever it is, before it has material failure.

(End Tape 15, Side B)

Faris Kirkland-Maxwell Thurman Interview Tape 16

(Begin Tape 16, Side A)

GEN THURMAN: Each date you look, each independent item of equipment, and then where its major utility would come together in order to make sure that there was some rational reason why a particular unit was given whatever it was given.

Now, if you think about that for a minute, let's take the issuance of the M-1 tank. As you brought the M-1 tanks into the inventory you had at least five different kinds of tanks in the Army inventory. You had the M-1 tank, you had the M-60A3 tank, you had the M-60A1 tank, you had the M-48A5 tank and the M-48A3 tank. All of these were somewhere in the U.S. Army tank force structure.

Now at the same time that those tanks were what they were, you also had mobile subscriber equipment coming in. At the same time you had the heavy trucks coming in called HEMTT [Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck], so there was no such thing as THE tank TO&E. You had a variety of tank TO&Es and you had to keep track of all this stuff in the Army system because the M-1 required a different crewman than the M-60A3 or the M-60A1 or the M-48A5 or the M-48A1.

The radio repair guy in the tank battalion was different if it was a mobile subscriber equipment, a SINGARs guy, a BRC12 guy, or whatever kind of radios you had in the system.

And, the truck drivers were either driving five-ton trucks standard, or they were driving five-ton dump trucks, or they were driving the new HEMTTs that were the supply vehicles and the POL vehicles for the battalion.

You have this interlocking, widely divergent system of systems trying, ultimately, to force its way in sort of what I call a standard TO&E. So the upshot about that is, I said to my people in TRADOC—in fact, I started this as an aftermath of doing these FAAs; I started this in the Vice—I said, “I want you to put together a system for me called the Living TO&E that says, as you put in a different BOIP change for a radio change, a truck

change, or whatever may be change, you keep these several TO&Es all visible because you've got to manage across all those TO&Es, and manage the personnel skills and the assignment of people to various and sundry units and all that kind of stuff.

So I said, "We've got to manage that and make sure that we take out the difficulties out of aggregating these things in the various systems and aggregate how many people you have—are you ready for the next item or equipment, and have you trained the old people in how to do the work or whatever."

So we started a resolution of that in a group that I fired up at the Department of the Army called a DOCMOD group, the doctrinal modernization group and the document modernization group. That had grown out of a Inspector General report done by General Trefry [LTG Richard Greenleaf Trefry] who was the then Inspector General. It said all this stuff was screwed up and it had to get unscrewed.

So then when it got down to TRADOC, then we kept the DOCMOD game going and kept the Living TO&E going. It's still going. The guy that ran it for a long time in the DOCMOD shop was a guy named Bill Curtis, who is now retired. So that's sort of the DOCMOD story.

DR. KIRKLAND: Terms. There was TO&E, and then there was something that came in that you called MTO&E. Does that have anything to do with DOCMOD or does that come before?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. See, anytime you modify a TO&E if you put the radio in there, put the new SINGARs in there, why then it's a new TO&E.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that because the radio repairmen have a different MOS or there's just a different—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, there are equipment lines in the TO&E as well as organizational structures as well as people.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: So you are accounting for all of that in the DOCMOD Living TO&E game.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, in the old days it would just be a substitute standard item.

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. Then you never were sure the personnel system was going to deliver you the correct guy.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: See, with the personnel game, you are trying to recruit a year ahead of time. So you're recruiting now. Right now in the month of February 1994 you were recruiting for June entry for people who won't get to the force until December.

DR. KIRKLAND: So we have to plan what units will have—

GEN. THURMAN: What item of equipment. How many units will be equipped with system X that I will have the supply of people who were appropriately trained for the system X.

DR. KIRKLAND: Will they have a different MOS for say—

GEN. THURMAN: They could have. Like the old tank, M-60A3 was a 19 Kilo and the new guy was a 19 ...Sorry, the new guy was a 19 Kilo and the other guy was a 19 Charlie or 19 Lima, so you have different aggregations. An 11B, for example, is a basic ground-pounding infantryman. But an 11 Mike is the infantryman that goes and rides in a Bradley. He's got to learn how to fire squad automatic weapons in a different way than a guy that's straight-legged.

DR. KIRKLAND: Are there different letters for, say, guys who are with 105s or 155s or MLRS?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. There are 330 different MOS. So it can change by type of equipment, or it can change by skill level in terms of whether you are an E1 or an E7. I think in the artillery you have a 13 Bravo with an additional skill identifier that carries whether it's 105 or 155 or eight-inch, or whatever. It's a 13 Bush to start out with.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'm ready to go to SOUTHCOM unless there's something that I've missed.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay. What happens in the SOUTHCOM caper, it sort of starts back in May of 1989. There are two lines of events going on, one line which pertains to me and one line which doesn't. So let's take the one that pertains to me for a moment, and then we'll put these two things together.

As you recall the Bush administration came to work in January 20, 1989. John Tower was nominated to be the Secretary of Defense. They went through an enormously difficult painful saga which ended up with he didn't get it, and so they had to get another guy. The next guy they got was a fellow named Dick Cheney.

Dick Cheney had been a congressman with then-Secretary of the Army, Jack Marsh, in Congress. And further, both he, Marsh, and he, Cheney, served in the Ford White House. Cheney was the Chief of Staff and Marsh was the Counselor to the President, his lawyer. This was brought about by long-term service together in Congress.

So when Cheney arrived at the Defense Department, Marsh called me up on the telephone one day and he said, "I want you to come up here and have lunch with Dick Cheney."

DR. KIRKLAND: You were at TRADOC then?

GEN. THURMAN: I was the TRADOC Commander. And he said, "You're going to retire this year and you have some things to say to Cheney about how he ought

to run the Defense Department because you've been around for a long time and you know a lot of stuff.”

Now, Jack Marsh was always a mentor of mine. He and I got along very well. I produced the policy and I recruited the Army and all that kind of stuff, things that he was interested in. Had been the Vice for [Ford]. He was the guy that was really instrumental in getting me promoted to be the Vice.

(Interruption—Lunch Break)

DR. KIRKLAND: We were just sort of breaking the ice on the two stories about Panama. One was a story about you.

GEN. THURMAN: Marsh knows Cheney very well. So in May he calls me up and says, “I want you to have lunch with Cheney and tell him a half a dozen things he ought to do as Secretary of Defense, because you're retiring and you can get away with it.”

So I wrote down a list of half a dozen things, about nine I think. I went in, and Cheney and I and Marsh are having lunch. I said, “I know you're on a very busy schedule, so you eat lunch and I'll talk.” And I said, “Item number one on my list is give a mission-type order to CINCs, and then give him the resources necessary to carry out that mission and never short-change him—because if you do, you will be pitting your military judgment against his.” And I said, “You don't have any military judgment because you never served in the military. These other guys who served 35 years have got a lot of military judgment, so if they ask you for something, give it to them. Otherwise, it will come home to roost on you; and you will be the fighter, but you don't know anything about it, so you'll pay the political price if something goes wrong.” I said, “If you don't like what the CINC is doing, get yourself a new CINC.”

I went through the other items that I had on that agenda and one of them was on the quality of people and another was on balanced resources back and forth between modernization and the structure and the like. So I left.

My retirement date was set for the 30th of September with the parade and all that stuff to be about the 5th of August. On about the 4th of July, I get a call from the Chief of Staff. Vuono says, "Are you in a place where you can talk?" I happened to be at that time in an airport in Santa Fe. I said, "No, I'm really not in a very good place to talk, but I'll answer any questions you have yes or no."

So he asked several questions, went something like this: "You don't have to answer this question, but we're going to remove General Woerner [GEN Frederick F. Woerner, Jr.] from command in Panama. Your name has surfaced to be Commander in Chief of Southern Command. Would you agree to go in there and serving two years?" I said, "Well, I understand all that, but I need to talk to you and so you'll have to wait an hour until I get up to Los Alamos and I'll get in a private room and call you on a secure phone." So I did that.

This is now July of '89. The previous Christmas I had come down with asthma for the first time in my life, I had a very serious attack. So I told the Chief that because of LaPaz, which is 13,500 feet and other places, Quito is very high altitude, that I needed a doctor's check. This is to Bragg, I needed a doctor's check on whether or not my asthma would withstand the altitude or the heat down there in Panama.

So I was giving a speech that night in Albuquerque and I told him, "I'll fly into Washington, Saturday morning enroute back to Fort Monroe. If you will have an airplane or helicopter ready and make the necessary arrangements with Walter Reed, I'll fly directly to Walter Reed and the doctors will give me an evaluation. And after that evaluation I'll tell you yes or no."

Then Chief said to me, "Well you better call the Secretary of the Army and tell him all about this. He'll have some words for you." So I called Marsh, and Marsh said that Woerner had become a political liability and they had to move him out, and he had recommended to Cheney that I was the right guy to go down there because I knew everything about the Joint Staff and everything about the Washington scene, and I would be able to straighten out this particular debacle. And Cheney had said, "Okay, check him out and see if he will serve." I told Marsh I was going to get a physical Saturday morning and let him know. Other than that I said, "I'll take it; if I pass the physical, I'll take it."

So I came over here on a Saturday morning, flew back in and landed at Andrews. And they had a helo that brought me over here and got the exam. And the ruse I was using was, I'm going on a special mission for the Secretary of the Army that's going to last six months, but I'll be traveling to high altitudes and I've got to figure out my condition; said I'd be traveling high altitudes in both cold weather and low altitudes in hot weather, and can I stand it from day to day oscillating back and forth and all that kind of stuff. So they ruminated around for a while and then said, "We'll clear you; you don't have any problems. You've got a problem, but it's manageable."

Sunday, my brother had gone to the beach down in North Carolina, so Sunday I flew to the beach. He and I had a little powwow down there and I said, "I need a little family advice." I don't have a family; so he is the family. "What do you think about all this?" He said, "Pretty good idea." I hadn't made any plans for retirement because I wasn't going to do that because I was still going to do my work for the government until it was time to get out, and then I'd figure it out.

So he said, "I think it sounds like a good idea to me; if you want to do it, that would be an opportunity." I said, "Well, it's sort of interesting. I don't know anything about Latin America. I could learn something about Latin America. Maybe I could do something for the country. I know there's a lot of drug work going on down there. Noriega is creating hell in a handbasket, so, you know, maybe I can be some sort of stability."

So I flew back up here on Monday morning and reported to the Chief of Staff that I would serve. He said, "We already knew that you were going to serve because you told the Secretary you would serve and he's already told Cheney you would do it. Cheney has already told the White House you would do it, so it's already a done deal. But you can't tell anybody. Anybody."

So I went back to the beach and spent another week at the beach. It was going to be my holiday at the beach.

And everybody said, "Okay, when do you retire?" I said, "The change of command parade is on the 5th of August. Then I'm going to come to Washington and get settled and then I'll have, you know, the retirement parade will be up here." I didn't tell anybody that. They kept saying, "When do you want to pack up?" I said, "I'll tell you

when I'm going to pack up. Just tell the movers I'll give them three days' notice for them to pack up."

Then I said, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. Pack it all up. Just pack it all up and I'm going to move into the BOQ. Then you can repaint that house down there if it needs it, get it ready for the next guy, John Foss."

Then they came in and said, "Well, there are a bunch of guys that were formerly in the Recruiting Command that want to have a party for you down there, all these colonels, lieutenant colonels, Charlie Moskos and other guys want to have a big party." I said, "It sounds like a great idea to me." So they had a big party laid on for Friday night, and people flew in from all over the country from the Recruiting Command. The upshot of all that was they had this terrific farewell party.

Meanwhile what was going on was they were getting their ducks in a row with the Congress and the White House. So I got called to Washington one day and they said, "Come up here, we'll tell you what you're going to do when you get here. So I reported in to the Chief of Staff. And he said, "I want you to go over and see Brent Scowcroft [National Security Advisor]." So I walked in the door at the White House and go upstairs to see Scowcroft. He takes one look at me and said, "When Dick Cheney came over and said it was going to be you," he said, "everybody over here said, great, we know who he is, terrific."

So he said, "You got any questions?" I said, "I got no questions. I just want to face you up and make sure you know who I am." He said, "I've already told the President, you're it. So cool it and we'll let you know when it's ready to be publicly announced."

So this went on until very late in July, at which time it was finally announced like a week before my retirement down there, that this would be a change of command ceremony and that I would be the next CINC South.

DR. KIRKLAND: No retirement ceremony.

GEN. THURMAN: No retirement. At which time all the personnel weenies who had been in the recruiting thing all got mad because they—

DR. KIRKLAND: You said goodbye to them ...

(Laughter and joking.)

GEN. THURMAN: So the saga continues. On the sixth day of August I come in and I report in to Washington. I get an office in the Pentagon. And I begin to accumulate a little staff—Hennessy and a kid named Steve Mear, another guy, an engineer officer I came with in TRADOC came over, and another guy Sid Bole came up. So this little group. I began to get briefed up. Crowe [ADM William J. Crowe, Chairman, JCS] gave me a three-hour briefing on Personnel 101 between he and me about what was going on down south and why the change had to be made and what he wanted me to do. That's what part of that was. He said, "You have carte blanche to look at the policy extant in the Defense Department with respect to Latin America and create new policy. And, then, bring it to us in the JCS the week before you go down there. Tell us what you found out and what you're going to do."

So I spent 45 days doing that, taking the language lessons, went out to Monterey and took a week's worth of nine hours a day of Spanish language plus doing it on a daily basis here from 7:00 to 9:00 every morning.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have a teacher or did you do it with—

GEN. THURMAN: No, I had a tutor. CACI happened to be in the same building that AUSA was. They had a tutor room there, and she taught me for two hours every day, five days a week. The upshot of all that was, I got myself ready, met everybody in Washington, earned over a nickel a day. The only guy I didn't see in Washington was the President himself. I saw Baker [Secretary of State, James Baker], Webster [William A. Webster, CIA], the CIA, saw all the relevant congressmen and senators, Cheney, Crowe, everybody, all the people in the State Department that were interested in Latin America.

DR. KIRKLAND: They had a lot of heartburn going on about—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, there was a big duke-out going at the time between Elliot Abrams, of the previous administration, who was the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs and Crowe principally and the Defense Department. It had to do with a matter with the Contras. So there was bad blood between Crowe and Abrams. And there wasn't a whole lot of confidence with the new people in the administration about where the Defense Department fit. And, oh by the way, they had this intransigent guy down in Latin America who was the Commander of SOUTHCOM, which goes in the second part of the story.

On the other front, in the month of May, I had made several trips into Panama as the TRADOC Commander. Bernie Loeffke [MG Bernard Loeffke] was the brigade level commander down there, and Fred was the CINC. I knew them both, and I'd been down there a lot. There had been a lot of incidents in the Panama, and there were probes to the tank farm and that kind of stuff. And the question was, have we got the right kind of policy with these people? Do you shoot them if they come in the tank farm? Do you warn them off, what the hell do we do? Dependents were being harassed and sort of an unsavory situation.

This was on the brink of the first free election in Panama, which was scheduled to take place around May 7th, 8th, or 9th of 1989. So the Americans sent in a bipartisan vote registration and voter oversight group under the auspices of the Organization of American States and the United Nations.

The upshot of that is, the people that went on that oversight group included Jimmy Carter, President, and Jerry Ford, President, Jack Murtha out of the House whom I knew very well, and John McCain out of the Senate. Apparently when they got to Howard Air Force Base they got on some buses to go where they were going to go and Fred Woerner got on the bus and told them that, because of the tension that was there at the moment, he was unable to guarantee their safety. He had about 16,000 troops there, and he had two ex-presidents of the United States, and he told them he couldn't guarantee their safety.

So McCain, for one, came back to the United States after that escapade and went to the White House and told Bush he had to get rid of Woerner. This was kind of an intolerable action by a CINC when dealing with two ex-presidents. It was just intolerable. He said, “If we'd had two men down there, then it maybe something about it, but he had 16,000. That's bullshit.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Where were they all? There were only two battalion brigades down there, wasn't there?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, but they had three battalions and a brigade at the time and they had Special Forces people, and they had Marines, and they had a Navy contingent; they had the headshed of SOUTHCOM, they had the MP company, extra MP company, a lot of people. They had a mechanized battalion down there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was it already there?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, from the 5th Mech. So the upshot of all that was that there then began a series of meetings after May 9th—I'll call it the 9th, it's either the 7th, 8th, or 9th—in which the coalition won but Noriega vitiated the election. OAS tried to get him to do something and couldn't make it happen. So there began a big policy meeting about what are you going to do about all this, Bush administration, which led to a presidential directive in the midst of July of 1989.

Oh, by the way, in May, Fred had made a speech to the Rotary Club down there that there was a policy vacuum for the new administration on matters pertaining to Latin America. It's never the right thing for a CINC to say in public there's a policy vacuum for its Commander in Chief. After all, if there ain't any policy, you've got to invent it yourself.

The upshot of all that was he was in substantial disrepute with both the State Department and the Defense Department and the Office of the President. Then this new presidential directive came out and said, you will start doing what we knew as Purple Storm and Sand Flea exercises, which were to reassert U.S. sovereignty associated with

the Carter-Torrijos Treaty which had been left to languish in the years since the Carter-Torrijos Treaty in 1979.

