

067

*U.S. Army Military History  
Institute*



**SENIOR OFFICERS DEBRIEFING PROGRAM**



**CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN**

LIEUTENANT GENERAL EDWARD M. ALMOND

AND

CAPTAIN THOMAS G. FERGUSON

**CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA. 17013**

A

July 20, 1977

(Date)

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Interview With Lieutenant General Edward M. Almond, USA

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INTERVIEW WITH  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL ALMOND (RETIRED)

by

CAPTAIN FERGUSSON

This is side #1 of tape #1 of a series of interviews with LTG Edward M. Almond, US Army retired. Interviewer Captain Thomas G. Fergusson, CGSC student. Date of interview March 25, 1975. The interview is being conducted at General Almond's home in Anniston, Alabama.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you were born in Luray, Virginia on December 12, 1892. Would you comment briefly on your parents and your family in general?

GENERAL ALMOND: As you have just stated I was born in Luray, Virginia on the 12th of December 1892. My mother was from the Mallory family and descended from the Scottish family of Hume or Holme. This family was famous for the historical reputation of Wedderburn Castle, known as Castle Danger in the Scottish War with the British Empire or England in particular and it located in the central part of Scotland. The Mallory family came to America in the 18th century and settled in Virginia between the Rappahannock and the York Rivers in Hanover and Prince William Counties. My father came from the Allemonde family in France, near the city of Meaux, and his forebears came to this country during the Napoleonic period. One of his uncles was a member of Napoleon's navy as an army officer when army officers were allowed in the French Navy. My father was a business man and travelled by horse and buggy method throughout the Page County and Culpeper County part of Virginia, back and forth across the Blue Ridge Mountains, and was a seller of heavy farm machinery. My mother came from Slate Mills, Virginia, where her father lived from the Civil War

to the time of her schooling days in Luray. My father's family consisted of one brother, Tom Almond, who was a travelling salesman and travelled between the Baltimore area and Page County area of Luray, Virginia. My grandfather lived on the Hawks Bill Creek, three miles east of Luray, Virginia and as a young boy I spent most of my time, on weekends at least and all summertime with him, rather than my own immediate family and most of this time I spent riding an old sorrel gelding horse, named Sam, about twice my age. But we galloped up and down the raceway that I made near the home in my grandfather's farm on the Hawks Bill River. My grandmother, whom we all called Aunt Matt, was a girl 13 years of age during the Civil War and I used to listen to her on the porch just before bedtime in the evening, hour after hour, describe the Union soldiers scouring the country for food, especially Virginia hams, during 1863 and 1864. The war then ended and most of my grandmother's time was devoted to her grandchildren after that and I was a chief object of her affection. In Luray, my mother had many friends who took an interest in me as I grew up until we moved to Culpeper where I started all over again as a boy to make friends and pursue my graded education. My family consisted of my mother, father, and three children. Two children were both younger than I was. Malcom was three years younger -- the sister, Judy, was five years younger. We grew up together in our early days in a compatible and friendly manner which is sometimes unusual in the present day.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, can you tell me something more about your parents -- what sort of people were your mother and your father?

GENERAL ALMOND: Both my father and my mother, as I recall, were friendly and interested in our development as children and did everything in their

power to give us guidance, moral stamina, and interest in our associates in the places where we lived, both in Luray and later in Culpeper. My father was a salesman, as I have stated before, and he took me many times to the monthly courts in Rappahannock and Culpeper Counties. We would travel by horse and buggy and start before daylight in the morning and go from Luray over the ridge to Little Washington, Virginia through Sperryville, a distance of about 30 miles. We had to arrive in a courthouse area in Little Washington at 9:00 where my father would circulate among the farm people and in that way sold much of his heavy machinery, such as binders, mowers, rakes and fertilizer spreaders.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, how much education did your father and your mother have? Do you know?

GENERAL ALMOND: My father went to grade school and high school and that was the extent of his education. My mother after her grade school, attended a girls' school in Luray. She had to go from Slate Mills, Virginia where her father lived, and spent the time as a school girl with an Aunt, Miss Broaddus, who was an old maid school teacher of the prep school type. When she was in this school in Luray is when she met my father. While my mother was in school at the Broaddus Academy in Luray, she met my father and they were married sometime in 1890. As we have said before, I was born in '92. My mother was a wonderful woman and was friendly with all types of people and all her neighbors and was very popular. She grew up as a small child in Slate Mills, Virginia, the daughter of Captain Thomas Popham who had been captain of a rifle company in the Civil War. Her uncle, Barton Mallory, was a famous captain of the Albemarle Rifles

in the Civil War, on the termination of which, having no job but being an able individual he moved to Memphis, Tennessee, where he became the first cotton mill operator and built the railway service of Memphis. His family was a large one comprised of three boys and two girls and from that generated a number of grandchildren. His boys participated in the WW I and one of them was killed in flying efforts and balloon activities in Italy. Three of these boys went to Harvard and later came back to Memphis and became responsible business men. Captain Barton Mallory of Civil War fame, having left Charlottesville, left most of his friends there and once a year he held a reunion in his spacious house in Memphis, which had three stories, the top story which he turned into a barracks and all of his Civil War time friends used to come to Memphis and spend a week to the satisfaction of Captain Mallory and to the disgust sometimes of his wife because they stayed up all night long playing cards and drinking whatever spirits Captain Mallory afforded for the occasion. In later years I learned the story of the Mallorys' activities after I was married when I would pass from the Alabama area to Leavenworth where I was a student and the other places that I was stationed. The Mallory family was very famous as I have said before and my occasions to listen to the reminiscing of Aunt Sophie Mallory about the activities that gave her so much trouble were of course interesting to me.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond you have described your parents education -- you have talked some about your mother and your father -- would you consider your parents -- either one of your parents, as ambitious people? Did they give you the sort of ambition that took you to high places in the Army, by their own personal example?