The upshot of all that was Bay, Freddie, and company began to do very high-speed road marches around the area with ammunition. Meanwhile, the tempo of harassment of soldiers was going up. But, Fred was a reluctant dragon. I'm not dropping a dime, but it is a fact that Fred has spent most of his adult life in Latin America and was married to a Bolivian. So, many folks perceived that he had become captured by Latino relationships; and the fact that he had a lot of personal knowledge about Latin America and therefore he knew a lot more about Latin America than any American. But his policies weren't the government's policies. He was then told to change his policies and make them the government's policies; and he didn't necessarily like that. So the friction back and forth between the Joint Staff and the State Department and the Department of Defense began to be at such a high level that they finally said it was an intolerable affair. So you see, these two things were moving in trains at the same time in dimensionality.

I'm meeting with Cheney in mid-May after this big debacle in early May; and whether Jack Marsh knew a lot about that, he may have. Some in the press say that I was also being touted to be the chairman by Marsh, or if some other service got it to be the Vice Chairman. I can't attest to that. Marsh never told me that, but there is some stuff in the literature, I think. The commanders talk a little bit about that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was the tension between State and Defense a consequence of Defense backing Woerner or something else?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, the tension between State and Defense started out with Crowe's general nonsupport of the Iran Contra business. Elliot Abrams was the guy running that kind of policy in the Department of State. I think you will find Crowe's pronouncements on military force and the like as being—he is generally viewed as being very much of a dove on the use of military force and only as a court of last resort. So, he was against, for example, the Persian Gulf escapade. He testified against sending troops there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he against the Purple Storm and Sand Fleas?

GEN. THURMAN: No, because he had to do that because he was directed to do that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay. So that wasn't a source of friction?

GEN. THURMAN: No. The friction came a long time before that, before I got on the scene. The friction occurred essentially between he and Abrams first on the Contra matter. But Abrams went out of the government in January the 20th, and there was a lingering frustration in the State Department because of then Fred Woerner saying, whose under the control of the Pentagon, saying, well, there's no policy down here; then Woerner telling the Voter Delegation Commission he couldn't take it. So, here is a direct subordinate in the chain of command from Crowe down to the CINC, and Crowe hadn't got this guy under control. Follow me?

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay.

GEN. THURMAN: So the State Department is looking at all this and again saying, here's a guy who can't control his people and can't control his forces. So these things are going on two tracks exactly simultaneously.

So, now they tell me to go into office. These two documents are done before I get there; the presidential findings and all that stuff are done before I get there. These things were done in July, and I get there in the first week of August.

Crowe sat down with me and he gave me the long litany of what the Defense Department's troubles were with the Department of State, and he told me to go review the policy. So I began a period of intensive work, about 45 days of work, of reviewing every document there was on Latin America. Then I went around and spent an enormous amount of time talking to the DEA people and spending all this amount of time talking to the State Department functionaries including principally a guy named Bernie Aronson.

Bernie Aronson had been a speechwriter for Jimmy Carter. His wife headed up some large human rights organization. When I went to see Bernie, I said to him, “The friction is over. I am the new guy on the block and I’m going to work with you and we are going to achieve whatever it is the government intends to achieve in Latin America on whatever time scale we are going to do it.”

Well, you had a big problem brewing in Panama, you had a big problem brewing in Cuba, you have a big problem brewing in a place called Nicaragua because they’re getting ready to have elections there in February of 1990 on a free Nicaragua. And it was not clear that the Sandinistas would go peacefully.

So I go to see the CIA and the Secretary of State and the under secretaries and the head of Counter Terrorism and the DEAs and Customs officials and the number two guy in the Treasury Department, go see the Vice President and go see everybody. The only guy I don’t see is Bush.

I prepared a top secret briefing on what I thought ought to be done. One of the things I said should be done is we should clear the decks in Panama, get all the dependents out so that if Noriega wanted to continue to screw around he knew that we were prepared to do bad things.

So the last week of September I gave a briefing to the Joint Chiefs; all the Joint Chiefs were present including Crowe. Then I rode Powell’s coattails going into office. Everybody on the Hill knew who I was. I called on everybody in the Hill, called on the big four committees in both House and Senate and added the Foreign Policy Committees in both because I’d have to deal with them on matters like security assistance and the like.

In the course of all that I also went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and got a briefing on a contingency plan. I did not go to Panama because there were some strained relationships down there that were definite. Woerner and his wife were making a big circuit around Latin America before he came out, hitting all the countries, and I wasn’t welcomed. In other words, Woerner didn’t call up on the telephone and say, “Come down here so I can give you a dump.” So I didn’t.

I went to Bragg and I spent a day there reviewing the potential operations plan called Blue Spoon, which was the plan for the reinforcement of the canal in the event

there was an action between us and Noriega. Essentially the plan called for air landing reinforcing troops to fall in under the war-fighting headquarters located at U.S. Army Panama, which is essentially a brigade level command under the command and control of the major general. At that time his name was Cisneros [LTG Marc A. Cisneros]. This would be a piecemeal air landing of troops to build up in the case there is some fracas and we pile on behind whatever was there and make something out of it.

Now, earlier in the spring, because I knew a little bit about Panama, not a lot but a little bit—I had been there several times as the TRADOC and as the Vice—I went to see Vuono. And I said, “Who do you plan to put into the J3s job? He said, “I hadn’t really decided on anyone.” I said, “I recommend you put in a brigadier general named Bill Hartzog.” I said, “Bill Hartzog is currently the Assistant Commandant at Fort Benning, Georgia, and he had just turned the heavy brigade that was located at Fort Benning and now was the Assistant Commandant.” I had worked with Bill for a year—he, as the Assistant Commandant and me as the TRADOC Commander. He was the guy that I turned to for example when I was at TRADOC and said, “Go to Fort Irwin, California and do the one-month analysis on 100 offenses and 100 defenses and tell me what is wrong with the Infantry.”

Vuono asked me, “Why do you think he ought to go down there?” I said, “You’re liable to have a fight down there, and Woerner doesn’t know anything about the fighting and Loeffke doesn’t know anything about fighting.” I said, “You need a war fighter down there who has had a billet here in the United States”—because Woerner and Loeffke have essentially been out of the country as general officers. Woerner had really only one tour back at Presidio, San Francisco, as an Army Commander. It sort of gives him a respite, gives him a way to get made a lieutenant general so we could send him back to be the SOUTHCOM Commander.

Loeffke had been an attaché, most of the time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was Loeffke the J3?

GEN. THURMAN: No. Loeffke was the commander of the brigade down there of U.S. Army Panama. And the J3 was a fellow named Cisneros. Cisneros was an

artillery officer and really didn't know a whole lot about infantry operations from my book. He was principally an artillery officer. So I said, "You've got all these guys and if we have to go to war down there we need a J3 who knows what the hell he's doing." I said, "Oh by the way, Hartzog commanded a battalion down there, so he knows the territory and he's also down there as the company commander. So he knows a little Spanish, he knows the territory, he likes it down there."

Vuono said to me, "I'll look at that and I'll get back to you." So he called me up about two days later and he said, "OK, you tell Hartzog that's where he's going." So I flew down to Fort Benning ostensibly to get a dump on something and I wind up with Hartzog. I said, "You're going to get orders here in the next week or so that sends you to Panama. You are going to be the J3 in Panama. You need a joint tour for one and secondly they need a war fighter down there. His jaw dropped six feet—

(End Tape 16, Side A)

(Begin Tape 16, Side B)

[Auditor's note: Side B not a continuation of the SOUTHCOM topic but rather a follow-on discussion of Thurman's experiences as the TRADOC Commander and Vice and the initial discussion of his involvement in the "Women in the Army" topic.]

GEN. THURMAN: ... readable manual for CINCs, hopefully that they would actually pick it up and read it themselves. This was supposed to be an intellectual piece about that; it became more a tactics and techniques manual as it finally emerged from the corporate JCS staff. Nonetheless, we got started on that.

We continued a very strong relationship with the Air Force down there. Bob Russ who was the Air Force Commander at Langley and the Tactical Air Command. Frank Kelso was the SACLANT, so we had what I call a peninsula pachyderm society made up of the four, flag, baggers down there. We had another rear admiral of the Navy, Bud Edney who was the Atlantic Fleet guy, and all that worked pretty well. We kept up the enterprise of direct relationships with industry. Every three months we had a group of them down on esoteric subjects like directed energy weapons or acoustics.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is your invitation, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah.

DR. KIRKLAND: This was again something sort of outside your mandate?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, but I perceived my mandate was to stay in touch with industry.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. Okay. And the combat development.

GEN. THURMAN: The combat development and sort of get on the leading edge of a variety of that stuff.

There was no particular resource squeeze at that time. We began to look at ways to strengthen this mentoring concept by reallocation of people and strengthening our combat developments by solidifying what work would be done at the various branch schools versus what would be done at the service school or at Leavenworth and Fort Lee, Virginia, in terms of differentiating the level of work so we didn't have to repeat the work.

We spent an enormous amount of time at Leavenworth. General Wayne Knutson was our combat developer out there and a very high quality guy. David Maddox was my combat developer and now the CINC USAREUR. So we had a first-class staff about that. John Crosby was the Deputy, and they put him to work on a program for revitalizing training in the Reserves. That thing has sort of been a blueprint that's currently in vogue and doing quite well. He spent a considerable amount of time trying to jack up the level of competency and training in the Reserves, and that has stuck and carried on.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did that program include any diminution of the administrative requirements of the Reserve units?

GEN. THURMAN: No. There was sort of a manifesto of "X" number of items that ought to be done. We took it up to Vuono and he approved them all and we got after it, and then it takes a while to get it codified.

On the matter of whether or not there was any specific program with regard to knocking off the amount of folderol in administration, I can't attest to that. It had to do more with the effectiveness of training and who would carry out various and sundry fiefdoms on the Guard and Reserve.

We continued the press on quality installations and we won back to back installation of the year, OSD installation of the year business. Took a big trip to China. The Secretary of the Army asked me to go over there and do a major initiative in China. Took then-Colonel Clark [GEN Wesley K. Clark] and several generals over there, one

engineer guy named Stroup [GEN Theodore Glen Stroup], Hallada. Wes Clark was an armor guy.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was it an assessment of the capability of the Chinese Army or what?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, actually, we had been training Chinese soldiers on the use of the TPU36 and 37 radar reports at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, probably little known to the American populace. This was before Tiananmen Square. They had asked to buy and did buy a couple of artillery locating radars which they were going to put down on the Vietnamese border because the Vietnamese were lobbing 1,000 shells a day into Southern China.

So I went over there to see that they had absorbed this item of equipment and did reasonably well and went out with a shooting demonstration where they demonstrated that they had indeed learned what it was that we told them to do and could operate the equipment and maintain it and keep it going.

But that was sort of a fascinating experience to go there. I visited the various fiefdoms of the Chinese Army. And it's quite a bit of a provincial army. They were going through a downsizing. They were going to cut 25 percent of their armed forces. They were going to go down from 4.4 million people to 3.3 million people. Then they were going to take another 80,000 people, or 100,000, and put them in the Civil Service. And I remember that's not 80,000; another 20 percent of 3.3 million, which would be 600,000.

I recall one regional commander says to me, "Do you have a civil service?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Do they wear a uniform to come to work?" I said, "No, no, they're civilians; they wear a civilian uniform." He said, "I don't think that's going to work here; we've been wearing uniforms for a long time, and if we take our uniforms off nobody would know who we are." So they were going through that phenomenon. They were going through the downsizing phenomena, and then they were going through the restoration of rank phenomena.

DR. KIRKLAND: Really.

GEN. THURMAN: And then Deng Xiaoping(, they had gone to him and said, “You need to be a five-star general.” And he said, “No, no, no, I couldn’t be a five-star general; the most I could be would be a lieutenant general.” Well, then there were a lot of guys who thought they were going to be brigadier generals, you see, if you could get to be brigadier general because Deng Xiaoping had downgraded the top rank from five stars to three stars. So they created two grades of colonel. There was a colonel and then a senior grade colonel. So they made it up in colonel’s ranks.

So I traveled all over China and Eastern China. Went down as far as the Vietnamese border and up to Manchuria. So I had a pretty good spread of their countryside and their life and all that.

I came out of that and I said in my report that the army was waiting for another opportunity to save the Republic, which turned out to be Tiananmen Square. I mean, I couldn’t have figured that. They were really displeased with their decline in their stature. We went out and they showed me a MILES demo. They had the opposing force, but their opposing force, they had little smoke canisters on everybody’s head gear. And if you hit the MILES thing, then there would be a puff of smoke that would tell you that guy was dead. The enemy had blue smoke, and friendly was red smoke. We’re the other way around, the enemy is red smoke. So it’s interesting that we’re congruent with that, that they perceive themselves as red and we perceive them as red.

So that was sort of an interesting two weeks in China.

DR. KIRKLAND: And we sold them the MILES stuff?

GEN. THURMAN: No, they had homemade. It shows you, if you give them the idea, they can go work it out.

I remember giving a lecture at the Nanjing Military Institute and there’s a Nanjing War College. Now, each one of the regions has their own War College. So it’s quite a regional or provincial army. This colonel, lady, asked me, “Do you know a military writer named DePuy?” I said, “DePuy?” She said, “Yeah, D-e-P-u-y.” I said, “Yeah, DePuy.” She said, “There’s an interesting article in this month’s *Army Magazine* written

by General DePuy, and it has to do with matters pertaining to the Army's Operations Manual 100-5. "

This was her talking to me. And I said, "Yes, what about that?" She says, "Well, what do you think about A, B, C and D, which had to do with that particular field manual in DePuy's commentaries." She had read both of them, and the *Army Magazine* had just come out. How did they get it over there? No rickety-tick over there, but they had gotten it very quickly. So it gave you some level of notion that they keep up with the stuff, doctrine changes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Very interesting, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: Dialogue in the press and all that kind of stuff. So there was a wide variety of trip taking about that. When I came back from that I went to Korea and told the Korean High Command what I had learned, and I went to see the Japanese High Command when I came out in order to make sure that they knew what I knew and confer with them.

The trips to Latin America continued in order to sort of get some estimate of whether or not we were doing the right amount of combat developments or what have you for matters pertaining to low intensity conflict down there. While I was at TRADOC, that's when we invented the TCBTP. I came back in, got the people from Leavenworth and the people from Lawrence Livermore to set up what is now the TCBTP training program, the Tactical Commanders Battle Training Program; and the computer thing lets you do it over and over again.

So I believe from a sensitivity standpoint that I was reasonably able to go to work without much learning curve down there. The transition into that was simple and I knew the territory. I knew the kinds of jobs.

Vuono had a monthly meeting on requirements, and so we went up to Washington once a month in order to be with materiel requirements and got into the ASARCs and did our contribution on that, did our contribution with AMC. Lou Wagner [GEN Louis C. Wagner, Jr.] and I got heavily involved in logistics matters. We had done that when he was the Director of Research at the Department before he went over to be the head of

AMC. We were able to set into motion a shortening of the time span when you requisition an item at a post, camp or station until you get them from the warehouses; and cut off a considerable amount of time delays by shoving the requisitions—instead of sequentially up the line you shove them directly to the NICP [National Inventory Control Point] and get a faster response about that. We started it at Fort Rucker and then moved it to Fort Hood, and now it's everywhere through the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did you get into this as a TRADOC skipper?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, because I own the log center. This was right up log centerlines and trying to be more innovative in speeding the access of items of equipment to the field. Lee Salomon [GEN Leon E. Salomon], who is now commander of AMC, at that time was brigadier general at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, ran the school up there. I recall telling him about my days at Aberdeen when I had gone to school up there, how I was immersed in manuals. And I said a person at Aberdeen, an ordinance officer ought to know enough about an engine to be able to take one apart and put it back together again, know all the functionalities in an engine. He said, "Well, I'm not sure we've got time to do that." I said, "I just gave you an instruction."

So he went out and bought 100 two-cycle engines and had them mounted on a workbench. And every student, whether you graduated from West Point or Harvard or William and Mary or wherever the hell you went to school, had to take the engine apart, put the engine back together, and get the engine to run as part of their graduation opportunity to do that. Every officer had to learn how to weld.

Now, why would we go through this horseshit? Well the reason you go through this horseshit is because your business is to maintain stuff. And if you don't know any maintenance, you can get afraid of the implements. So if somebody says, that's a welding torch, and you won't put your hand on a welding torch because if I put my hand on it I might blow something up or blow the gas up or set myself on fire or burn my mittens off my hand or whatever I'm doing. So you've got to make people comfortable with it. So it's part of what I would call the 'gunner's badge syndrome.' We said, if you were an

engineer officer, then you've got to be capable of setting C-4 charges and blowing breast works and apaty and all that kind of stuff.

So we invented the sapper, engineer sapper program, which said you'll have the similar credentials for a sapper that you would for an expert infantryman's badge. So we got that going.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is there a badge associated with it?

GEN. THURMAN: No, but there's a qualification associated with it. You got one like your marksmanship badge.

DR. KIRKLAND: It says Sapper?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I asked Reno one day to take all his people in his ANOC and give them C4 and blasting caps and all that stuff, demolition caps, and tell them to blow a tree down. Twenty-five percent of the people couldn't do it because they didn't know how to hook it up. Yet these were the sergeants that were going to run all of this. He went over to the transportation school, so naturally he put that in the curriculum, and they all had to go do that.

I went over to the transportation school; all of it was being conducted indoors. I said, "Everybody here has got to have a license for every vehicle that is currently in the transportation fleet." He said "I beg your pardon" I said, "License."

DR. KIRKLAND: Drive truck.

GEN. THURMAN: Drive a truck. If you're going to be the truck master, you've got to be able to drive it because you're supposed to supervise everybody driving trucks, license them, make sure you know how. You've got to drive a truck. That was heresy at the time. So had to change the curriculum and start driving trucks. I mean, sergeants had to drive trucks.

Then we got over to the QM School when I went down to the pipeline outfit where they teach them petroleum pipeline. I said, “What is the exam here? What’s the final qualification?” “Well, you have to figure out flow rates through the pipeline.” “Let me tell you what the exam is: you give an ANOC sergeant a FARPE [Forward Ammunition and Replenishment Point], helicopter FARPE, fueling Army and refueling point equipment, and you give him a grid coordinate to rendezvous at Fort AP Hill, and you tell him to meet you there at time ‘X,’ and two hours after that you fly in a helicopter and refuel it.”

DR. KIRKLAND: He has some troops there?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, he’s got BNOC and AIT guys with him. That means that he’s got to find out where he’s going, he’s got to do map reading exercise. I said, “Yeah, that’s right.”

He said, “He’s got to drive there and find the place in the field you told him to go to.” “Right. That’s right. And, oh by the way, he’s got to have the FARPE set up so he’s got to go through the business of purifying the fuel, making sure there is no debris in there, and checking all that for foreign matter and then make sure it’s strained properly and all that. Then he’s got to put up the safety facility and make sure of the helicopter crash area, put out the fire and all that.”

I said, “You see, we are training this guy to be a FARPE mechanic; that’s what we’re trying to do, make him a FARPER. So get out of the schoolhouse and get in the field.”

So it’s constant prodding about that to go back to the field. Every time you lose sight of that, then it will creep back inside the schoolhouse, so there’s a constant push to get them back out in the field.

So when I went down and insisted that master gunners at both Fort Knox and Fort Benning would have to go downrange in order to keep their master gunner qualification. There was a big hubbub about that.

So what I tried to do in the training game was actually install the mentoring program in the day-to-day BNOCs and OBCs and the like. And put people in the field so

that they were learning skills that were relatable to what it was they'd do as lieutenants and captains and sergeants running various and sundry things. So that's sort of the attack on the training vector about TRADOC's responsibilities.

On the combat developments we had to do the LARAP which is the Long Range Acquisition Research Acquisition Plan for bringing items who worked heavily with Bob Black, who was a civilian over at AMC, and with Lou Wagner, who was the Commander of the Army Materiel Command in order to do a joint effort so that the Department of the Army wouldn't have differing opinions coming up to them as a heavy resolution job about that detail work, about how to do that.

I left the recruit training game to John Crosby, and he sort of supervised the basic and advanced individual training game. And I sort of picked it up at the BNOC and ANOC and the like. In the leader development we spent a considerable amount of time in the practical game of leader development and in the writing of a couple of manuals including the manual on 25-100, which is the training manual for the Army. This is also a new training strategy, which Carl Vuono had experimented with when he was in the 8th ID and then more experimentation when he was the TRADOC Commander and deputy guy at Leavenworth and then at TRADOC headquarters itself. So we were refining that and getting that published on Carl's watch because that's what he wanted as part of his legacy in training.

Pretty heavy travel schedule overseas into Israel, into Egypt, into Turkey.

(Discussion held off the record.)

GEN. THURMAN: Have you looked at my tape on the Medical Corps?

DR. FRANK WARD: No sir, I haven't seen it. I don't get to see it unless it gets negative press. [Laughs.]

GEN. THURMAN: It's a good tape.

DR. WARD: When did you make this?

GEN. THURMAN: Last year at Brooks. It's been shown at the Commanders Conference down there. And, what it does is it tells you what the vision is for the Army Medical Department and what you have to do in order to have world class combat casualty care.

In certain specialties, you have to have world class research. You have to make provision for that. And the only guy I know who has made provision for that is Berman, in the clinical nature. But, that means, he gets extra people and extra floor space and extra money and a few other things. Then, you end up world class.

You may choose not to have world class oncology but you may want to have world class trauma medicine. You want world class burn medicine, obviously because they're part and parcel of our business. But, would you want world class OB/GYN work? And, the answer is yes.

DR. WARD: Really?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, because you've got 13 percent of your [force] is female.

DR. WARD: That's interesting that you should say that because that's an area—I think I've mentioned it before—that's an area where I might say, the mission has not been provided with the resources, the service has not been provided with resources to follow the mission.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes, I'm just saying, if you have 13 percent of your force that has a particular predilection for a particular claim on medical time, you've got to provide for it. We know burns—that gets everybody, we know trauma—that gets everybody, we know dermos—as little as I think of them—you need them. Because you go off and get some esoteric disease over there. Neurosurgery and surgeons—since we are in combat casualty care—you've got surgeons you really need to take care of.

So, you need to look at my tape. I'll make Jones get a copy of it sometime. Take it home and go to sleep. Put it on while you're getting ready to go to sleep, nod off.

DR. WARD: Sir, with all due respect, I'm not sure if I want to hear you speak in the moment before I head off to sleep.

[Hearty laughing]

GEN. THURMAN: You do it when you get up. That will get you fired up, cut yourself shaving.

DR. WARD: That will get me inspired because you're on my mind quite a bit already.

[Medical discussion]

DR. KIRKLAND: When you hit the nadir, is it the nadir that just counts, or do you feel like you're—

GEN. THURMAN: Well, you have to stop eating uncooked food. You can't eat any uncooked food. You have to be very careful you don't get any scratches, no dogs around. I've got two dogs, but they go away during this period of time.

DR. KIRKLAND: Don't have a sitter?

GEN. THURMAN: And if the reds go down, you feel it. You can't tell it on the whites. But the reds go down, then your energy level goes away. Because that's your oxygen carrier. So you can begin to tell like walking up and down the steps any exertion whatsoever, you can tell. I've gotten down to 25,000 reds. Your normal number is 54,000. About that time you're huffing and puffing because you've essentially cut your oxygen supply in half. So you huff and puff.

DR. KIRKLAND: You get cramps and all kinds of things. But you haven't had those?

GEN. THURMAN: No, not that. It's exciting.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's a hazardous trip, is it not?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. First of all this is round two on this particular subroutine and it could not work and the counts could not come back. And if they don't, then we're in the soup. If they come back, they hopefully come back with the right production in the carrier sites, which are the precursor cells for platelets. Then you're okay. But if they don't come back, then you either have to go on transfusions, or I'd have to go down to Fort Sam, the Brooke Army Medical Center and go through a bone marrow transplant because I have bone marrow in storage down there in cryogenic storage.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is that your own?

GEN. THURMAN: That's my own. It's called an autologous bone marrow transplant. You give your own, they clean it up with chemo and then they reimplant it. But in my case I have to go through a big chemo regimen that flat puts you out, and I'll be in an incubator there for a while because they drive all your counts to nothing then in order to reinsert the marrow. Then there is no guarantee the marrow will work. So that's - shitty, man. So hopefully we don't have to do that. But that's the ace in the hole.

DR. KIRKLAND: It's good to have multiple lines of defense.

GEN. THURMAN: Sir?

DR. KIRKLAND: It's good to have multiple lines of defense.

GEN. THURMAN: No, that's right. And that's what we're trying to do is trying to go—there are also two other drugs we haven't tried yet called interleukin-6 and interleukin-11. We are holding that out because those drugs haven't had enough trials on them yet. So we would have to debate whether or not to take that if this one doesn't work. You keep taking transfusions, pretty soon you build up antibodies that eat up the transfusion as soon as it comes in the body so you don't get any benefit out of it.

DR. KIRKLAND: Wow, talk about second- and third-order consequences.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, I think I will leave you now.

GEN. THURMAN: All right.

DR. KIRKLAND: I will come back.

GEN. THURMAN: Let's see what we are doing here next week. Okay. Next week, if all goes well, Monday is Washington's birthday and I'm doing nothing on that date. The 22nd readiness, I'm working at the Pentagon. Then Wednesday and Thursday and Friday are all open.

DR. KIRKLAND: Let's do it Monday.

GEN. THURMAN: Washington's birthday.

DR. KIRKLAND: Would you rather do it here or—

GEN. THURMAN: This is fine because I don't know what status I'll be in by then. So that will work. Good.

(Session ends for the day.)

(Begin new session.)

GEN. THURMAN: One of the things we didn't talk about, which is a significant thing, is we did not talk about women in the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: No, we didn't.

GEN. THURMAN: The women in the Army experience starts with Westmoreland as the Chief of Staff when he is issued instructions to integrate West Point by 1980, and the number of women are beginning to increase in the Jimmy Carter administration.

As the PA&E we began to market how many women there would be in the Army and what the recruiting resources were and that sort of thing. That's when we began to get into attrition rates, which were significantly higher than male attrition rates for a variety of reasons. I'll come to some of those later. Even upper mental category women would attrit faster than the same mental category males. So you got into a substantial cost problem with respect to the advent of bringing a large number of women on board. So that's sort of one thing that as PA&E I was able to begin to observe and plan for and figure how many people to recruit and all that sort of thing.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were they attritting higher than CAT4, non-high school graduate males?

GEN. THURMAN: Upper mental category women? No.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: Upper mental category women would attrit at about the same level as mental category four males. They ran something like 40-some percent, as I

recall, against upper mental category 1 to 3A males which was in the order of 25 to 26 percent in those days, the mid-to-late '70s.

So as it goes through stage one is the integration of women; then you go into stage two, which is the orders come to integrate into West Point. Meanwhile there is information coming back from the field that maybe you have too many women in a single kind of unit, like there are too many women in single units or too many women in medical units, et cetera.

There was a substantial amount of blowback from the field as to whether or not women could handle chores in the FTXs [Field Training Exercises] and the CPXs [Command Post Exercises] and that kind of stuff to be done in the field missions. Matters concerning pregnancy and all that were beginning to come to the fore.

At the same time you began to have, are we properly taking care of our female soldiers with the requisite medical attention and that kind of business. So a variety of issues were beginning to spring up in the late '70s about women. And those issues were bubbling around in the PA&E because they were resource-related issues.

Now by the time I get to be the recruiting guy, one of the things we absolutely stopped doing was recruiting in the non-high-school-graduate women because non-high-school-graduate women would invariably recruit out or have a drop-out rate of up to 60 percent.

DR. KIRKLAND: Who made that decision? Was that you as the recruiting commander?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, yeah. I recommended it to the DCSPER and they said, fine. So we stopped recruiting all non-high-school-graduate women.

DR. KIRKLAND: That was in '79 or '80?

GEN. THURMAN: '79, early '80. Then we eliminated CAT4 women. Then, essentially, we worked on high school graduate 1 to 3A and 3B women and tried to focus on 1 to 3A women because their stay rates were higher.

Now, when I get to be the personnel chief, Jack Marsh had just come on board in about May of 1981 as the Secretary of the Army in the Reagan administration. Jack had high tentacles to the Congress because he himself had been a congressman for four terms. So he was well regarded in the Congress and knew a lot of people in Congress and was well-acquainted with what I would call the trickle-down authority from Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution on raising armies and the responsibilities of the Congress on the one hand versus the Executive branch on the other.

He called me up one day and said to me, “We have to come to grips with a policy on the use of women in the U.S. Army because there are two laws on the books currently. This is 1981. One of which precludes the use of women in combat jobs in combat ships, aboard ships. The other excludes women from being in combat aircraft. No law pertaining to the Army.” So he said, “In the absence of a law I want you to draft a policy statement that we can adopt pertaining to the utilization of females in the U.S. Army that is in the spirit of the two laws associated with the Navy and the Air Force, the explicit law.”

So I hired a guy to help me work this particular caper and his name was Colonel Chuck Hines, Charles Hines [MG Charles A. Hines]. Chuck Hines was a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins, military police officer, very smart guy in personnel matters, and he was also a minority officer, an Afro-American. I gave Chuck a very small staff. He had about three guys working for him—a guy whose last name is like Cobalt or Kowalsky or something like that who was an MSC Officer, and a third officer whose name escapes me. I may think of it later, but those are two guys, you sort of want to talk to a little bit. Durso was the other guy, Tony Durso.

I gave him this task, and that was their single piece of work. They did a brilliant strategy piece of work and it took us probably close to a year to get that work crystallized to where it would be suitable for having a rational base on which to proceed—one, to codify it in the Army and, two, to get the relevant OSD bureaucracy to make sure it was squared away.

Meanwhile the DACOWITS, which is the Department of Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Armed Services, met once every six months and was in the business of encouraging the Secretary of Defense to broaden the opportunities for women

in the armed forces. The DACOWITS had one distinguishing characteristic, which is not necessarily a good one. Although it was a politically based committee that was appointed by whatever the sitting administration was, they had the unfortunate rule inside the DACOWITS structure that said—

(End Tape 16, Side B)

Faris Kirkland–Maxwell Thurman Interview Tape 17

(Begin Tape 17, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: —fact of previous administrations. So in the case of the early days of the Weinberg administration you would have carryovers from the Harold Brown and Democratic administrations. And then you had 12 years' worth of Republicans. Then the current DACOWITS has got carryover in there. So it's sort of a—

DR. KIRKLAND: Bigger and bigger?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. I mean, everybody could come to the meetings and many of them did because it was a forum for speaking out on women's affairs and various military by whoever wanted to use that particular forum to speak out.

So Chuck Hines and his boys—we had females on that task force as well, I can't think of their names—first of all went to the Department of Labor Work Classification Codes because those classification codes had stood up under scrutiny by court challenge. And, therefore, were an effective way to say that we had our description of jobs related to an existing code that had been prescribed by folks who had nothing to do with the Army and yet they had stood up to court challenge in Workmen's Compensation cases and other kinds of cases.

We then pulsed TRADOC and had TRADOC do a subjective, quasi-objective evaluation of the tasks that people had to do by MOS in order to be able to in some way, grade out the strength requirements to either push, pull, lift, or lift with others in a particular MOS.

Let me give an example. It's fairly clear, and you can make an objective assessment according to these classification codes, that the work in an artillery crew was very heavy work. Because you had to lift a projectile that weighed 96 pounds from the ground to an elevation at chest height. Therefore, one, two, three or four people were required to do that, this fit into the criteria that the labor code had developed that

described that as very heavy work. We ended up with very heavy work, heavy work, average work, or moderate heavy work, light work and sedentary work.

Now, to go through all the tasks associated with being a soldier where even the secretarial help on a clerk-typist MOS may have to pull guard duty, may have to throw hand grenades, may have to retrieve wounded, et cetera, why then we're beginning to be able to flesh out various and sundry MOS that fell under various and sundry classification codes. From that we then ascertained with some testing how many people would be able to do various kinds of work.

We then had ARI do a study and find out with incoming recruits how many recruits passing through—let's say 400 people going through Fort Jackson or 1,000 Fort Jackson women going through there—we devised a test on determining if you could do "X" upon entry, then with 12 weeks, 14 weeks, or 18 weeks of basic and advanced individual training, how you would be able to build strength during that training modality so that by the time you exited the MOS course for which you enlisted, you would be able to handle the requisite to that, whether it's lifting artillery "projos" or lifting pencils or throwing grenades or whatever it was you were going to do.

So we could give you a predictive test on a small machine much like one of these lap machines that you may find is an exercise machine for lifting, pushing, and pulling.

And for a while we put those in recruiting stations and actually used them for measuring potential. The recruiters, after I left the enterprise, got rid of them, which was a mistake.

But, at any rate, we went through all this drill and finally came up with a policy statement that mirrored the two laws on the books which would exclude women from direct combat, which essentially said, women will be excluded from infantry, armor, artillery, and others that would bring you into routine direct contact with the enemy.

Then we came up with some statements about transiting the combat area; and we came up with a thing called the DCPC, the Direct Combat Probability Code. We came up with seven such codes that ranged anywhere from the front lines to the CONUS. There became seven of these direct combat probability codes with number one being direct combat. The salient feature of this is that your duties required you to close with the enemy on a routine—underline routine—basis, which became the DCPC code.

Then we had rules of association. So it said, while you may not be an infantryman, because you had a routine job closing with and defeating the enemy, that you might also be an ordnance person or a clerk typist; and could you be a company clerk or could you be a member of a contact team with an infantry or an armor unit? We said that the rules of association were also applicable. Therefore, if you were female and you were a medic, you could not be assigned to a battalion aide station. If you were female and you were a clerk typist, you couldn't be a PLO clerk down in some company or battalion.

We brought all these papers up to Secretary Jack Marsh; and after excruciating review by his M&RA and by his Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower Reserve Affairs by himself, and by briefing Weinberger and Weinberger's staff, we then issued this policy. We briefed the DACOWITS in train and got some feedback from them, most of which was hostile because they preferred, even in a Republican administration, to open up essentially all the billets, although they never said open up infantry and armor.

So that now becomes the policy. And that has substantial effect now on how you code the units, how you code the billets, how you code each individual person's records so he or she knows what kind of unit they can serve in or can't serve in and the like. It becomes a substantial administrative burden to administer.