GENERAL ALMOND: No I would not. My parents were staunch, religious, normally educated people in the nature of the day, just about the end of the 19th Century. They did what they could to instruct their children in the proper manner to bring them up to occupy important jobs when they became a grown person.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, where did your family live as a boy in Luray and how long did you live in Luray before you moved to Culpeper?

GENERAL ALMOND: We lived in Luray, Virginia until I was 10 years old. We always lived on Main Street which is a main, long, hilly street in Luray in three different houses. The one which I remember most distinctly was the last one we lived in when I was going to graded school, called the Stuart house. I forget the number of the house but around us lived many friendly people including Dr. Fred Amos, who will appear later in this discourse.

CPT FERGUSSON: When did you move to Culpeper?

GENERAL ALMOND: We moved to Culpeper in about 1902. As I say when I was 10 years old and there my father continued in his choosen business of the farm implement business for the period that I lived there and prior to going to VMI in 1912.

CPT FERGUSSON: Where did you go to school as a boy in Luray and then later in Culpeper.

GENERAL ALMOND: I went to the graded school for three years in Luray and for four more years in private schools, run by my father's cousin, Carrie Flynn and the other by Miss Lucy Broaddus, the same one who conducted the school that my mother went to. In Culpeper I went to the Culpeper High

School after I finished graded school in the same general school area. The outstanding person that I remembered from my high school days was Professor Hendricks who was the principle of Culpeper High School, and a great person to interpret things that the children ought to know to develop their character and stamina.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, what sort of a town was Luray when you were a boy?

GENERAL ALMOND: Luray was a small country type town with no street transportation and everybody used a horse and buggy. The population was about 2500 and there is nothing particular about the area except the Luray Caverns which was the objective of many tourists, mostly from Baltimore, Maryland and Washington, DC who would appear each Saturday on a tourist's train and be carted in buses drawn by horses three miles from the railroad station to the Luray Caverns. Luray Caverns are famous all over the world for stalactites and stalagmites which are finely formed shells that hung from the ceiling or grew up from the floor. It was discovered by a rabbit running into a hole and the man, Mr. Tanner, who discovered the cave got very little for his discovery, but the tourist guides and the people who developed the tourist trade were the ones who made the money. Luray Caverns are still a famous site for tourists and anybody who hasn't seen them has missed something that he might go hundreds of miles across the country to see when he has it on his own doorstep.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about Culpeper, what sort of a town was Culpeper during your boyhood days?

GENERAL ALMOND: Culpeper was a town of about 3000 population and of course I remember the individuals of Culpeper better than I do those of Luray.

I was impressed by the people who were lawyers, who were ministers and who were the chief merchants in the town.

CPT FERGUSSON: Why were you impressed by these people in particular?

GENERAL ALMOND: The only thing I can say is that they were outstanding members of the church and members of the legal profession and doctors who were well known by everybody and were staunch characters, dedicated to their community and the development thereof. For instance, Dr. McCoy ran the best drug store in the town. Mr. Roger Biggers was the chief prosecuting attorney. The Commonwealth's attorney, which was an elected office, was filled by attorney Edwin Gibson, who also in my Culpepper days was a captain of the Culpepper Minutemen, a National Guard unit that attained a reputation in the Civil War. The unit had retained its interest in military activities so that the children of the Civil War soldiers became members of the National Guard company. One of my best friends in high school, Walter Hitt, was the 1st Sergeant of this company "B" in our senior school days and had been a sergeant in the company before that, although he was a very young man. He got me to become a member of Company B and there I learned in a more detailed manner of the influence of Captain Gibson, our Commonwealth Attorney. I attended two summer camps with the members of this National Guard and became a sergeant in the company the last day of my high school days at the age of 16 1/2 years and just before I went to the Virginia Military Institute.

CPT FERGUSSON: What other friends do you remember as a boy of your own age General Almond?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well besides Walter Hitt, whom I just mentioned who I should say here was my old time classmate at VMI, there was another classmate

at high school named James Prosser and it was with James Prosser that I toured the city of Washington and all the government buildings, when I was 15 years of age and this I have never forgotten. Both Hitt and Prosser were my constant companions on weekends in whatever we did in roaming the vicinity of Culpeper, through the fields when playing games. Or another friend that I remember was a little older than I was and the leader of the boy group which met once a week in a designated part of Culpeper named Bob Smith. Bob Smith later became editor of the Culpeper Enterprise and was known for his civic minded activities for many years thereafter. Of course all these people are dead now and I have outlived them.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you or your friends ever get in any sort of trouble around Culpepper as a teenager?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, as I recall it the people I have referred to were assembled by direction of our leader Bob Smith and would meet at least once a week, at a designated place, and engage in some activity, either night games or tours of the library or something and it is for this special reason that I remember Bob Smith as a good leader in the right direction of youth as they assembled from time to time with nothing to do. What I have just described as my youthful activities during leisure time seem very drab I know, compared to the movies and television, the tennis matches and golf and other activities that we introduce our children to at an early age these days, but in those days where people would have to walk everywhere they went and there were no movies, activities were usually confined to assemblies and local things that nobody would pay any attention to or be interested in these modern times.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you have already mentioned a trip to Washington, D.C, that you took as a boy. Were there any other trips out of the Luray or Culpeper area which you recall which were of special importance to you?

GENERAL ALMOND: The only trips that I took besides this special trip were trips I used to take from Culpeper and Slate Mills, Virginia to visit my mother's aunt, Leila Quaintance, wife of Dr. Quaintance of the Rappahannock County area. We would travel in the summertime by two horse surrey or with Aunt Leila Quaintance to Louisa, Virginia, which is where another aunt (Aunt Leila's sister) Sophia, lived and spent two or three days in that manner. The only other trip that I ever wanted to take was to the Jamestown exhibition, which was held in 1907, and my father had always promised to let me go there. At the time this came off in 1907 we didn't have sufficient funds or expense to finance the trip, so therefore I never got there.

CPT FERGUSSON: So that brings up the question that I intended to ask you later. Did you family ever encounter economic difficulties or did your father always make enough money so that you always lived in relative comfort when you were a boy?

GENERAL ALMOND: We always lived in relative comfort, but it was always a strain financially for my father to gain a salary adequate to any luxuries. For that reason we did not travel around the country and take trips to Sulphur Springs, Rushing Waters or any other local or distant resort.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you ever think when you were a boy that you wanted to be a rich man when you grew up?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, not especially. I began to wonder when I was in high school what kind of a job I could get after I got out of high school and

also the fact that I would like to be a college graduate.

CPT FERGUSSON: Why did you want to be a college graduate sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: Because I thought it would fit me for a life that would improve upon that I experienced as a growing child.

CPT FERGUSSON: Certainly when you were a growing boy in Luray and Culpeper, there must have been a number of veterans of the Civil War living in these towns and in the area. Do you remember conversations with them -- did they make a lasting impression on you?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I wouldn't say that I had any fundamental conversation about the Civil War in either Luray or Culpeper, although I knew of people who had been in the Civil War. For example, one of Lee's corps commanders, A. P. Hill, came from Culpeper which I discovered about the time I left it. I knew the Hill home, but I didn't realize the connection that high ranking Confederate generals had with A. P. Hill. He was dead of course and I had no way of consulting him and I don't believe his children tried to expose the facts of his Civil War connections, although he was a famous Civil War general. The other areas of contact with the people much older than I had to do with local events since the Civil War. Most people were left to do with their worldly goods and finances when the Civil War was over. We must remember that the time we are talking about now was just 30 or 40 years after the Civil War and people were still struggling to regain their balance financially and economically.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were some of the people still bitter about the defeat of the south and the Civil War -- some of the older people?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, the older people, especially those who knew people who had been killed in the Civil War. One of the ways they expressed it was their memorial day services once a year in which all the people with any responsibility would go to the cemetery and put flowers on the graves of the Civil War dead and discuss the terrors and the hardships imposed by the Civil War which had occurred only 30 or 40 years before. It must be remembered that most everybody of any means had lost their businesses, their animals, their way of life due to the poverty generated by the Civil War. This caused bitterness and resentment and had to be met and remedied as best we could during this period of 1890 to 1920.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you say that this bitterness on the part of the people who had lived through the war carried over at all to the younger people. Did you find yourself feeling some hostility towards the North or towards the Yankees?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, not especially. We always called anybody from north of the Mason-Dixon Line a Yankee and looked at them askance, especially if we didn't know them well. Many of them we knew well and many came to settle in our midst and that way we became friendly. Another thing that detracted from ill feeling was the Spanish-American War which came in 1898, and solidified the attitude of the average citizen towards national welfare rather than bitterness of the past war.

CPT FERGUSSON: What do you recall from that period of the Spanish-American War. Were there a number of people from Culpeper or Luray who volunteered to join the Army at that time?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, not especially because the Army was small in those days. The Battle of Manila Bay, fought by Admiral Dewey (in which the

Spanish Fleet was destroyed), was, for example, a topic of interest, total interest, and the charge of Roosevelt's Roughriders in Cuba up San Juan Hill was an outstanding event that everybody was interested in. It was a national event performed by our national armed forces and as I say that centered the interest on the 'Spanish-American War as a national subject, rather than the bitterness of the war that had passed so recently (the Civil War).

CPT FERGUSSON: Were you conscious of a feeling that the United States was becoming a great power at the time of the Spanish-American War?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, because it extended our activities to the Philippines, to Cuba and later to the Barbary Coast where the Marines became famous for their landing in Morocco.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you ever recall meeting Regular Army officers in Culpeper or Luray as a boy? Were there officers who came from those towns and came home periodically? Or soldiers for that matter -- people who might have had an influence on you to join the Army later?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I don't know of any particular individual that especially impressed me except in Culpeper as I grew up, prior to going to VMI, there was one lawyer named Nalle who had been the Adjutant General of the National Guard of the State of Virginia, who was an influence on all young people who had any interest in military affairs. And as I said before, I was a member of the Culpeper Minutemen, Company B of the Second Virginia Regiment and General Nalle used to come down to our drill and advise us by discussions on what we should do to improve our company to get ready to go to camp, usually in Maryland or Pennsylvania for a period of ten days. There were no other special individuals that I recall in this regard.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were there many Negroes in the Culpeper town when you were growing up?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. There were many Negroes -- they lived in certain sections of the town and in the suburbs of the town, but both in Luray and in Culpeper there was a certain section where Negroes settled, primarily because of the rental rates being more favorable to their status in the community.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall at that time if any of the Negroes were able to amass any sort of wealth so that a few of them might be considered middle class?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not that I ever heard of.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you ever have any contact -- what sort of contact did you have with the Negro community as a boy?