It also has anomalies in that normally you would not necessarily place some military intelligence units right on the front lines in a normal hostile conflagration. But because Europe was on the defensive, you put some intelligence units right square on the interzonal boundary between East Germany and West Germany or in Korea. So you had women operating in front of the infantry. So you had anomalies of these various kinds.

We also took a stab, based upon these codes of heavy, very heavy, and all that kind of stuff, when we looked at the number of stretcher-bearers in a particular unit we tried to make sure that you didn't exceed "X" number of women in a particular unit if you had to handle casualties, for example.

Now, that policy rocked along without much change to it from about 1982 to 1987, about five years. Meanwhile, the DACOWITS were always constantly nibbling on this regulatory matter that we had issued. Finally they persuaded Secretary Weinberger to reopen the issue of the direct combat probability codes. And they assigned the deputy

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, David Armor, A-r-m-o-r, to review all these policies.

Dave Armor did so; and in 1988 he took a new policy to then-Secretary of Defense Carlucci; and there was some modification of the assignment game, but essentially he stuck with the rules about the direct combat probability code. And he stuck with our concept of exclusion from frontlines of the battlefield.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did he have input from the then-DCSPER?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. By that time Al Ono was the DCSPER, I believe. There had been some modifications of what jobs were open. We made an initial evaluation of what jobs would be open in 1981–82, which ones would be closed; and then as new evidence came forth or new information that pertained to what jobs would be opened or shut. I'll give you an example.

The Pershing II Missile System came on board in that period of time. We said, although you would be subjected to retribution by the opposing force or Spetsnaz would be able to attack you, we did open the Pershing Missile System because it was a new missile system and the setback was substantial from the front-line area, so that women would be permitted to serve in that unit because you were not routinely—underline routinely—engaged in direct combat with the forces.

Although, again, Spetsnaz could attack you [Auditor's note: Spetsnaz denotes the Soviet Union's military covert operational forces]. So at no time did we ever say that the battlefield was impervious to attack either by ground, by air, or by missilery. What we did insist on is that it was the routine engagement of people where the probability of killing was high and capture was high.

So the Armor Report came out in 1988 in the Reagan administration and essentially ratified the basic elements of the policy that we had invoked in 1982.

Now, when the Bush administration came in, there were still some minor openings that were going to go on about all that. Some minor adjustments were made in the early days of the Bush administration.

Then the next major event in this saga unfolds in the call-up of various and sundry people who are going to get ready to go to war in the Persian Gulf. There had been some minor hubbub established when it turns out I'm the commander in Panama and we have a female captain of the military police who achieves some U.S. notoriety in terms of an attack on a small enemy objective.

And there were cries in the Congress, principally from Representative Schroeder—"See, here's combat," which we never denied would happen on any battlefield. And, oh by the way, the MPs are embroiled in it, and an MP female is embroiled in it, and there were MP helicopter drivers in lift ships, Blackhawks, involved during the attack, none of which we ever denied that there would be women in combat. There would be women in combat, but they would not be in the business of routinely engaging for the purposes of prosecuting a war where high injury rates or high death rates or capture rates would ensue.

So, as an aftermath of the Panama Affair and as the Reserves began to get called up, doctors began to get shipped overseas for the Persian Gulf. And women began to see you had these public visions of women saying goodbye to their lap babies and getting in their combat gear and being posted overseas. There became another major effort in the Congress to take stock of women in the military. And only by the skin of our teeth in the Persian Gulf fracas did we escape having a ruling made that women who had young children would be excluded from going into combat, which would be the worst possible thing you could have in the Army.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: It says you can serve as a soldier, but you can't go to war. Man, that's crazy stuff.

So, at the conclusion of the Persian Gulf fracas, because we had 50,000 women serving in the Persian Gulf we had the positive side of things going very well with women serving in the Gulf, and a negative side of hanky-panky on the recreation ship that was sent over there on the one hand, women getting pregnant on Navy ships over in the Gulf region and the business of women leaving little kids back here as they went off

to war with the thought of being orphaned. The administration, in order to avoid hearings and the like, agreed to conduct a presidential commission on women in the armed forces, the assignment of women in the armed forces.

DR. KIRKLAND: And guess who got to be a commissioner?

GEN. THURMAN: And I got a call. I was in retirement at the time and I got a call. And the lady said, “Secretary Cheney would like you to be on this panel.” I said, “Well, you know, I take a tremendous amount of baggage because I’m the guy who has been involved the current Army policy as the DCSPER of the Army 11 years ago.” Then she answered the telltale question, the answer of course which is the one, she said, “Are you fair?” And obviously I’m fair. And she said, “If you’re fair, then we want you to serve on the committee.”

Well, I look at one of those things as being in the public service. After all, the government is paying my retired pay and I owe them something. So I agreed to serve on that. Then the Herres Commission was born, and I then served as one of the commissioners on Women in the Army Panel.

There’s a long story on the commission, okay. That’s a whole other story, and I don’t know if you want to get into that. The papers are full of that, whether you want to get into it now.

That’s sort of the saga of women in the Army.

So, some names that you want to go pulse are clearly Chuck Hines, formative guy on that. Claude Alton knows a lot about it, and Tony Durso was one of the guys who was an analyst on that. He retired as a colonel not too long ago. Chuck Hines went on to become a major general in the Army, as the commander of Fort McClellan, Alabama. He is now here and works for the Smithsonian. He’s the director of Security, having been an MP, at the Smithsonian. So he’s a very responsible guy. He invented a terrific system. Les Aspin just published a document before he stepped down in December on the revision of the system.

Although one of the things we had come to grips with was the “risk rule,” which is another way to talk about the direct combat probability code; while he abolished the

risk rule, he did retain the essence of what we had described as infantry armor, field artillery as being off limits for women in ground units and did have a problem with a risk rule associated with being assigned to a unit so that women cannot be assigned below brigade level in those kinds of units—infantry, armor and field artillery.

Women are now permitted by the changing of law to serve in combatant aircraft and noncombatant ships.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. To be in a headquarters battery of a field artillery brigade, but not in—

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah. So when we had the commission we voted to open ships except submarines, and we voted to keep closed the ground and keep the aircraft closed. The ground was almost universal on closed. Opening ships was eight to seven, and I was the swing vote on that to open them. [Auditor's note: The commission's vote to allow women to be assigned to all naval vessels except submarines and amphibious craft was Yes=8, No=6, Abs=1.] Then I was the swing vote on closing aircraft.

My reason for closing aircraft and opening ships goes like this. Ships in the main, except for submarines, do not traverse the enemy's soil or homeland and, therefore, have very low prospect of being captured. They don't routinely engage the enemy where there is a high prospect of capture or casualty. They can have casualties in the Navy, obviously, as witness World War II.

With respect to Air Force, the Air Force doctrine is to take the fight to the enemy's homeland.

DR. KIRKLAND: They fly over routinely.

GEN. THURMAN: They fly over, and so they are routinely engaged in a place where you're in combat aircraft, where the prospect of being shot down, being captured is high.

DR. KIRKLAND: Very high.

GEN. THURMAN: I guess my reason for voting to exclude women from aircraft was the indelible impression of Lieutenant Zahn, who was the Navy aviator who was captured in Baghdad and they beat the hell out of him and then put him on television. I could not picture that being done to an American woman. My own view is, it's not a question of are we so short of males that you need females in order to retain a high quality pilot force. The answer is, there are plenty of high quality males for a high quality aviation force, and, therefore, we don't need to open the market for that particular purpose. In other words, there's no good reason for subjecting women to that kind of stuff.

Now, that's my view and a lot of people had different views about it. So later on Aspin makes a decision to not do what the commission says and do what the Democrats were going to do anyway.

Now, "break break," in the course of the assignment of women in the armed forces, we found out some startling information. For example, there were almost 10,000 children under the age of 10 years old who were left in the United States as their parents went off to war. So if you had had a substantial casualty problem in the Middle East, you would have had a lot of orphans. The American people don't have any sense about that because we didn't have the casualties.

So the next guy is going to have a problem. If he has 10,000-20,000 casualties, and the national policy has been, yeah, we'll walk off and leave little kids back here, when essentially you don't need to. There is plenty of population out there. You don't really need to cause women to get into that kind of fracas. But if women are going to serve, then they have to go off and do combatant duties.

We identified 17 issues in the commission. And there is a commission report and I can give you a copy of it. Those issues are still around. The big three issues were, do women serve in the Army, Navy or Air Force. But there's another whole subset of issues which have to do with, can women do the work? How about little kids, et cetera, pregnancy rules and all that which vary by service and the like.

DR. KIRKLAND: They're still hanging out there unresolved?

GEN. THURMAN: They're out there waiting for attention. We identified those in our panel.

DR. KIRKLAND: You weren't involved in the close call about whether there would be a ruling for Desert Storm that women with young kids wouldn't go?

GEN. THURMAN: No. I was flat on my back in Johns Hopkins during all that time trying to recover with leukemia. But that did go on and there was about to be a congressional issue about all that.

My general view is that the capture game is one of the most important considerations. If you look at the Army major who was captured, she came before our commission and she reported that she had been sexually assaulted, as had the Spec4 who had been captured. I don't think you have to put women through that. That may be a Victorian age notion about that, but it sort of has to do with no other Army in the world has women in its combat arm's role. We have a great big population; we don't need women in there. Russians had them during World War II in extremis because their country was getting ready to be lost. The Israelis, contrary to popular belief, never had them in there.

DR. KIRKLAND: Never had them. Right.

GEN. THURMAN: I think we sorted through a tremendous amount of notions and got done some meaningful work. And the seventeen recommendations, I think, were all good ones. Several of them have been acted on, most have not.

DR. KIRKLAND: There was a subject that I wanted to renew with you.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's this business of infusion. It was apparent to a lot of people in Vietnam that having an event where most of the people in a unit went home was something that was a catastrophe to be avoided. Apparently, Colonel Norris, for one, felt that acutely when he lost his best one, two, three and four in the same month. One of the pieces of fallout of that, I guess, is your having to take over the job that normally the four would have done about then, getting the parts to the units that had a lot of weapons down.

So essentially here was a destructive personnel policy implemented in the name of solving an immediate problem which was perceived as being a disaster of having units go to almost total 100 percent turnover in a month or something.

Then there was the history of resistance to COHORT by the USAREUR people and the Armor community and the personnel management people. Again, to solve what were the problems that were on their desk at the moment, which was the people being unhappy when a COHORT company came and joined a battalion and so forth, everybody else felt like they were second class.

What I'm trying to get your view on is this preoccupation with the media problems destroying the ability to take a long view and get a long-term solution. Now, you were able to get away with taking a lot of risks and taking a long-term solution, for example, in the recruiting situation. Also in general with the functional area analysis business, these were not quick fixes, these were long-term looks. And I wondered if you had any thoughts about how ingrained in the Army preoccupation with what's happening right now and what's going to happen in the next readiness reporting cycle. How much that drives ability to make policy command and so on.

GEN. THURMAN: I think that in the main the Army, over time, has gotten itself into a short-range view problem. Now let me cite you some cases about that. The business of fairness and equality, fairness in general is a virtue that the Army likes to ascribe to itself. While never having been in the infantry, my understanding of the way infantry operations may take place is that not every day does the pointman remain the same in the infantry's advancement game. On occasion the pointman may be relieved,

one, because of tiredness or, two, for risk to go down. In some cases people feel the risk is such that the risk ought to be ameliorated among individuals.

I believe World War II was the last time in which we felt, as a corporate body, that equality went out the window if it imperiled efficiency. And therefore we had units that landed on D-Day that fought straight through to the conclusion of VE-Day. And people who lived moved up into ever-increasing job responsibilities in the main while constantly being replenished with new people who came in from the United States and therefore absorbed in the unit.

Take General DePuy, for example. He fought with the same unit all the way across Europe. He didn't hit Europe on D-Day, but he was pretty close behind that. General Stillwell was in that same unit. He was variously a regimental S3, the Division G3, et cetera. So he stayed in the same unit for the whole time, and a battalion commander.

So a number of people joined units in World War II; and if they lived, they stayed in those units through the end of the war. In other words, the enlistment contract looked like that, or the draft contract looked like that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Duration plus.

GEN. THURMAN: It said duration plus six. Now, as I understand it, at the conclusion of World War II there came upon the U.S. Army, how do we discharge people here. So people then in what is now ARI came up with a formula solution saying, well, people who had the highest risk during combat would get the highest premium towards being discharged and come home. So they adopted that on the heels of a riot in France. People said, the war is over, it's time to go home. So as soon as they put out a rule base, people could then count up their points and they could figure out when they were going to go home.

Everybody became very happy because we have an equitable way to measure things, and therefore I know what my number of points is, and I can figure out when I'm going home; and so I resolve myself to exist in the dimensionality where I'm going to

exist until I achieve whatever point score, or they call my number of points up and bring me home.

Now if you look at the fighting in Korea, I believe that in Korea we began to be plagued by: we're going to spread this thing around and it won't be the duration plus six. It will be, we will come over here and fight. And we began to get the 13-month tour game going.

And people then said, "If I've got 13 months to go and we stay on an individual replacement system, then I'll be rotating people through on basic training." Some of the regulars will go back for second or third tours, but in the main everybody is going to get one tour before we begin to rotate through the second tour unless you volunteer to go to it.

So, we began to carry this equality game, which had come out of World War II, into assignment policy in a fighting game. I believe that was the beginning of our undoing. So we became accustomed then with a group of people who fought. Let's say Shy Meyer and people graduating in the class of 1950-51—they fought in that battle. People in the class of '46, '47, '48 fought in those battles, and they began to think that this is the way you fight.

(Discussion held off the record.)

GEN. THURMAN: So in the Korean game we are in the business of starting up the 13-month tour. I think that if you think your way through that for a moment, one can understand that it's done because of raising forces' efficiency and in equality statements.

Let me talk to you about raising forces. "Raising forces" efficiency. If you go to a unit rotation policy in combat and you only want the unit to go over there and stay for 13 or 15 months or something, then you have to raise the cadre, put the people in it that are going to train it and bring it up to a combat readiness standard, and then ship the unit intact to the theater at which time you then trade out a unit that is in combat.

Well, we didn't do that in World War II. We kept raising units, but we never traded any of them out. We were continually trying to raise the number of division forces

in World War II. So our personnel people and our force development group have no experience base in the business of raising units and then rotating units out.

So the hierarchy of the Army, the generals and the colonels and all that, don't have any experience with it. But they do have experience with the substitution of people in World War II. Even though those who lived stayed on, they then replenished those that died or were casualties. Therefore, it was an individual personnel system that got us through World War II.

When a unit came off the line, if it had been attrited to 70 percent or 60 percent or something by casualties brought off of the line, you infused it with another group of people from the replacement training depot in a unit, and they trained for a while and went back in the line.

So we didn't have any experiential base of shoving units in so they fell back on the "efficient way to continue to raise forces," which was, keep the units you have over there out of the World War II model.

But instead of keeping the surviving nucleus there forever until the war was over, they also brought out the surviving nucleus. So, whereas, in World War II the combat skills of the unit were enhanced the longer the unit survived in combat—because those who survived in combat were survivors on the one hand and they were both the teachers and the trainers and the leaders for the next group of infusees to come in.

The bad part about both Korea and Vietnam was you took out the experienced leadership under this same kind of policy.

(End Tape 17, Side A)

(Begin Tape 17, Side B)

GEN THURMAN: His own strengths and what the vicissitudes of war were going to be about, and thus he was on a training and learning curve himself. Only when he got to a very productive state in a six-month tour because everybody was supposed to get a battalion command to do in combat, he got jerked out.

So I guess my view would be that the systems of the Army in terms of equality overcame, and efficiency for different reasons, not war fighting efficiency, but for force raising efficiency. They took over and dominated the headspace of the Army and thus led to this thing called infusion in Vietnam.

The perpetration of this hoax continues on such things as the view that you now have even though you're in command for a two-year tour; people give a look at, gee whiz, I've got to be able to do everything I'm doing on a two-year time swag or 18 months before when you had battalion command for 18 months.

So it becomes a flog the troops for 18 months, wring them out good, make sure I get my ticket punched well and I survive it—as opposed to a longer term which says I am in it for a long haul, and whether I command for two years or four years or whatever is inconsequential.

Shy Meyer, as a matter of fact, tried to go into a business of saying, the nominal tour is 18 months, but people could be in command from 12 to 30 months. It depends on how well you're doing. He got beat down by the four stars after he worked at it for about a year or two years as the Chief of Staff of the Army. They said, no. See, if we take a guy out earlier, he will think that he's not doing well. You know they didn't want to face up to the guy that, yeah, that's right, he wasn't doing very well. Or they may have taken the guy out after 12 months and made him the Division G3 or the Corps G3 which is really an important billet. But then it got to be, well then the promotion boards won't understand whether or not he was good, bad or indifferent. Therefore, everybody goes the standard of 24 months. Wickham tried to wrap around that 21 to 27 when he was the Chief, but even then he got to be, MILPERCEN won.

The problem here is that we don't have the same principle base associated with the assignment of people, the cohesion of people together, as we do, for example, with the principal base that on the 15th day of every month you measure whether or not your equipment is ready to go or not. That's a long sermonizing about that.