GENERAL ALMOND: Only as laborers and through the association I had on my uncle-in-law's farm up at Stevensburg, Virginia (Uncle Claude Royston). He had a large family and used to have neighbors come to help him till the soil and they were usually Negroes.

CPT FERGUSSON: Returning to the Civil War theme for a moment, did not the fact that you lived so near to the Shenendoah Valley, the cite of the famous Jackson Valley Campaign have some affect on you? I know that later on you became a great student of the Civil War -- didn't your proximity to the scenes of those great battles which were only 30 or 40 years before your boyhood have some impact on you. Did you ever visit the site of these battles as a boy?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I don't believe that I was particularly impressed by Civil War activities until my senior year in high school in Culpeper,

Virginia. During that period Professor Hendricks gave us a historical survey. When I lived in Culpeper I do remember going across the Masanutten Mountain into the valley of Virginia at New Market and Strausburg. Of course they were famous names in Jackson Valley Campaign.

CPT FEGUSSON: General Almond you attended Culpeper High School for four years -- from about 1908 to 1912. What do you remember about high school in particular? Were you a good student?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I think I was a good student and along with my boyhood associates that I have already mentioned, Walter Hitt and James Prosser, we were interested in history, english and mathematics, primarily. We studied hard and knew our lessons when we went to school and for that reason attracted the attention of Professor Hendricks and he served us well as a basic and fundamental instructor in those subjects. Other subjects were interesting of course, but they were the fundamental ones.

CPT FERGUSSON: Why do you think you did well in school? Did your parents put pressure on you to do well or was it something within you that you wanted to do well in school?

GENERAL ALMOND: It was an innate desire to succeed in whatever I did and I have always followed since that throughout my life to do the best I could at the job at hand and to get a college education as I mentioned before.

CPT FERGUSSON: In these days sports have become very important in both high school and college level. In your day when you were in high school were organized sports important? If so, did you participate?

GENERAL ALMOND: The only sport I remember in those days was baseball and that was on a local basis and not costly and not too intensified in effort.

CPT FERGUSSON: Among your fellow students, your classmates at Culpeper High School, would you consider that you were a leader even in high school?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not especially, but I was an able student in my opinion and knew my lessons and that was all that was required in those days.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did not certain people in your class emerge as leaders of the others just because they had certain traits which caused others to follow them?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not that I recall.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, in high school before you got interested in the military, during the last year or two, did you ever think about being a farmer? Many of the people in the area of Culpeper were in the farming profession. Some of them were wealthy farmers -- did you ever consider this as a possible life career?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not especially. I was interested in the farm areas where I visited my grandfather when I was living in Luray and my aunt, Leila Quaintance of Slate Mills, Virginia when I was living in Culpeper. My purpose in going to the farm in those days primarily was based on riding horses and I rode many horses in both places. As a matter of fact Dr. Quaintance, Aunt Leila's husband, was a doctor, "saddlebag doctor" as they called them in those days, who day after day and hour after hour in each day would travel on horseback to people who were his patients on adjacent farms and in the little villages surrounding where his doctor's office was. In those days all medicine was dispensed in the home of the patient in the hospital. In connection with Dr. Quaintance for example he had many fine riding horses and my purpose in going to the farm in the summer was to ride

those horses and he was interested in my coming and took great pains to give me good horses some of which he rode one day and I rode the next. Really, I was interested in becoming a farmer in the later part of my service. When I was a Lieutenant General at the Army War College, I used to travel through Maryland from Carlisle, Pennsylvania to Washington, DC and look at the beautiful farms which were much larger, than those of my boyhood. I then decided to be a farmer when I retired, but when I retired I found it too hard to get farm labor to help so I gave up the idea and I am very well pleased that I did so at the time.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the legal profession and being a doctor? Did you ever consider those when you were in high school? Since you have admired -- you have already said you admired. . .

GENERAL ALMOND: No, no I didn't consider those professions although I had cousins, Dr. Rupert Quaintance and Dr. Roy Quaintance, both of whom were doctors and sons of Dr. Oscar Quaintance who furnished me the riding horses when I used to visit his farm in the summer. I became interested in a military career early in life at Luray through the efforts of Dr. Amos, my across the street neighbor.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond you mentioned already that Dr. Amos gave you buttons at an early age which caused you to develop an interest in a military career - could you explain this a little more?

GENERAL ALMOND: I first became interested in VMI and a military profession in general from a neighbor across the street, Dr. Fred Amos. I was eight years old and he was a doctor of medicine and 40 years old. He gave me four VMI brass buttons from his VMI coatee which my mother duplicated in overall material and sewed the buttons on it. Dr. Amos worked on me and at the age of 8 1/2 years, I formed a military unit of about seven boys. I never

lost interest in VMI but later tried to go to West Point because it was cheaper if you could get an appointment.

CPT FERGUSSON: When you were in high school did you have a favorite subject? Were you particularly interested in history or mathematics?

GENERAL ALMOND: I have already mentioned that. My favorite subject I would say in high school days was first history and next mathematics and because I studied hard on these I did well in both of them.

CPT FERGUSSON: What particularly interested you about history? Were you interested solely in military history or history in general and what period?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I was interested in primarily the discovery of America and now the United States portion thereof and it was for that reason that I wanted to go to Jamestown, as I mentioned before, to the 300th anniversary. Secondly, after American History, I was interested in European history, particularly the Napoleonic period and the days of Frederick the Great and Bismarck. Third from that would be my interest in the various wars that happened in Italy, starting with the Romans and starting back earlier than that in the Battle of Cannae, in the third century BC.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond what did you see in the early period, the Roman period of history, of particular interest to you at that age?

GENERAL ALMOND: I think my first interest could be put as the early history of Greece and the Phoenicians, Phillip of Macedonia, and then the Egyptian history and maybe Cleopatra had something to do with it. That led me into what happened in Rome in Caesar's time and before and then I was intruded by Hannibal's crossing of the Alps and his double development at the Battle

of Cannae. Double envelopments in military operations are very hazardous and usually fail. But the fact that Cannae was such a success and defeated the Romans completely at that time (300 BC), was unique and served to illustrate what was necessary to begin a double envelopment, but Hannibal's crossing of the Alps was intriguing to me in those days and later Napoleon was doing the same thing at the Battles of Marengo and lost that he was successful in, the head of the Po Valley and the principal battle that I was interested in was the beginning of Napoleon's success, the Battle of Marengo. Marengo was in my area later during WWII, and I took my aide to see the battlefield. When we arrived there I said we were going to see the Battle of Marengo, one of Napoleon's battles. I asked my aide, Captain Walter Vaughn, if he remembered who won at Marengo. He had forgotten, so I told him that "when you get back to the van tonight in our CP down in Viarregio you can read what you don't remember now," which he did and I saw that he did it.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, were there any particular tragic or traumatic family or personal experiences during your boyhood that you recall?

GENERAL ALMOND: No we lived a normal life, going to school in the wintertime, going to games and to the farm in the summer and the first shock that I recall was when my father died in 1925, which was considerably after that.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did not you suffer a very serious illness about the time you graduated from high school?

GENERAL ALMOND: I did. In my senior year in high school, the spring thereof, I was suddenly seized with appendicitis which developed strongly into peritonitis which caused me to leave school for the moment to be taken to the hospital in Charlottesville, Virginia from Culpeper and I sustained

four different operations in about ten days period to save my life. My doctor was a university surgeon who travelled all over the country and a very famous one, Dr. Watts. This was a drastic setback for me at the very time that I was trying to go to VMI. (I already had an appointment.) With reference to my graduation at Culpeper High School it should be stated here that at my graduation exercises I was awarded a diploma suspended because I was in the hospital under going one of these operations. So later on, my high school principal attested to my qualifications and my diploma was awarded about the time I entered VMI, when I entered the third class as a high school graduate of Culpeper High School.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, could you go into detail about why you went to VMI?

GENERAL ALMOND: Before explaining that I would like to explain that I had always had a desire to go to West Point and become an army officer for the reasons that I stated before, being first indoctrinated into military attitude by Dr. Amos in Luray, Virginia when I was a boy eight years old. I was about to realize this desire to go to West Point to become this professional military man when an unfortunate occurrence happened. My father was not financially able to send me to college, but he did have the friendship from boyhood of an individual who lived in Lynchburg named Claude Swanson, who at that time was United States Senator from Virginia and promised me an appointment to West Point Military Academy when I graduated from high school in Culpeper. Unfortunately Senator Swanson died in 1911, which left me without the ability to go to college or to get into the Army. My mother knew a Virginia state senator named George Browning, of Orange,

Virginia who when he learned of my desire to go into the Army, suggested that I go to VMI which was a military school and he offered me a state cadetship which was a considerable financial assistance in this effort to go to VMI. I accepted this with great thanks and paid all of my expenses to VMI except board and clothing with this cadetship. My parents and I (from money I saved in my newspaper route in Culpeper) paid these basic expenses that were incurred in my years at VMI. I had heard of VMI since I was 8 years old through Dr. Amos as I have explained before.

CPT FERCUSSON: When you arrived at VMI your first year in the fall of 1912, General Almond, what was your impression of VMI?

GENERAL ALMOND: I quickly learned about the traditions of VMI from association with cadets, old and new, my classmates as well, and from some of the instructors who had preceded me at VMI. The most prominent one that I recall is Stonewall Jackson, of Civil War fame. He had been a teacher at VMI for several years before the war opened and he was also a graduate of West Point. Another thing that impressed me about VMI immediately was that it had participated with its cadet corps in the battle of New Market in 1864 when the South won that battle of May 15th, 1864 by a remarkable charge across an open field and captured the four guns on top of the hill held by the Federal troops that were assaulting the Confederates at New Market. Everyone in Virginia had learned about that battle before he could walk almost, but it did not impress me previously as it did by seeing the pictures depicting the charge of the cadet corps in New Market in 1864.