In my own case, see, the Army had raised me differently. The Army had raised me with a three-year tour as a PA&E guy at the rank of a lieutenant colonel, at the rank of colonel. I spent all my colonelcy as a brigade commander. I was only a colonel for 26 months, total. Then I'm back into the resource management game again, which is always a long view, and spent four more years in it. Then I'm in the personnel game, which is long view, and then I'm in the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army for the long view. So by the time I get to be the Vice Chief, in my case, I am a guy who has had two recruiting, two is four and five years of PA&E is nine and two years as DCSPER is 11 years of my colonelcy and generalcy is spent as a long-range viewer.

So it shouldn't be surprising I look at things in the long- range view—secondary, tertiary outcomes of decisions made at the spur of the moment. Not everybody is given that opportunity. I think you have to train people to look at the long term. We certainly don't do it at the War College.

DR. KIRKLAND: No, and we don't do it with the ticket-punching process of having to get so many things done in such a short time.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. As a matter of fact, now the ticket-punching game with respect to having to add joint service—two years' worth of joint service further inhibits developing this kind of long-term view unless you happen to hit a joint service billet that has some long-term view attached to the work in it. So I think we have a problem with that. I think it should be investigated thoroughly, and I think it should be included in curriculum development at the Army War College.

And people should be measured about whether or not they can do it at the Army War College because, essentially, the work of four star generals ought to be on a time horizon of 10 to 15 years. I mean, day-to-day stuff shouldn't be a part of that, but you find that the Chiefs of Staff of the Army are involved in day-to-day stuff on a daily basis.

Guys at probably the major general level ought to be looking out at about six years. Guys at the brigadier general level ought to be looking out at about three years. The average brigadier general is in an ADC billet for a year, maybe year and a half.

(Discussion held off the record.)

DR. KIRKLAND: That's one that's hanging out there that needs work.

GEN. THURMAN: Working hard on that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Another one I wanted to ask you about was when you were the Vice, what was the interplay of influence among ops and intelligence and logistics and personnel as far as who was driving the train? There's a sort of tradition that the three are the most important staff element. But at the Department of the Army level, when you are looking far down the road, did you find that you had problems training the major staff elements to take the long look?

GEN. THURMAN: I think you always have problems with taking the long look at a staff that is located in Washington, D.C. The Army staff, as a corporate body, ought to be looking downrange in order to serve the needs of the Army 10 to 15 years. Work is sort of divided into three tiers of order. Those three tiers of work are the work I do to support my bosses.

(Discussion held off the record.)

GEN. THURMAN: The levels of work are doing work to help your boss, doing your own work, and then delegating work and supervisory work of your subordinates. In the case of the Army staff it ought to be helping his boss, the Chief of Staff who ought to be looking downrange 10 to 15 years. The Army staff is also encumbered by things, agencies like OSD and the Congress, which causes it to look very short-range in terms of going after money on the Hill this year for next year's budget, et cetera.

Planning timelines at OSD also are relatively short-range for a headquarters of that size because it's essentially a five-to six-year timeline depending on the years of the POM.

So getting people to take a look at the long haul are important.

(Discussion held off the record.)

GEN. THURMAN: On the Army staff, you've got, obviously, the DCSOPS is the "paramount carabao" on the Army staff in the ranks of lieutenant general. But, for example, he spends a substantial amount of his time in the JCS. So some of his subordinates carry key long-term roles. One is the SS guy, the strategy guy, and another is the force requirements guy. In the case when I was there, Jack Woodmansee was the requirements guy, and he spent all his time looking long-term because he's figuring out how much money is going to be put on weapon systems and the like. That's all long-term stuff.

I think the Army staff has the capability of looking downrange, although I don't think it's their long suit. DCSPER does probably more. I think the two generals who have the longest downrange view about it are the OPS and the PER. Then the major generals that have the longest view about it are the RQ guys or the requirements guys in the hardware game and the acquisition guy who is in staff who has the requirement to bring the stuff on board. He's always looking long-range, downrange.

DR. KIRKLAND: Is he in DCSLOG or is he separate?

GEN. THURMAN: No, he's not in DCSLOG. He was the Deputy Chief of Staff for Research, Development and Acquisition, and now that job has been put in the Secretariat based upon legal stuff from the acquisition reform.

[Off the record.]

So I think there is certainly some training that ought to be going on that equips people to do longer range thought processes. Not a lot of people get a chance to do that. So the bench is generally not rich with people who can do that well.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were there situations coming up when you were the Vice in which the OPS or logistics objectives would conflict with what was best for the personnel in the Army?

GEN. THURMAN: Example?

DR. KIRKLAND: One I could think of would be, if OPS decided to do basic training at one post but the LOG people couldn't come up with resources to give them decent barracks, and so, therefore, instead of having a good feeling coming out of basic they came out with having lived in a crummy situation?

GEN. THURMAN: I don't recall many major ruckuses. I told you the anecdote of my deputy when I was the PER coming in and telling me that he had already agreed with DCSOPS that anything DCSOPS wanted to do that the personnel command we would support it. I told him to never ever say that again as long as he was working for me because in peacetime, you don't have a right to screw over people.

I think in the main that most people believe that the personnel system can do anything. The answer is, it can do anything. I mean, if you are in the Army, we can order you about and do any damned thing we want to. But if you are trying to run a personnel system that is generally fair with its people on the one hand, except in times of really imminent crises, then you have to make some time allowances to make sure that people don't get shoved around, pushed around, et cetera.

To give you a current example. We only had one civil affairs battalion on active duty. That civil affairs battalion was working on the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo when we ordered it to Panama, and they spent their whole Christmas of '89 down in Panama. And the following Christmas they were in the Persian Gulf. The following Christmas after that, they were in Hurricane Andrew in Florida.

Now, here is the case where you have only one civil affairs battalion in the whole inventory of United States Army. In order to ameliorate that you would have to raise

another battalion or you have to bring one in from the Reserve components for extended troop duty.

Should the Army investigate that for the business of ameliorating the personnel? My answer would be probably. You may want to think about having two of those given the fact that you are going to have two nearly simultaneous major regional contingencies in the new national military strategy. But, moreover, because you have high demand of those on peacetime operations other than real war, then you might think about whether or not we need more than one of those battalions on active duty on a contingency basis.

So I think that personnel, I could tell you, was taken for granted in the acquisition cycle. We got that turned about with our program called MANPRINT in the acquisition cycle. People just assumed that every Tom, Dick, Harry and Jane you bring into the Army is capable of doing anything for everybody on any kind of weapon system, and that just isn't so. You have to think your way through, what does it take to answer it.

I believe that there was, in fact, a renaissance in the 1980s brought about by the success of the All-Volunteer Force in the line that when you have a draft and you discharge a person from service, the function of the draft is to bring you another replacement. So a draft situation causes you, in many ways, to look at people as things as opposed to people.

The all-volunteer system changed, I think, fundamentally, the way in which we treat and dignify people because what we are doing is we are saying that we want to conserve people. If we don't, we have to go back and recruit them again, which is hard to do; it takes a lot of money to do that. Therefore, we are much more into conservation of people. And, oh by the way, if you bring in high quality people and you don't throw out as many due to indiscipline factors, then the whole atmosphere of the place in which you are living and working has been substantially raised.

I think one of the greatest benefits of going to the all-volunteer structure is the fact that we now treat people with more dignity than we did when they were draftees because we thought that it was a free gift.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's certainly been the big change, and the results of it are quite remarkable.

Do you have some views on the unit status report? I had the impression that you did, but we haven't talked about it at all—the fact that it counts people rather than capability and that sort of thing. I was wondering if you had any feel for what the constituencies were that insisted on its perpetuation rather than change.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, there is a regulatory piece of matter that comes out of the Department of Defense and as JCS that requires you to have a readiness reporting system. The Army has chosen to implement that with a once-a-month report although that's not required in the directing regulation. The directing regulation says you can have a living system, so you can report every day on readiness if you want to. The Navy does that. The Navy report changes on a living basis as you go down the line. The Army is one of those things that says, stop the music on the 15th of the month.

DR. KIRKLAND: Stick the thermometer in.

GEN. THURMAN: Stick the thermometer in your mouth and take your temperature and hustle around for the business of making sure that all of your equipment is up on the 15th. If it's down on the 16th, so be it.

The Navy is quite different about that. They report it as you go. So a ship can come up on the 15th and go down on the 17th and be back up on the 21st, and you get a real live system embroiled in that. I would like to see the Army do more of that.

The 220-1 or whatever that particular regulation is, the AR that describes our readiness system takes on more than you would want. It takes on a measurement system of your capability of stewardship of the unit you happen to be administering and can be used as either a reward capability or a threat capability because you're not as good as the Jones boys on day "X."

[Discussion off the record]

DR. KIRKLAND: I was going to ask you another question. When you were in TRADOC and you found that the SIDPER's error rate was very high and you did something—

GEN. THURMAN: Found that out when I was the DCSPER.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, did you? Okay.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. The SIDPER's [Standard Installation and Division Personnel Reporting System] error rate was 5 percent when I came in there. The way I figured it, 5 percent of 780,000 would be something like 37,000 errors per daily SIDPER's transaction. So I told the new AG, SIDPER's error rate would be .5. I can't say that that made a difference.

DR. KIRKLAND: I was wondering what you did about it other than say that you pull up your socks. The reason I ask is that SIDPER's errors were such a high profile cause of heartburn among the troops.

GEN. THURMAN: I achieved success more in the error rate of SIDPERs, probably more flogging than consequences. I didn't do the same thing for the SIDPER's error rate that I did for straightening out the promotion system and the number of NCOs. So I can't tell you much about that. I tell you, as I told you before, we cleaned out a lot of profiles.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes.

GEN. THURMAN: A lot of people who had been riding profile 3's suddenly became profile 1's because they decided they would like to stay in the Army and go overseas and go into combat rather than get transferred from the infantry to the quartermaster. That worked.

DR. KIRKLAND: That worked?

GEN. THURMAN: Right.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were there also bars to reenlistment or anything like that?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. A lot of forcing functions. If you were a profile 3 for an extended period of time, put you on a bar to reenlistment that said you can't automatically reenlist until you are off profile because we don't need you in this MOS anymore because you can't function.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did being on a profile affect eligibility for promotion?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. You can't get any favorable personnel action if you are on the profile or if you are on a bar to reenlistment. Very effective tool. It causes people to take action.

I also convened NCO—as sort of part of the follow-up on NCOES was to convene panels for promotion of E7s, 8s and 9s. I would actually fly out to Indianapolis and sit down with the promotion boards out there and tell them what it was I wanted done. Why I didn't want cooks promoted if cooks were in overstock. We gave them a little teeny, tiny quota that that would be it as opposed to others. The whole notion of this was to cure the imbalances so that we would be able to field and maintain the equipment that we had that we were beginning to get issued to us in large and substantial quantities.

The whole notion of that new equipment training and laundering in Bradleys and M1 tanks and MLRSs and all those new mobile subscriber equipments and all that became very important to getting the personnel system straight.

Mobile subscriber equipment is another good story. Talk about an acquisition story.

DR. KIRKLAND: An acquisition of people story?

GEN. THURMAN: No. It's an acquisition of capability in communications. I'll just briefly outline it for you. The Congress, in the law that was passed in August of 1981, came into knocking the communications account by, if I recall it right, \$135 million. So I called all Signal officers in the rank of general, no matter where they were

serving in the Army, to a meeting in September at Fort Belvoir. I told them in that meeting that the Congress did not have confidence in our program for acquiring signal equipment and that we were desperately in need of a new signal capability at higher units.

Therefore, since all these signal officers knew which way the rabbit jumped, then they were to go into a task force mode and within 30 days give me the answer on what the new communications architecture would be.

This is sort of unheard of. It's like calling all the armor officers together and tell them what you need. We don't do that. What we do is call TRADOC, tell TRADOC to tell us; and they tell you about three years from now what it is you need. So this cut through all of the levels of circuitry in terms of trying to come to grips with a vexing problem.

I think it took them 42 days, but they came back in 42 days and they gave me a dump that said essentially, we need to go to quote, "off-the-shelf equipment," unquote. There are two systems which are available for procurement. One is the RITA system in France, and the other was the Ptarmigan system in England.

So I took all my papers to the Under Secretary of the Army, Jim Ambrose, who was a good friend of mine, and told him this story. I said, "Okay, we want to proceed on putting out a winner-take-all bid that would be open for international competition or teaming arrangements between U.S. and international competition." He agreed with me, and together we formulated this very short request for proposal.

The upshot of that was, we put it on the street, Ptarmigan in England went with Rockwell, and GTE joined a French company that built the RITA system, Aerospatiale. So the two overseas vendors were in a head-to-head competition for a 20-year contract. That contract was opened, and the review board looked at them and awarded the contract.

From the time we had the meeting in September, by the 31st of December the following year we had awarded the contract. And 19 months, from the time the contract had been put out for bid until we put the first equipment in the field was 19 months. So the total elapsed time from the time I met with the signal officers was about 26 months. That was unheard of.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's fast turnaround all right.

GEN. THURMAN: Now, that contract was a unique contract for America and for the Defense Department. It embroiled Margaret Thatcher calling Ronald Reagan telling him that they had been victimized. And he had an investigation launched, and it turns out that the thing that lost it for the Brits, among other things, was the fact that they had used their own inflation indices instead of ours on the rate of borrowing money. You know, borrowing British pounds and American currency to get all this thing lashed together.

That was one of those success stories that was getting new items of equipment in just a little over two years from the time that it was even thought about. It's an unbelievable story.

DR. KIRKLAND: It is, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: We gave the winning company 20 years' worth of fixing it up, of depot maintenance, overhaul, and all that kind of stuff. We also had another feature in that contract which says, any money that you could save by innovative product improvements in the system, you may do that as long as you maintain basic configuration.

They redesigned the system a couple of times as they were delivering it, taking advantage of new technology as new technology came upon the scene. The savings they met they were able to plow back into new equipment, so they added packet switching to it. It really turned out to be an astonishingly good program, but it broke every rice bowl in the Army Materiel Command.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did you have any internal sweat as well as the conflict between Margaret Thatcher and—

GEN. THURMAN: We had internal conflict. For example, one of the things that was said was the contractor will do the training of new people to learn the system. So immediately Fort Gordon comes up and says, "We would like to bid on that contract and

bring it in-house,” which meant I would have to get more people to teach the course. So we said, “Yeah, you can go do that, but you’ve got to bring it back up here.”

And when we brought it back up and looked at it, we said, “You can’t afford the people it takes to teach the course. We are downsizing, not rising up.” He added another 1,000 instructors stated in. That’s one of those good-news procurement stories.

The other one is the ATACM [Army Tactical Missile System] switches, which is sort of the same sort of thing. You know, you look around at your career and you say, did you put your hand on a couple of things that really turned the tale? I look at it myself and I give myself credit for the Patriot Antimissile capability, the ATACM system and the MSC. Those are the three that I think that I personally shepherded into the equation and come to fruition.

DR. KIRKLAND: What’s the ATACMs? I don’t think you have told me this.

GEN. THURMAN: The ATACM is the one that the guy came in and told me it was going to fit on the MLRS.

DR. KIRKLAND: Oh, that one, right.

GEN. THURMAN: And I told him, “No, the missile is too big. One, it’s too long; we would have to have a different launcher, we are not going to do that. Make it fit the current launcher and well buy it.” It didn’t fit the current launcher; redesigned the missile and we bought it and it saw service in the Gulf.

MSC saw service in the Gulf. The Patriot saw service in the Gulf. So all three of those were timely add-ons to the arsenal.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was your role in the Patriot to tell them, we’re stopping funding until you get it fixed?

GEN. THURMAN: That was one role. The second role was telling the project manager at the time, who is now the chairman of the board, that he had to proceed on

with company IR&D funds, independent research and development funds, to provide as much of an anti-missile capability as he could to the extant Patriot system. So that required software changes, some changes in the missile, some changes in the algorithms used in the radar screening process.

So they did, and that was essentially done on corporate money. Then we bought enough missiles to send them in the Middle East. It stopped the Israelis from getting in the war and stopped some incoming rounds—although they're not designed in the overall for that purpose but they did very well.

DR. KIRKLAND: What was in it for the company to make these changes?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, the incentive was the notion that they could go after a new and emerging threat—the emerging threat being the proliferation of Scuds and Scud launchers; whereas, that system had been manufactured for the purpose of going after fixed-wing, breathing aircraft. This, then, gave them an opportunity to go after missiles. There was quite a difference in a major change function.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. It was a major change of function that was good for the Army, but did it expand the contract at all or anything?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. What it does is it gives you more money to bid on the business base that's already established for the manufacture of missiles. So you add a new missile line to it, and that causes you to buy another 500 missiles of one kind or another. You don't have to buy any new launching infrastructure.

DR. KIRKLAND: There was a story in the materiel and personnel integration process whereby I think it was when you were in TRADOC—was it you who set up the system of rolling modernization in the various corps? You'd give one corps, for example, a new kind of weapon or communication system and training to go with it and the doctrine to go with it, do them one at a time?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, yes. There are two things about that. One is in the case of MSE [mobile subscriber equipment], I designated the lead corps to get that would be 3rd Corps. I wanted to get congressional buy-in, so I said at the same time you do 3rd Corps modernization MSE you will also modernize the Reserve divisions allocated to the 3rd Corps. Then I would get all the lawmakers in the Congress to sign up because we're modernizing the Active and the Reserve at the same time because if we had to go to war, you all had to operate with the same radios.