CPT FERCUSSON: What about the physical appearance of the campus at VMI? Were you impressed by that?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well VMI had been built from 1839 on and at the time I

went there, almost a hundred years later, the structures had changed considerably. The barracks and the main sets of quarters in which the Superintendent and the Commandant lived and some of the other structures were of Gothic architecture and well, the appearance was very impressive as a group of buildings. The parade ground is immediately in front of the barracks. Stonewall Jackson's statue on the edge of the parade ground was always an inspiration as our company marched past it to parade or to drill.

CPT FERGUSSON: The first year at VMI is called "rat year". What about your "rat year" General Almond? Was it a very unpleasant or difficult year for you?

GENERAL ALMOND: I knew of the reputation of "rat year" of any cadet who ever entered VMI and I knew it required stalwart character to survive it. I was also confronted with the fact that I had only been out of the hospital three months with a very serious operation which was an abdominal one as I have described before. This would make it difficult for me to undergo the hardships of being a "rat" and I made this known to the doctor on my appearance. The doctor saw the severity of my predicament and had me excused by the Commandant from strenuous training, not from drill, but from football, baseball, or from hazing that the "rats" were usually subjected to.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond what sort of hazing went on at VMI at those days?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well to begin with every cadet had to "fin out", that is throw his shoulders back and keep his forearms at the horizontal. Then, they would have "rat" sessions on Saturday afternoon which required the "rat" to sit in a bowl of ink and be spun around in a naked condition, to run a certain distance if he couldn't spin in the bowl or if he fell out of the bowl and for standing at attention with a bayonet supposedly at his throat

or his chest to make him stand in the correct attitude. Many commands had to be given in mimicking older cadet officers who exercised cadet military authority over him. He had to learn poems and speeches by heart and to make comments that were inspired by his persecutors, the upperclass cadets, especially the third class whenever they could think of anything new to say.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were there any physical beatings that you can remember of your classmates?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not me. Sometimes a cadet who broke a rule would be required to bend over and get ten licks of a bayonet or 20 licks of a bayonet and sometimes this became excessive, which a cadet would expose when he went to the surgeon the next day for a bruised midriff rear.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you ever consider quitting VMI during your "rat year"?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not at all. I went there determined to get an education and I withstood all the restrictions that were imposed with good spirit and with intentions to do what I was supposed to do.

CPT FERGUSSON: What company were you in during your first year sir, or were you in the same company the four years?

GENERAL ALMOND: I was in Company F as a "rat" in the first span of the rear rank. In the next year when I became a second classman I was transferred to D Company, where I served throughout the year as a sergeant. The next year I became a lieutenant and was transferred back to F Company due to my height which was tall in the center companies C and D. I also served in E Company, as a sergeant part of my sophomore year.

CPT FERGUSSON: Who were your closest friends at VMI during your four years there?

GENERAL ALMOND: I was in Company F as a "rat" in the first span of the rear rank. In the next year when I became a second classman I was transferred to D Company, where I served throughout the year as a sergeant. The next year I became a lieutenant and was transferred back to F Company due to my height which was tall in the center companies C and D. I also served in E Company, as a sergeant part of my sophomore year.

CPT FERGUSSON: Who were your closest friends at VMI during your four years there?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well my high school friend, Walter Hitt who was also a cadet in the third class from Culpeper High School was my roommate throughout the period of cadetship of three years. The other classmate who served with me in my first class year and roomed with me was Tom Holtzman of Luray, Virginia, a boy I had known ever since I was in the first year of graded school. They were the principal friends that I had in that period of three years. We were always moving from one stoop of the barracks to another and sticking together. In addition to Hitt and Holtzman as my roommates, I had other strong and staunch friends who remained friendly with me for the rest of my cadetship and service as well. Most of them are dead now. They were Addi and William Hagan and Dick Copeland, all of Norfolk, Virginia, and my friend Alex Campbell of Richmond who later became a tobacco manufacturer in Richmond, Virginia. These were all classmates. There were many others too numerous to mention that I remember now and then and see now and then on my return to the Institute.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, who was the Commandant at VMI when you were a cadet?

GENERAL ALMOND: The Commandant of the cadets at VMI during my first two years was Colonel Tim Wise, an ex-Army officer who had served in the military

attache's office in the American Embassy in London previous to his retirement from the army. He was the son of a former governor of Virginia, who had been governor just after the Civil War and was a controversial individual. Although somewhat "British" in manner and the son of the former governor of Virginia, I recall that as my instructor he was very prominent because he taught business law in addition to being commandant and used the last half of my first class year in discussing the great war that the British had been engaged in since August 1914. So, we had a war course instead of a law course.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the remainder of the faculty sir? Did you have any difficulties?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well I remember distinctly other members of the faculty because one had my middle name, "Mallory". Colonel Francis Mallory a distant relative, was chief of the physics section, and a very staunch instructor. I remember a certain math instructor very vividly because of his comic attitude which on many occasions he used when he wanted to spur cadets on to better efforts -- his name is B. D. Mayo. There was another Lieutenant Colonel Mayo who taught French that I remember distinctly and then the heads of other departments whose names I don't remember, especially now, were impressive at the time.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, were all the faculty at VMI at that time active duty Army officers?