DR. KIRKLAND: And they loved that because they love the Reserves.

GEN. THURMAN: They loved the Guard and the Reserves, so they love to give them money on something the Army wants to give them, fine and dandy. But on the other kinds of modernizations, we had to go in what I call a stepwise function in order to assure that you brought a corps along at the rate in which the corps could accept and the Army could plan to field and the acquisition community could produce the equipment to field battalion level units with this new equipment.

So with respect to the tank game, we started with the 3rd ID because it was on the border. That would be the unit that would be closest to the border if you had an incoming German or Russian attack. There is interaction between us and the field about who would get the various items of equipment, and we tried to spread them around a little bit.

(End Tape 17, Side B)

Faris R. Kirkland–Maxwell R. Thurman Interview Tape 18

(Begin Tape 18, Side A)

GEN. THURMAN: Hartzog says, “The end of all ends and the ignominious end, you're trying to take me out of the Army and here it was I thought I was doing a good job.” So I said to him, “Look, I’m just telling you that place is liable to go to war down there and I need a war fighter. You go down there and get that damned thing straightened out, and Vuono will take care of you at the right time.”

The upshot of all of that was, he goes to Panama. And this is all before I know I’m going down there. When I go down to hear the OP plan, then of course Hartzog is one of the guys who is there and helping to brief the OP plan from the forces in Panama.

At the conclusion of this briefing I said—

DR. KIRKLAND: This is taking place at Bragg, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I'm at Bragg getting a laydown on the operation, the Con plan. They got done with that, it's an all-day show.

And I said, “Okay, now I want to tell you something; I am not the CINC. I have been nominated to be the CINC, I have not been approved as the CINC, I have not been ratified by the Congress, and I have not assumed the job. But I want to tell you one thing. If I am ratified by the committee and if I’m approved by the Congress and if I arrive on scene as the CINC, this plan doesn’t stack and it will be changed. What we will do is, we’ll be doing a parachute assault from the get-go, and the operational headquarters that will be in charge of the operation from start to finish will be 18th Airborne Corps, not the brigade in Panama.” Now, this is in August, all of this is going on.

Then I concluded by saying, “I want to remind you, I’m not the CINC, I haven’t been approved to be the CINC, and I haven’t arrived on the station, so obviously you are obligated to follow whatever is told to you by the current sitting CINC.”

That was enough to cause the planning cell at Fort Bragg and the planning cell at Panama to go to work to revise the plan before I ever got there.

So the plan and my own analysis of things to do in Latin America, I took into the Tank [Auditor's note: name commonly used in referring to the JCS Conference Room] on the last week of September, a country-by-country expose of what I thought ought to be in each one of those countries and then other matters that pertain.

So I said, "For example other matters, one of the things I recommended was clear the decks and get all the dependents out of Panama, which had great unfavorable reaction amongst the several service chiefs." I said, "Now, Mr. Chairman, I don't expect you to act on any one of these things, and I would ask that you give me 15 days after I arrive there to ratify my assessment since I have not been to Panama. I will send you a message telling you step by step whether these are the right courses of action or whether they should be amended in any way."

DR. KIRKLAND: This is Crowe now?

GEN. THURMAN: Crowe. So this is like on Thursday, Wednesday, maybe, maybe Tuesday. On Friday it's Crowe's graduation exercise. Colin Powell was to be inducted. I go to the graduation exercise over at Annapolis for Crowe's retirement and get on an airplane right after that at Andrews. I'm in a green uniform at the ceremony; it's over at about 1:00 or 2:00 in the afternoon, as I recall it. I change into BDUs. I get off the airplane with a pistol strapped to my side and my BDU uniform when I arrived at Panama late afternoon, like 7:00 on the 29th day of September.

I wanted to make a statement when I got off of that by the fact that I was in BDUs, and I knew that the Panamanian press would see everything and photograph it. Of course, they did. They didn't know who I was except that I was a long-serving officer and didn't have much combat experience and knew nothing about Latin America.

I took with me a couple of people from the State Department and one guy from the White House who had previously been an ambassador to Panama but was now the Latin American desk holder in the White House in the National Security Council. So they all went down with me.

On the way down, I worked on my speech and had them take a look at it to make sure I hit all the points that needed to be hit from a policy standpoint. I went to a little farewell party that night and the next morning at 9:00 we had a big formation, and we got done with the receiving lines and all that about noontime. I started at 1:30 and ran until 9:00 listening to each one of the 18 attachés and MIL Group Commanders from down-country give me dump about what was going on in their particular country. This went on all day, the rest of the day on Saturday the 30th, and all day Sunday the 1st. Each one of these guys would stand up and give me a one-hour burst on their country.

Then that night I got a call about 9:00. I had gone back to my digs. They said there was going to be a coup the next morning.

DR. KIRKLAND: Welcome aboard.

GEN. THURMAN: Welcome aboard.

Now, what the coup-mongers didn't know was that I had scheduled with Hartzog, and he's the only guy in the headquarters that knew about it. I scheduled a call-out of everybody in Panama on an emergency call-out at 2:00 on Monday morning. I figured there had somehow been a leak about that. So Noriega was going to do something on his own to generate something to welcome this new gringo from the north to Latin America.

So when the guys came in and reported that the coup was going to take place, I asked, "Well who has talked to the coup-monger?" The answer was nobody has talked to the coup-monger, and we're getting it second- and third-hand.

So I got hold of the original source who was a female and happened to be the wife of the principal coup-monger. And she said her husband had instructed her to pass on that the Americans had what was going on although they didn't want any Americans involved in it.

So I got hold of my CIA Station Chief in Panama.

DR. KIRKLAND: Does he work for you?

GEN. THURMAN: No. He worked for the ambassador, but there wasn't an ambassador there. It was a Chargé there at the time, a guy named John Maisto [John F. Maisto, Deputy Chief of Mission in Panama] who is now the Ambassador in Nicaragua. I got a hold of Maisto, and I got a hold of his CIA Station Chief. And I had a CIA guy myself, and I got him, those two guys to go out and interrogate the coup-monger's wife, that were defending their stance. She came back and said, "Yes, she had talked to her husband, and her husband wanted the two CIA guys to talk to him, as well."

So we had a second meeting about midnight between the two guys and the CIA versus the coup meister. And the coup meister, again, reiterated he didn't want any American help about that. As a matter of fact he wasn't sure how the coup would play out because he wasn't sure about what the Air Force would do. He wasn't sure about whether the Calvary would be for him or against him, and he didn't know where Noriega was going to be the next morning.

So when I called Washington about 2:00 in the morning to get a hold of Colin Powell I said to him, "There's going to be a coup here at 7:00 in the morning. We've debriefed the coup meister not once but twice, and I believe that the coup is ill-conceived, ill-motivated, ill-planned and, thus, fatally flawed." He goes, "Stay out of it."

I went through all this lingo, and he didn't know who his buddies were going to be, and he didn't know where Noriega was going to be, and the reason he was going to do it was because Noriega was violating the constitution by staying on longer than the constitution would permit. It permitted service for 25 years; Noriega was serving longer than that, and that was against the constitution. He wanted to provide upward mobility for other people in the PDF, Panama Defense Force; none of which were altruistic towards throwing out the dirty bastards and letting the elected government of May 9th come into office.

So what Colin did or does I won't comment on because I don't know exactly what he did. But at any rate, the next morning the coup didn't go off. So, like 10:00 nothing is going on, got all kinds of people staked out and all kinds of people on various and sundry stages of alert. Colin calls up and says, "Is it on or off?" I said, "Hell, I don't know." Got back to Major Giroldi's wife. Major Giroldi [Major Moisés Giroldi] said, "We postponed it for 24 hours. It's going on tomorrow."

Meanwhile, it's 7:00 on the morning of the coup on Monday morning. Noriega had shown up and with the Commandancia, which is in our direct line of sight. We could see. We had all kinds of devices there to monitor that. He said, "I don't want to take him directly; I just want him to go out and retire someplace. I don't want to have any face-to-face confrontation with them." Little did I know what this would turn out to be.

So I reported all this up to Colin and said, "Noriega showed up, so no coup."

Later in the day he says, "Well the coup is back on for tomorrow morning, the same time, the same station."

DR. KIRKLAND: Your alert is due that morning, too.

GEN. THURMAN: I didn't pull the alert because if I pulled the alert that would have foretold that I knew what the coup was all about. So I didn't do that. I had a different set of things going on. I ran a different thing. I called out a Sand Flea that morning to get the troops up on alert, and I notified the Panamanians that I was doing that so as to not give any credence that I was backing the coup one way or the other and thus tipping off the coup, which would be faulty. So we were playing that pretty closely.

Giroldi's wife said, "Yeah, it's going to go in the morning rain or shine, whether Noriega shows or doesn't show." Meanwhile I'm getting instructions from Washington to meet with Giroldi and see if Giroldi will include the standing up of the government, because if he stands up the government, why we may take a different stance on their being in the coup, if such a coup takes place.

Giroldi says, "I'm not doing that. I'm just doing this for the PDF. I'm not speaking for the whole country and any of that stuff. I'm speaking for my buddies in the PDF that also want to get part of the grease there, you know."

So I reiterated. I said, "Look at that sleazebag bunch of guys down here. All they want is more aggrandizement and they want some of the cut down here; they want to get advanced and they have no intention of turning Noriega over to us or instating Endara and his government."

So the upshot of all that is that the coup did go down the next morning. There was substantial shooting and looting and firing and all that kind of stuff. We had people on

standby, and we had people connected so that if we had had the occasion to ask people: “If you will detain Noriega, would you turn him over to us?” They said, “We’re not turning him over to you.”

So, sure enough, Noriega shows up at the Commandancia, again, the next morning. Well, the coup goes down, and sure enough Giroldi gets in a room with Noriega for an hour. And Noriega laughs at him. And of course that’s what Giroldi knew was going to happen, and, therefore. Giroldi didn’t want to face him to begin with. He wanted to just abdicate him to get out of town.

But Giroldi wasn’t smart enough to know that when he had Noriega he should have called us on the telephone, and we would have come and gotten him, and that would have been the end of it, and he would have been a Panamanian hero forever. But he knew in the confrontation between he and Noriega, that Noriega would ultimately talk him out of it—Noriega the master of intelligence, Noriega the master of the slippery tongue, Noriega the cat of nine lives lay flat.

So, he’s scared to death of Noriega. So he ended up face-to-face with him. Noriega ridiculed him, and while this was all going on in the talking, Noriega’s aide was on the telephone marshaling forces from outside the city limits to bring to bear to come in and shoot up all these guys. When Giroldi walked outside, there was a bunch of guys standing out there with guns. And they arrested him and carried him off and shot him that afternoon.

DR. KIRKLAND: They pitched some guys off the roof too; did that happen?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. So the upshot of all that was a great hurrah in the American press which says, you know, the Bush administration was a feeble, ill-conceived—although this guy had been a figure that the Bush administration wanted out of office for so long, they weren’t there to take advantage of the golden opportunity that was handed to them in a kit bag and all that. So it’s a pitiful administration with resolve and capability to do things. And, oh by the way, this turkey Thurman down there was unable to make anything happen. So quite a bit of abuse heaped at the time.

DR. KIRKLAND: The home team got a bad day.

GEN. THURMAN: Home team, bad day.

So, I guess about, this is now Wednesday, because it didn't go down Monday, it went down Tuesday, and it takes all day Wednesday to get it put back together again. Meanwhile I'm sending reports up, meanwhile I'm analyzing information and all that kind of stuff. And about Tuesday of the next week, Colin by now has assumed the Chairman's job at the same time I took Panama, so he did that on that 30th day of September. He calls for me to come up and brief the Joint Chiefs of Staff on all the crooks and turns of what went down there.

So I go up there on a Tuesday and I get a bunch of butcher charts we put together on what went down by time sequence, a very complete description about everything. The following Saturday either *Time* or *Newsweek*—this is now about 10 days after the coup takes place—they put front cover on the magazine that says, Bush is a Wimp.

So Bush says, "I want to talk to my Commander in Chief down there." So he sent for me to come up here, and I met with him on a subsequent Saturday. It's now two-and-a-half weeks later. The people that run the government were there, and they are at that time, Bush [President George H. W. Bush] and Quayle [Vice President James Danforth Quayle], Sununu [John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff], Scowcroft [Brent Scowcroft, National Security Advisor] and Gates [Dr. Robert M. Gates, Deputy National Security Advisor], Baker [James A. Baker, III, Secretary of State], Cheney [Richard B. Cheney, Secretary of Defense] and Powell [GEN Colin Powel, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff]. Those are the eight people that run the government.

Now you notice I didn't say the Central Intelligence guy. He wasn't there. So those eight guys run the government. I go in there, and we're in the upstairs sitting room with the President. And he turns to me and he says, "Tell me again what went on." So I went through this whole story from start to finish for about two hours. He interrupts and other people interrupt; and about three hours later I end saying, "I told you then and I will tell you one more time, it was ill-motivated, was done for a private conceit and advancement of economic capability. It was ill-planned, didn't know who was on the

team, who wasn't on the team; ill-motivated, fatally flawed. And you should have stayed out of it, and I still believe that." He said, "Okay." This was on Saturday.

So I fly back to Panama, and I say to myself going back, Leavenworth taught me something. Leavenworth taught me about the explicit mission and the implicit mission. I have received no explicit tasks as a result of this operation, but it is clear to me what the implicit task is. That is, the President will never be embarrassed, again, as long as he lives, on matters pertaining to national security. So we had better be ready to do something.

It takes about five-and-a-half hours to fly from Washington to Panama. When I got down there I told Hartzog to be ready and the J2 and J3 to be ready. I got them together and I said, "Okay, I want the ratchet-up on the plan, Blue Spoon revisited. And I want you to get Stiner [GEN Carl Wade Stiner] in here tomorrow night." This was now Saturday about 10:00 p.m. I said, "Bring him in under the cover of darkness on Sunday night, Monday morning, and we'll begin the plan on Monday in earnest."

Meanwhile, during this period that I was in the interregnum in August before I took over down there in September I had gone to Vuono after the briefing we had in downtown Fort Bragg. And I told Vuono I wanted Steiner and the 18th Airborne Corps to be my redoubt. And he had agreed. And as soon as Powell had taken over in this thing, I told Powell the same thing. So they earmarked that at the joint staff for my planning function.

So bringing Steiner in was no difficult trick. So he came in with his planning cell overnight and civilian clothes, began the plan for the operation in detail.

So that's sort of how we get to the starting of the famous downtown Panama escapade.

DR. KIRKLAND: The pistol is cocked. Do you want to rest for a while?

GEN. THURMAN: Yeah, I'm about done for the day.

So I had been sort of preempted to get back to the Chairman and the Chiefs on what my plan had been, the plan that I said I really didn't have time to screw around with because I was too busy fighting my way through the coup and the aftermath.

One of the things that sort of gets back on the personnel side of things, one of the things that it did ratify for me was that I clearly wanted to get the dependents out of there because on the day of the coup I had 10,000 kids on the streets of Panama in little school buses, going all over Panama going to school. Bullets were flying everywhere, and I just made up my mind it was going to get the dependents out of there. They shouldn't be there with all that crap going on down there.

DR. KIRKLAND: I'm surprised. Of course the other Joint Chiefs didn't want to do it, did they?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, it was a peaceful paradise down there. You follow me? I mean, there is some notion about whether or not we ought to be in conflict down there or not. My view was as long as Noriega was there and the government had the policy the government had, then we would be at odds with one another, and he would make a mistake and we would have to do something.

My opinion was resolved after I had seen Bush, when I sort of got the message, although he never said it straight out. He certainly implied that if anything else happens down there, if they harm a single American's head down there, then we will be on their back. We won't take it. He was not going to get called a wimp, again, by the American press.

DR. KIRKLAND: You got inside his headspace.

GEN. THURMAN: You bet.

DR. KIRKLAND: That certainly was an accurate read.

GEN. THURMAN: You betcha.

DR. KIRKLAND: Well, when should we get together again? Do you want to do it again this week, or do you want to wait until next week?

GEN. THURMAN: I'm going to be at the napier of my game plan this week. My view would be we can either do it Monday of next week or Wednesday of next week.

DR. KIRKLAND: Let's do it Monday.

GEN. THURMAN: Okay. You need to find me on Sunday the 27th to figure out where, and we'll call it for 10:00?

DR. KIRKLAND: Right.

GEN. THURMAN: On Monday the 28th. Okay, that sounds good.

(Session ends.)

GEN. THURMAN: I jerked out some stuff I'd left this morning at 6:00 hoping to get back at 11:00 but the transfusion took longer than I thought so I didn't bring it. Are you here just one day a week?

DR. KIRKLAND: I can come any time it's appropriate. Usually to keep costs down I come just one day at a time.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I'll have it then. I just walked out because I was going to get more of it and sort of let you take it and thumb through it and see if any of it was of any use to you.

DR. KIRKLAND: Great.

GEN. THURMAN: For example, I brought out the efficiency reports that I had written on Olson in USAREC, Connelly in USAREC, Connelly in the DMPM, Schwarzkopf in the DMPM, those DMPMs at DCSPER as you know. Bobby Phillips

both at USAREC and DMPM. The reason I brought them out is I thought you might read, not the style of the report—and the report obviously isn't for quotation.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. To give me a feel for what questions to ask.

GEN. THURMAN: By looking at it you can get a feel for what was going on. In the case of Schwarzkopf he produced several sheets of the 67-2 Report, which tells you what I thought I did. It lists 40 things in there, and I may not have touched on all 40 of them. So it's a good reference for being mindful of what the tempo of the time was.

DR. KIRKLAND: Yes. Those would be very useful, and I will treat them with confidentiality. Efficiency reports are helpful also in fixing dates of who did what, when, where.

Where we left you, you arrived in Panama, pistol on hip in BDUs and going through the coup, got the dependents out.

GEN. THURMAN: Well, we hadn't gotten them out yet. I talked to you about the Bush meeting. I still owed the Joint Chiefs of Staff my 15-day appraisal. I had told them I would respond to them in 15 days, but the first seven or ten days of that was tied up with working our way through the coup and its aftermath.

The second thing I owed the Department of Defense was, I owed them a drug plan by the 15th day of October, which was going to be how we were going to do our bit to aid and abet the ambassadors doing their work down-country in Peru and Colombia and Bolivia.

The third one was getting after the lessons learned from the coup and how they would shape the new plan that had been invigorated by the discussions with the President, although we didn't talk about the plan, but as a result of my believing that the implied task was to own the plan and get it quite efficient.

The fourth line of work was, in its own right, trying to set the command on a path to develop an overarching strategic strategy for the region in which I happened to be located.

Having said all that, the immediate draw was to get Stiner to work, and he did come to work on Sunday night. We brought him in under cover of darkness, he and his planning staff. We closeted them in a facility over at Fort Clayton and planning began in earnest. My three and my two and my J5 were heavily at them.

The CINC's plan was moving in parallel with the corps commander's or joint task force commander's plan, which included the JSOC, which is joint special operating command which had in its employ the Special Forces, the Delta Force, which if we needed to track Noriega, go make a snatch on him, we had to have those kind of guys to do that.

DR. KIRKLAND: JSOC is a permanent command in the United States, isn't it?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: So it wasn't under Stiner.

GEN. THURMAN: No, but I put it under Stiner because I wanted a single joint task force commander. That violated JCS operating norms, but that's the way I chose to run my particular operation and it worked very well for me.

They gave me a single guy to look at the details of the operational plan. He had to work out all the details between the Air Force and the Marine Corps and the Navy, the JSOC and the land forces. So that planning begins in earnest.

Meanwhile, we are running the Sand Fleas and the Purple Storm kind of exercises on a daily or every other day kind of basis, which has as its focal point to exercise all these parts of the Carter-Torrijos Treaty that permitted us to exercise troops and operate in certain areas of the country. And those are all color-coded on the treaty map as saying what rights we had where and what rights were returned to the Panamanian government. So all of this was going concurrently.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, I had to go down to the three major countries that were on the president's agenda for drug dealing—Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. So we

made visits to those three countries because as CINCs come to know, ambassadors count for a lot. They are the president's representative in whatever country they happen to be lodged in. You've got to be able to get along with CINCs, or CINCs had to be able to get along with ambassadors.

So I went down to see the ambassador in Colombia. His name was Ted McNamara, who is now in the Powell/Mill apparatus at the State Department, and a guy named Bob Gelbard [Robert S. Gelbard] who was the ambassador in Bolivia, and there was a Chargé in Peru. It was for quite a long time, and later it was taken over by an ambassador named Tony Quainton [Anthony E. Quainton]. Those were the centerpiece of the Andean Strategy that had been promulgated by the Bush administration.

So I had to go in and sort of say, okay, I'm the military guy, here's what I can do, and here's what I can't do, and now let's get our plans together. And, oh by the way, drugs is not an individual country deal; it transcends the border, so therefore it's a regional deal. The regional "ambassador" is located in Washington; he's called the Assistant Secretary of the State Department for LATAM affairs, Latin American affairs.

But I am the CINC forward deployed, so I've got to do business with this guy. We are not co-located. It doesn't strain things, but Bernie Aronson [Bernard W. Aronson] is in Washington and I'm down there, and the ambassadors are still further south. And Bernie doesn't come down there frequently, very infrequently.

So I made my rounds doing all that. And meanwhile I had given to my planning staff in the required mode, that I told the JCS to get my 15-day briefing ready to go. I said, "I want to bring out the dependents down here as quickly as we can so that essentially we will not —on the second day of October 1989, when we had 10,000 little kids driving around the streets of Panama City in little yellow school buses while shooting was going on." And I said, "If the Americans get into this, then, we will have perhaps more shooting and they will be more at risk. We must do something to get them out."

So I got all this briefing ready to go, and I sent Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney a long message on getting dependents out. I sent my personnel chief, J1, up to Washington to work with the J staff because I knew this was a contentious issue. In other words, a large number of people in Washington thought that Panama was paradise, and it

wasn't anymore. We had a high threat environment. Civilians were being hassled, dependents were being hassled. It just needed to get cleaned out, so we were essentially stripping the decks.

I said, we could actually go to a one-year tour then. I raised the one-year tour with the troops and for rotation by a battalion of Army forces—because we didn't need any dependents down there. So then all the hackles go up and they say, you are destroying our quality of life.

And the current SOUTHCOM Commander General McCaffrey [GEN Barry Richard McCaffrey] was at that time a major general in the Army Operations staff, and he violently disagreed with that because I was going to be upsetting family life down in Panama. Now, he had been down there as a general's aide before, and his view was everything was copasetic.

DR.KIRKLAND: Even after a year or a year and one-half of

GEN. THURMAN: This is after eight months of being put upon by the Panamanians, beaten up on post, high incident level and the like. But this shows you that people looked at it with a different filter on their lens. So I'm not suggesting that they were evil in doing that. I'm just saying, my view was I was spending an inordinate amount of time looking after dependents. I had to have MPs running certain routes at the same time school buses were running—mobile convoys, sort of make sure the buses got there without incident and all that.

I was determined, determined, not to have a bunch of kids hijacked by a bunch of dimwitted, ill-lead Panamanian Defense Force or any of the Dignity Battalion people who were cruising around about that time. The Dignity Battalion is a whole other subject, but they were part of the threat environment where we were operating. They had been put together as a “people's army” and their leaders had been sent to Cuba and to Nicaragua for training.

We found this huge arms cache later on in the operation, 50-some-thousand weapons. That tells you that another year or two down there it would have been quite a different story trying to get that place under control.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was their plan to expand the number of Dignity Battalions?

GEN. THURMAN: Yep. They were doing it as fast as they: one, could recruit them and, two, train them. So the month of October was an interesting month, challenging month.

DR. KIRKLAND: Lots of opportunities to excel.

GEN. THURMAN: Another opportunity to excel. My J3 came in one day after all that was going on for a while. Hartzog said to me, "I can't be a satisfactory J3 in this environment with my wife and family here, and I can't see to the safety of my kids if they're running around in the streets of Panama, so I'm sending them home." So that tells you something about the temper of the times down there.

Now the upshot of all that was, I had to come to Washington and go around and see all the Chiefs of Staff about getting the dependents out. And none of them wanted to do that. The plan that I had worked out was, one, you have to be mindful that none of this was preordained that we were going to do any attack in the month of December.

There was, however, an orderliness about getting on with the show, but not to say that we're trying to get ready for a 20 December attack, because we were not. The trigger event was in the hands of Noriega.

DR. KIRKLAND: But you had in your mind your perception of Bush's unspoken wish?

GEN. THURMAN: And I had my perception of Bush that said, be ready—not in 1995, but whenever some American gets pushed over or there's an untoward event. You know, we're not going to take it anymore from this guy. We've been trying to work with him, trying to get him out, and he won't leave.

So the scheme I had developed was to get the dependents out at a time which it would mean the least impact and we would have the least overall impact on children's schooling.

Now, you may say, that's a screwy thing. If you really thought you ought to get the dependents out, to hell with the children's schooling. In defense of that notion, there was no telling when we were going to do this operation; therefore, I wanted to be as compassionate as possible about getting little kids through school, and that would make for a happy family.

What I was going to do, I was going to give the sponsor "X" amount of time to go make a reconnaissance in the state of his new post. I had to get the MILPERCENS of the several services to issue orders to the guy and to find where we're going to put him so we'd move the family that close and give him a follow-on assignment in six months or one year or whatever it was going to be.

DR. KIRKLAND: A very big deal.

GEN. THURMAN: So no insignificant deal because the idea was, don't hassle the families. I mean, this is a military exigency but it is not a rout. We are not in a rout deal here.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is 5, 6, or 7,000 officers and NCOs whose families—well, those guys had to have assignments picked for them.

GEN. THURMAN: That's right. And some of them had served 27 months and some had served 33 months, and some had gotten out the month before—I mean, that whole gamut of that. And you were trying to optimize it on a notion of how to make it as family-immune as you could get it, given that you were facing them with a prospect of being separated from their loved ones when in fact they came down there on a three-year tour. I was trying to ameliorate the hardship on families. It turns out on some families we didn't ameliorate it; we exacerbated it to a large extent. And I'll tell you about that in a minute.

So I laid out this very exhaustive plan. We'd worked with all the several services. And I went to Cheney, and Cheney approved it. So we began to take them out.

To give you a notion of sort of how we tried to run that, this is now October, so I took the November and December outs and said we'd move them out like the first ten days of December, take all the November and Decembers out.

DR.KIRKLAND: These are normal rotation people, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, that's not right—

(End Tape 18, Side A)

(Begin Tape 18, Side B)

(Private discussion.)

GEN. THURMAN: So I brought all this plan up. Cheney said, “Go ahead with it.” There was a grudging, well, he’s the CINC, if that’s what he wants to do, fine and dandy.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is on the part of the other Chiefs of Staff?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. They didn't like it. Nobody liked it. But they bought in. So I was going to say, now we took the people leaving November and they left in November. We took December, January and February and rolled it back into late November, early December. That, then, said that anybody who thought they were going to leave during that period of time, push their families back, move during the Christmas period and be sent with their kids to go to school in January. So they would be in the new school district; we got the cooperation of the DODS school master down there to give them their final exams and all that kind of stuff so they get a clean semester break.

So then we had the March, April and May people, and we rolled them all into mid-to-late December; and they too would be home by Christmas. They would be a little bit discombobulated because they would not finish their last semester there. And they would have to go in to pick up a little bit of repeat time if you looked at all schools being comparable in sort of the last semester. But that would essentially get everybody out who was in up through May, which May/June normal school-out time—and they would be gone by the end of December.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did that give you about a third of the dependents?

GEN. THURMAN: No, because this is only a period of six months on a three-year tour.

DR. KIRKLAND: Three-year tour is only about a sixth of them.

GEN. THURMAN: A sixth of them. This created a tremendous morale problem. Meanwhile I told all of the battalion commanders to take their units to the field and don't come back until you get them spruced up.

DR. KIRKLAND: That was all the same time?

GEN. THURMAN: All this is going on at the same time. So it's a very busy and turbulent period of uproar.

DR. KIRKLAND: Weren't any of the families frightened? Weren't any of them glad to get out of there?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I was going to tell you. I went down to the first airplane that came in to take them out, a MAC charter, a DC-10. DC-10 has a very long nose you've got to get up into. You don't see it when you're in an airport. If you're standing on the tarmac you got to climb a pretty good-sized ladder to get up there. So I stood at the bottom of the airplane and I shook hands with every dependent that got on the airplane.

DR. KIRKLAND: That's 300 people.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. And I said to them, "I want to tell you that I know that I discombobulated you, but this is too high risk an area." And they had all been there and had just seen all of the bullets flying, whizzing around. One lady had two youngsters under the age of seven, and she threw her arms around me and she said, "Thank God you came and took care of this and you are getting us out of here."

So some of them were scared to death. So while that was a tough pill for a lot of people—think of the little stuff. You've got to get transportation people to pack them up.

DR. KIRKLAND: And they aren't used to that density ...

GEN. THURMAN: So a big, big problem, you know, to get them all out. But we started all that, and we were in the midst of all that of course when it turned out that the 20th was take-him-down day.

But, I don't resent making that decision. In other words, little kids and families shouldn't have been in that place at that particular time because the level of harassment and uncertainty were of such magnitude that we were endangering the lives of innocent dependents down there. So that commenced.

Now, along about the 25th or 26th of November all this is going on. Meanwhile I'm flying down-country and the planning is going on, trying to run the drug war and deal with the ambassadors, get the strategy around that front, trying to sell the dependent withdrawal plan and all that. Lo and behold, right in the middle of the last part of November a guy walks into the American embassy and says that Noriega has permitted the Colombians to import car bombs, which will be used against American citizens in Panama and military installations.

Now, at first blush, you might treat that in a cavalier manner, but when you are the CINC and you've been through the Vice Chief four years and have been through two years as TRADOC Commander; and you have observed the kind of terrorist activity that went on in Germany during some period of the '80s; and then you have a connection with Noriega and his Colombian buddies whom he also had a drug connection with; and you have a very aggressive drug program beginning to operate in Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia; and you look in the intelligence documents and you find that Noriega had employed as the G2 of the Panamanian Defense Force, the Guardia Nazionale, he had employed bombs during the Carter-Torrijos Treaty negotiations; then as the CINC when some guy comes in and says, we're going to blow up something here, you listen.

So I said to my friendly CIA Station Chief, we didn't have an ambassador, we had a Chargé who by now had changed. A guy named Bushnell [John A. Bushnell] came in to take it over. So I asked, "How reliable is this source?" Well, it turns out the source was being handled by an FBI guy in Chicago. So the FBI guy in Chicago had put a source back into Panama. It turns out, he had done that without notifying the FBI. Therefore, he

was illegally running the source out of the country in hopes of breaking up a big narco ring in Chicago.

So when we found, and when the FBI admitted, that this guy was in fact a paid informant of the FBI, I, then, called for help. I said, "I need bomb sniffing dogs, we've got a lot of installation control, I need more MPs, and I need to bring in a substantial detachment of DEA guys because this is a drug-related deal.

So pretty soon down in Panama we had the head of the FBI swat team. We had 100 bomb dogs and their handlers. And I had put the installations under a tight control system so that every car that went through the gate had to be inspected. And Panamanian cars were not permitted to come through the gate.

DR. KIRKLAND: That included dog sniff and bomb sniff?

GEN. THURMAN: Oh, yeah. Look underneath the car and all that kind of stuff.

You can begin to understand that because the commissary was located on the installation it's beginning to get burdensome and tedious, but I persisted until we could smoke out. Meanwhile, we're taking this guy and putting him on a polygraph, and DEA is doing an interrogation. DEA is being sent out to look at the various Noriega points to see whether or not there is any activity going on in his remote locales.

I recall one time they said a bunch of the narks were coming in from Colombia and they would be staying at a specific hotel. So I turned to the Station Chief and my own CIA guy and I said, "Stake out that place, and lets find out what's cooking." The CIA guy, station chief, said, "We don't have anybody to stake it out." I said, "Listen here. You mean to tell me we've been in this country for 80 years and I don't have any people that I can declare loyal to me as Panamanians to go stake out a place?" "No."

That tells you something about the state of HUMINT down there.

So it ended up these two agents, this station chief and my guy who is sort of a CINC-level guy are out there doing stake-out. I mean, that's Mutt and Jeff stuff, you know; it's a laugher, Katz'n Jammer Kid stuff. But they did it anyway because I insisted they go do it.

Pretty soon I had a team of about 10 or 12 DEA guys, a State Department detachment, had a big Army detachment down there, the counter-intelligence guys and that kind of stuff. So we were running down a number of tracks. This was beginning to also grate on the population.

Now I said, for example, Panamanian cars are barred from entering a U.S. military installation. Well, it turns out the hospital is built on a slope and it's outside the installation, Gorgas Hospital was. It doesn't sit on the military installation and it's built on stilts to accommodate the slope. All you had to do was drive in underneath the carports there and set off a car bomb and bring the whole hospital down.

So I was determined that I would not permit a car bomb or whatever to blow up American people because, one is, it would have been an embarrassment to the government of the United States of America, and to take it lightly would mean you would aid and abet those kind of guys if indeed they did exist.

So if you talk to a guy like Colin Powell or Carl Vuono at the time, they would say that was the great Thanksgiving car bomb caper.

Meanwhile, during that particular caper, Stiner came down for an update on the plan; and so I activated him as the Joint Task Force Commander without asking Colin Powell anything. Colin would later say in the commanders, the least he could have done was ask me. Of course, that falls back under my Rule 14, which is, when in charge, take charge and don't ask any question the answer to which you wouldn't like. Which the answer to that would be, "No, hell no, we can't do that." So I just stood him up because of what I knew was going to come. I mean, that is, if one of those bombs went off, I knew what my President was going to do. Do you follow me?

So from my perspective although I couldn't talk like that that says, I'm doing this because the President expects me to.

The President doesn't know shit about what I'm doing. I was content with the hassle that we put people up with, in order to try to make sure that there was no stone left unturned, in order to assure that we didn't have car bombs going off someplace killing innocent American dependents and military as well.

So this is all beginning to squeeze, up the level of frustration with dependents and that kind of stuff. Meanwhile we start packing out.

You know, if you come back and try to put a spin on this from a personnel stand point, there are a couple of spins about it.

Meanwhile, I was using the SCM, the SOUTHCOM Radio and Television network key people to tell them what the hell we were doing about all this.