GENERAL ALMOND: No. There was only one Army officer who was Commandant of cadets who was a Regular Army officer in my third year, the year I was a first classman. His name is Colonel Schuler as I recall it. But Wise was the most prominent one as a Commandant. There were no other Regular

Army officers on duty at VMI. Only in a much later period did the Army begin detailing more than one Regular Army officer to a military school at one time. Now there are many Air Force, Navy and Army officers, who get assignments to ROTC duty now at various schools.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, at VMI, the ROTC program was not even in being and VMI was not therefore turning out officers for the armed forces. Is that correct?

GENERAL ALMOND: That's correct. The ROTC came into being after WW I. I believe 1919 was the first year it existed. Since that time, it has developed to the point where a person can get commissioned directly from an ROTC course, while in the days of my cadetship nobody could go into the Army unless there happened to be a vacancy and that was supposed to be given only to the top graduates of honor schools so designated. That was pre-ROTC procedure. While the ROTC since 1919 has commissioned cadets, directly from the ROTC course into the Army, this was not the case prior to WW I. VMI had developed a reputation for producing good officers through the performance of many of its cadets who had gotten a chance to serve in the Army and had taken advantage of those opportunities. For example, when WW I was coming on, General Pershing then an important top officer even before he became Commander of the AEF in France in WW I, referred to VMI frequently as the West Point of the South because of its known reputation of preparing cadets for immediate commission in the Army.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, how many of your VMI classmates went on to careers in the Army or to serve in the Army as officers?

GENERAL ALMOND: When WW I was coming on, every physically fit cadet who was eligible for commission in the Army considered being commissioned and

that was the case when the war was actually declared. I know of no cadet who was physically fit and available for service, whether he was engaged in business or a profession such as law or medicine, who did not offer his services in order to fill the great demand for Army officers as the forces expanded to take part in WW I. I would say that the majority of my class met this requirement and served in WWI. Many of them were discharged when the war was over because their intent had been to follow some particular line of business or professional work, but those who desired to remain in the Army did remain and that happened in many cases.

CPT FERGUSSON: How many of your class eventually reached general officer rank in the armed services, General?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, I couldn't state that definitely, although a number of my classmates, attained high rank. For example, Richard Copeland, one of my friends that I have mentioned before, became Chief of Ordnance of the Air Force when the Air Force became a separate entity in our national defense. Another was Tommy Arms, my classmate who became a brigadier general. There were many others, I don't recall at the present time, but all who desired to stay in the Army had a chance to become generals and many of them did.

CPT FERGUSSON: Have you ever since attending VMI regretted going there -- ever wished that you had gone to West Point or some other college, and why?

GENERAL ALMOND: No. Once that I became a graduate of VMI I have always been inspired by its principles and never regretted my attendance there compared to any other school, including West Point. I admire West Point tremendously, but I still appreciate the accomplishments of VMI's civilian school which does a fine job in preparing individuals for military service.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what sort of an education did you get at VMI? What was your major there or what sort of degree did you get upon graduation?

GENERAL ALMOND: I majored in electrical engineering. The most difficult course at VMI is civil engineering, but at that time we had a course in civil engineering, electrical engineering, chemical engineering and liberal arts. The liberal arts student didn't want to do anything else except study history and literature while the engineers wanted to work at their job and become proficient and experts in mechanics.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you have a difficult time with any particular academic subject?

GENERAL ALMOND: No. I studied hard and got results and graduated three in my class of 65 graduates and 125 matriculates.

CPT FERGUSSON: What cadet rank did you attain during your three years at VMI?

GENERAL ALMOND: All the cadet officers in the cadet corps came out of the first class each year. The sergeants came out of the second class and the corporals out of the third class. Second classmen had been there a year; when the promotions were made, I was made a sergeant in that class. In the first class year I became a first lieutenant throughout the year.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, was first lieutenant a relatively high rank within the VMI corps of cadets?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well it ranked after all the six captains that we had.

CPT FERGUSSON: What was your position as a first lieutenant? Were you an executive officer of a company?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I many times commanded a company to which I was assigned.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you participate in any organized athletics during your time at VMI?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well not exactly. I had no special class distinction as an athlete. I was a track team manager in my first class year and on a health committee, but not a varsity team member of any sport. I did participate in all of the basic sports in which our class was trained. There were very few extra curricular activities in my day, except dances and I always attended the hops, but had insufficient funds to afford many invited girls.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what was -- what constituted social activities at VMI? Were there many girls who came to VMI on the weekends to have dates with cadets?

GENERAL ALMOND: In my day very few girls came to VMI by invitation except at time periods of the hops. There were usually opening dances, Thanksgiving dances, pre-Christmas dances, February dances, spring dances, Easter dances and final dances. At these times every cadet who could afford to entertain his invitee to the hops invited a girl to Lexington, and she usually came with a chaperone, or in a group for the particular hop or for the whole time. The only extra curricular activities in those days were these hops at which time the cadet who invited a girl to the hop was supposed to take her out to lunch and a dinner for the days that she was there. This was expensive in those days in spite of the fact that it cost less than it does now. I was handicapped in that respect because I had very little spending money to afford such entertainment.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you ever have girls to VMI during your time there?

GENERAL ALMOND: Oh, yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall any of their names?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well I had Martha Chambers, from Richmond, and Rosalie Moseley from Richmond, and a couple of girls from Charlotte, North Carolina. The

principal one of these from North Carolina was Judy Baxter Scott, who instead of interesting me in marriage, married a rich textile man. Had I invited my present wife, Margaret Crook from Anniston, in the event that she was old enough, I probably would have become engaged to her as I did five years later in Alabama.