DR. KIRKLAND: So did you lay it right out that there is a danger of car bombs?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. Of course Noriega then got up and denied it, which was fine. I didn't want him to say yes. All this was just some more pressure being put on Noriega. If you blow up a car bomb, we blow your ass away. So one of the things we did is to acknowledge him. We did acknowledge it, and we used our daily newspaper. We knew the daily newspaper went off-post, so I told the newspaper guy to print one page of news in Spanish, unvarnished news off the ticker tape.

See, all the newspapers are going over to Noriega's side or else he closed the sons of bitches up and exiled the editors. So he had a captive press. He had a captive press, he had a captive legislature, he had a captive president, and everything was under his jurisdiction. But the pressure was coming up on the population of people there, and going through this large drill of removing people from the paradise that they thought they were going to come to, and it was becoming burdensome on families.

But, I tried to put the scheme together so it would minimize disruption of little kids going to school. It was going to create a hardship in terms of being separated from your spouse for a while, but we came up with a way in which you were graded on how much time you had been there and how much time you would have to serve, depending upon going back to a standard unaccompanied two-year tour or by-search 12 or 13 months. In this way we had everybody phased in; very elaborate plan, very heavily worked by Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines sub-elements about that and put together by my J1.

But I guess one would say that it sounds like you're screwing over the troops—you know, their families on the one hand. On the other hand I would say, no. My long-term view of having worked as the DCSPER and having kept involved with that both as

the Vice and the TRADOC Commander—in other words, eight or ten years continuous service about that made me highly sensitive to the families. And I tried to move the thing around so it would minimize impact on the family.

So the work that I believe had gotten started with the first family symposium when I was DCSPER, and now it's eight years later and some of those tactics and techniques are being put into place which says, "Families are important" and "We've got to take care of them and don't screw over them any more than you have to."

Meanwhile the planning is going on, the drug work's is going on, and that's sort of the temper of activities. We had a code system for closing downtown Panama. And once the bomb scam went on, I put a curfew on and put a squeeze play on the people downtown that if you're American, you couldn't be out of your house after 10:00 at night. So the number of incidents are now falling because you're not out there in a place where you can get policed up.

We are beginning to evacuate the kids and the parents. The level of tempo of activity in the training ranges is picking up because I told all the battalion commanders to go to the training range, and don't come back until you've fired all your weapons, infantry, armor, artillery, gunship, C130 gunship, all that kind of stuff—in the impact area and do live fire maneuver from the squad to the battalion level. It's pretty high tempo time October, November and December on all fronts.

DR. KIRKLAND: What was the nature of the combat assets that you had?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, I had three battalions of light infantry, one of which was the parachute battalion. I had a Special Forces battalion. I had a Marine battalion. I had a brigade out of the 7th Infantry Division, which had a brigade headquarters and two battalions.

DR. KIRKLAND: That was actually there?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. A little bit north of Colón.

DR. KIRKLAND: They rotated through?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. I had a battalion in the Joint Jungle Operations Training Center.

DR. KIRKLAND: They were rotating also, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. They would be up there for 30 days.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did they stay longer than that?

GEN. THURMAN: No. When they got through the 30 days, they went out to the beach. They had a mission. In fact, one of the units was in there when I was scheduled to graduate them like the 23rd or something. And about the 20th they went to combat. So while they did not get their Jungle Operations Badge, they got a CIB instead, Combat Infantry Badge. I was pinning this on the battalion commander and I said, "I know it makes you mad not to get your jungle operations training patch, but will this do instead?" And he said, "I think the troops know the difference."

Then I had a mechanized battalion from the 5th Mech Division. Again, they were rotating in and out. They had 113s. So we had 10 battalions.

DR. KIRKLAND: And were there service component commanders and staffs there also?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. A Marine colonel and his staff; there was a rear admiral of the Navy and his staff; there was an Air Force brigadier general who was the advanced CD of the 12th Air Force which was located at Bergstrom Air Force Base which was commanded by 12th Air Force commanded by a lieutenant general.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was there an Army?

GEN. THURMAN: Major general named Cisneros. He is called the U.S. Army South.

DR. KIRKLAND: And he had a brigade commander under him, right?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: Then was the brigade of the 7th Infantry Division also under him temporarily? Or attached to him?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: But he was not going to be your war-fighting guy?

GEN. THURMAN: He was not. Stiner was going to do it. He was originally going to be the war fighter.

DR. KIRKLAND: What was his role compared to Stiner's?

GEN. THURMAN: Deputy Dog. And he played a very vital role in commanding the in-country units. Stiner was bringing in the out-country units. He commanded both. So it ended up Stiner would command this big task force. He broke it into about four areas. And Cisneros had part of it. Jimmy Johnson [MG James H. Johnson, Jr.], who was the Commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, had a part of it. Carmen Cavezza [GEN Carmen J. Cavezza], who had part of it, was 7th ID Commander, The Marines had a part of it. So it was broken down into several sectors, so the major generals in charge of that—it had a high leader-to-led ratio.

So at the time of the fight when we started out we had about 16,000 people, and we brought in another 11,000 for a total of 27,000.

Okay. So now the month of November is on. As soon as the great bomb scam goes, Stiner begins to rehearse all the operations in the middle of the night. So pretty soon

helicopters are flying around in the middle of the night and flares are going off on the range in the middle of the night.

The grammar school at Howard was almost an exact replica, about the same, size, shape, and dimensionality of the place where this guy was going to be, where we are going to rescue him. So, they practiced that at night. They practiced the air holds, flew out and did reconnaissance on the outlying units at night. So pretty high level night activity.

So I came under a court order for arrest because I was going to be arrested and charged with disturbing the peace, which I was doing. One of the things that happened in all that, that became a huge deception plan. Pretty soon we flew so much at night and did so much activity at night that the Panamanians didn't know whether we had something really cooked up or not.

Now Noriega is becoming increasingly frustrated by all of those high-tempo ops since the arrival of this new flaky general in Panama. Along about the 15th of December he gets up in front of his national congress called the Assembly, all of whom he appointed, and gives a very long speech. He rails against the U.S. and says that there is a declared state of war between the Panamanians and the U.S., not the other way around. And the Assembly then voted him to be the maximum leader, el supremo jefe, and as such he would have all the powers of decree, and his job was to protect the Republic and make sure he brought out all the gringos that were in there. One of his tag lines on that thing is, We shall see our enemies floating down the canal.

So on the 17th of December, when one of our guys gets lost with three other guys in the car with him, a Panamanian defense force guy lets him have one with a rifle and the guy is killed. That's Lieutenant Paz [1st Lieutenant Robert Paz] of the U.S. Marine Corps.

DR. KIRKLAND: Was he on a mission of any sort?

GEN. THURMAN: No. In fact he was going to run downtown for dinner. So with the shooting of Lieutenant Paz, the fight is on. Those are well-chronicled, and I don't need to talk about that.

Now, a sad note. With all of our care and attention trying to get the dependents out and make it as smooth as possible, a guy comes up to me about day three in the operation, my DCSLOG, my J4 logistics guy. And he says, “We got a bad story.” And I said, “What’s the bad story?” And he said, “We got 250 or 300 or 500 dependents, whatever that number was, the number of people leaving in the first three weeks of December and all their property has been—it’s gone.” I said, “Say, what?” He said, “All the property had been moved in vans to a transshipment point on the Colón side—the north side—waiting the arrival of a freight ship, a container ship to take it to the United States.” And he said, “We didn’t guard it when the takedown started and the Panamanians went in there and looted it all.” I said, “You have got to be shitting me.” I said, “We had an infantry battalion one mile away.”

DR. KIRKLAND: Colón, yes.

GEN. THURMAN: So, I mean, there’s no problem about doing that if you just told me, “I’ve got 500 carloads of shit that have to be guarded.” So there’s a group of 500 dependent families that are in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines around there somewhere—that don’t have shit to live with because all their property disappeared. The Panamanians stole it. I mean, it didn’t get blown away in the war. Just looted. I mean, everything. I went up there and looked at it and it was a sickening sight. All these CONEX, containers that were packed to go to the United States wide open and a few this and a few that fluttering through this wide number of CONEX. Shocking. But it tells you something about attention to detail and all that.

Maybe had we had another month to work on the plan we would have been better at that, but at that moment nobody had thought to say, “We’ve got a new site.” We had 27 sites to take down, but we had another 27 or 30 or more of them we had to guard or move because they were all kind of vital points along the canal that had to make sure that they get the right amount of attention about that. So if that could have been just one more and it would have been a piece of cake to do it. But it was one of those things nobody reported up the line about having to take care of the thing. Some commander down below wasn’t smart enough to raise it, and thus we lost an extreme amount of property.

So what we thought was going to be a smooth exodus wasn't.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did the families keep going out after the—

GEN. THURMAN: No, we stopped that.

DR. KIRKLAND: Did any come back?

GEN. THURMAN: It was over. No, we let some come back, but not many. But we stopped that.

DR. KIRKLAND: So it is a long tour area now still?

GEN. THURMAN: It is. I think they're getting ready to go through a different deal, which was turning then to a short tour area now, but I'm not sure, but I think that's the case.

From a family point of view, you understand the fight actually got into the front yards of families. On Amador, half of Amador had been turned over to the Panamanians. It was occupied by fairly high-quality Panamanian force and a company. So we thought we would do an air mobile assault into Amador, which we did. Then, by a show of force and by using a lot of loud speakers, we would fire some warning shots, talk to them and ask them to give up their weapons, but surprisingly they did not do that.

So, for example, one of the wives later told me that she was in there baking cookies on the morning of the 20th to take out to the troops or who were in her front yard who were firing across the drainsward.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right across the drain valve, PDF on one side and dependent housing on the other.

GEN. THURMAN: Right. The whole notion of somebody is in the kitchen in the same battlefield and is making cookies for the troops is an interesting notion. Not

since the stockade days on the Western plain had we seen such an action like that where were families were directly involved in the war.

Now obviously as things went on there was a significant amount of looting downtown. We stopped the dependents going out, said we'd freeze everybody in their tracks. Anybody that wants to leave may do that—if you have already made your plans, you bought a house, or you decided enough of this is enough and we're getting out of here, so they're done. There had been some on-and-offs and all that. We let those who wanted to go ahead to take a day off. Many of them elected to stay and have stayed since.

So from a how-does-the-personnel-fit-into-this kaleidoscope we've been talking about in the SOUTHCOM instance, I think one is: a substantial amount of quality of force comes into being here. The 7th ID, the reorganization of creating the world's finest light infantry, comes to be here. It was able to be hastily moved from its dispositions up north down to a contingency area where they were employed and employed very successfully.

The quality of the people who manned Gorgas Hospital, for example—terrific doctors, Panamanian doctors, Panamanian nurses came over there. They took care of Panamanians and Americans alike.

Discipline of the troops, extraordinarily high discipline. We had a couple of incidents there, both of which resulted in court martial activity. One where a guy shot a woman. He was either coming in or going out of a brothel, and he saw a woman and for some reason or other shot her. One was in the 82nd Airborne Division where a sergeant had seen several of his people get ambushed, and when a bunch of guys came along and opened fire, he opened fire and cleaned out the lot of them. He stood trial down at Fort Bragg and was acquitted.

There was an editorial in the *Army Times* that I think puts all that in perspective. I don't know whether you have a copy of that or not. It sort of, when I turn up with leukemia, it talks about, you know, he had something to do with recruiting them and he had something to do with equipping them. We used the Black Hawk here and we used the Apache here. He had something to do with training them, and now he's employing them in combat operations.

DR. KIRKLAND: This is why I picked you.

GEN. THURMAN: And that's pretty well summarized, I think, in the *Army Times* editorial. So I will leave it to you. You can read that and make what you like about it.

Now, one of the things I did after the fracas took place. Again, I think this is because of my proclivity for trying to get "people" into the act, I took a SOUTHCOM flag, that's not right, I took a battle streamer for Panama and then I took photos of the Apache and photos of the Black Hawk and took them to the factories and presented them with the streamer. It was all framed, and I presented that to the workers in the factory for having produced high-quality equipment which American troops were using in combat.

And interestingly enough, I told that to Bill Tuttle who was the commander of the Army Materiel Command after I'd retired, and this was after Desert Shield. He did the same thing after Desert Storm—went back and we were like down to [inaudible] where the ATACMS missile had been used or the MLRS went down and put a big streamer on them and gave them a notion that their equipment had fought or went to the Raytheon plant and had excuses to do the same. But all of that was trying to stimulate a pride in the civilian work force who had manufactured these impedimenta of war to give them some notion that we appreciated what it was they did, give aggrandizement for being on the defense team.

So from a personnel standpoint, that's sort of the Panama story.

DR. KIRKLAND: How did Purple Storm operations differ from Sand Fleas?

GEN. THURMAN: No particular difference.

DR. KIRKLAND: Just another name for the same operation?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: There was a big fire in the barrio. Did you have information on how that got started?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. There are two beliefs about that. One belief is that we deliberately started it. We didn't deliberately start any fires. And the second is that Catholic priests reported to us that that was set by members of the Dobermans.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were the Dobermans a Dignity Battalion?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. A first-class Dignity Battalion.

DR. KIRKLAND: And did he have any idea what their purpose was?

GEN. THURMAN: Well, one of the purposes was to bring ill repute on the Americans, play it off on the Americans.

DR. KIRKLAND: We were talking about the Dobermans and the fire in the barrio, and giving one reason they might have or actually did start it was to discredit the Americans.

GEN. THURMAN: Yes. The other account clearly is that it was accidental, you know, using tracers or whatever else it is that ignited. It really was a barrio and the Commandancia was sitting in close proximity to it. The Commandancia was taken apart with C-130 gunships by Sheridans and several Hellfire rounds were fired in the vicinity by our Apaches. There were no artillery fired there, no mortars fired there.

DR. KIRKLAND: My understanding, the only artillery shells fired anywhere near Panama City were a couple of demonstration rounds fired into an empty building at Fort Elmendorf; is that accurate?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: There were no aerial bombs dropped anywhere?

GEN. THURMAN: Two. Way out in Rio Hato, 50 miles out.

DR. KIRKLAND: Were there shacks and shanties and so forth built up against the walls of the Commandancia?

GEN. THURMAN: No.

DR. KIRKLAND: It was a clear area around it?

GEN. THURMAN: Yes.

DR. KIRKLAND: We talked to quite a large number of soldiers who participated in the action, various actions, and none of them described fights with Dignity Battalions. They all reported that they were engaged with Panamanian Defense Force companies. So I never had an idea of what happened and none of the books even talk about Dignity Battalions. Did they just dissolve?

GEN. THURMAN: I think there was some sniping with those guys. We had snipers all over the fracas. I was standing in front of the assembly building on the 20th, and a drive-by car drove by and hosed down the area. Now, whether they are Panamanian Defense Force people or whether they are Dignity—but they were all in civilian clothes, hard to tell.

So, I think, you sort of look at the taxonomy of who was in the fight. You had Panamanian Defense Forces in uniform, and you had Panamanian Defense Forces not in uniform, and then you had Dignity Battalions not in uniform. So you had a potpourri of people, and my notion is that there were some Dignity Battalion people who picked up several thousand people; some of whom we put in detention while we screened them as EPWs.

DR. KIRKLAND: What is an EPW?

GEN. THURMAN: Enemy prisoner of war.

DR. KIRKLAND: Okay.

GEN. THURMAN: And so when you talk to troops and say, who did you fight against, I think the natural proclivity would be anybody that returned fire against us or was in uniform, obviously the PDF. But I will also say to you that a large number of PDFers weren't in uniform. Then the question would come as, well, did the Dignity Battalions infiltrate the mixture with all that. My impression would be that they did. But I wouldn't begrudge—they were there at the shooting end and they know more about it than I do.

DR. KIRKLAND: Right. I was just wondering if the G2 reported that there was close integration between the DIGBATS [Dignity Battalions] and the regular Army?

GEN. THURMAN: There were centers of excellence of DIGBATS. For example, immediately west of Howard Airfield was a town, which was infiltrated full of Dignity Battalion people. The Dignity Battalion people gave us a fit at Gorgas one day during the famous bomb caper. They came up there and we wouldn't let them park, then they came up with a demonstration. So I conducted a counterdemonstration by running over some armored personnel carriers to clean them out because they weren't going to get up under my Gorgas Hospital under the "auspices" of a famous bomb caper. So there were pockets of Dignity Battalion people. Yes, because they were geographically oriented.

DR. KIRKLAND: I see.

GEN. THURMAN: Organized around the center of the mass population as opposed to saying the guys on the west side of town—were in Dignity Battalions on the east side of town.

DR. KIRKLAND: The people that we talked to described their initial combat missions as being to take down certain specific units. And none of these did they describe as Dignity Battalions. They were always—

GEN. THURMAN: No, we didn't orient on a Dignity Battalion as a target. We oriented on PDF, regular units and police units and their centers of mass in terms of their property holdings and then oriented on the force themselves.

DR. KIRKLAND: So after they were taken down, did the Dignity Battalions more or less evaporate, disappear?

GEN. THURMAN: The objectives were all seized by about 1700 the afternoon of the 20th. However, there was a spattering of sniper activity and that kind of stuff for several days thereafter and looting, and all that kind of stuff went on for several days thereafter. So there was a—

(End Tape 18, Side B)