CPT FERGUSSON: While you were a cadet at VMI, General, were you consciously preparing yourself for a career as an officer in the Army or were you merely preparing yourself in the way of getting a general education? Did you still want to go in the Army?

GENERAL ALMOND: I would have to answer your question in a two-prong manner. I was still interested in becoming an Army officer but there were no vacancies at the time as I have said before about the ROTC and direct appointments to the Army with a direct commission from the ROTC, but I was always available and interested and in the meantime I was interested in getting a job anywhere I could after I had graduated from college.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, did you have plans for other occupations after graduation? How did you plan to make a living?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I didn't. I was a graduate in the electrical course at VMI and hoped that I would find a job on graduation that would take me either to Westinghouse or some other comparable organization or maybe to become a chemical engineer teacher or physics teacher. Really, I had no definite plans and hoped possibly to find a suitable position through my own classmates who had connections with various professions and businesses. As a matter of fact I thought of going to be the commandant of some military school until I could look around in more detail and that's what I eventually did.

CPT FERGUSSON: Looking back, would you say that your experience in education at VMI was extremely important in the development of your potential for subsequent long service in the Army, and if so, how?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I consider VMI had a very important part in my development to become what I consider myself to be, a responsible Army officer and leader on the battlefield. That involved the value of understanding that every accomplishment is the result of labor, effort and hard work. The other element and more important one was the establishment of no uncertain terms of the value of moral stability and integrity which the honor system at VMI, like the honor system at West Point, establishes in the mind of a responsible cadet. There is no substitute for integrity.

CPT FERGUSSON: Approximately one year before you graduated from VMI a famous assassination at Sarajevo touched off WW I. Was there a strong feeling among VMI cadets and faculty during your last year at school that the United States would eventually enter the great war in Europe?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, from the beginning of WW I in August 1914, as each event occurred, it became evident from the spirit of the Corps and the reaction of the Corps and was really due to the influence of Colonel Wise, our commandant. There was a tendency of opinion in the cadet corps to lean towards ; the British and the longer the war went on the more evident it was that all cadets favored our interest into the war to assist our British brothers.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, weren't there any cadets, who perhaps came from German-American families or in some way would favor the other side in the war at this time before we entered?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not that I recall.

CPT FERCUSSON: Was -- the fact that there was a feeling among the cadets about the likelihood of the United States getting into the war -- was this important in lending an air of urgency to your final academic year of 1914-1915?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well yes, everybody wanted to be sure first to graduate and have a privilege of being commissioned as war developed or as the prospect of war developed and they knew if they were a graduate they would be immediately available rather than having the question of whether or not they were going to graduate.

CPT FERCUSSON: Did the officers on the faculty and the VMI cadets follow closely the unfolding events in Europe -- the battles that were taking place on the Western Front particularly?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well I would say that the only means of following that was through Colonel Wise's lectures and the solutions proposed where these were especially important as at the battle of Messines Ridge where the British losses were so severe. These reports and comments would be published on a cadet bulletin board where cadets as they broke ranks from their meal formation, especially class formation, would go to the bulletin board and get the results of the day.

CPT FERCUSSON: Didn't you read newspapers -- as a cadet -- weren't daily newspapers available which carried war news while you were at VMI?

GENERAL ALMOND: No. We had a cadet publication called the "Cadet" which came out once a week and that would summarize important developments of the past week and of course as I say, Colonel Wise would see that the bulletin board was supplied with items from his newspaper, but as far as the cadet corps and individuals receiving newspapers, that wasn't a fact.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was there any attempt -- well you have already touched on this, but what did the faculty attempt to do under Colonel Wise's direction to incorporate the lessons of WW I into your instruction or was it too, was this happening too fast for anything to really be done?

GENERAL ALMOND: No. The faculty didn't enter into the war solution or comment on the events that took place. Colonel Wise was our main source of information.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the new developments in warfare which really came to the fore in the WW I, like the use of the machine gun, the use of the airplane, the submarine, these sort of things which were being used on both sides which made the WW I quite different from what everyone thought it would be. Everyone thought the war would be over very quickly and yet it turned into a tremendous bloody stalemate which went on for years. Was this sort of thing -- how was this received at VMI?

GENERAL ALMOND: During my cadetship which was the last year, my first class year, the first year of the war, nothing special took place to change the mode and the theme of the military course toward cadets. I think this was changed as the war went on in '17 and '18 to accomplish the realization that you speak of.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what do you recall about your graduation at VMI in the spring, actually early summer, of 1915? Was there a big ceremony and so on? Can you tell us a little bit about that?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, at the graduation exercises at VMI, the diplomas were awarded and the cadet would receive his diploma and walk back individually to where his parents were seated and turn over to his mother or whoever represented his family and receive a kiss and congratulations. That night

the final ball would be held in which ceremonies, dances, special dances would be produced. On the Sunday of the final exercise week the baccalaureate sermon by some prominent minister would always be given and of course there was always a graduation parade by the cadet corps and the first classmen would fall out as they do at West Point and become part of the reviewing group under the Commandant.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, if there was any motto which was emblazoned in your mind by your experience at VMI which stayed with you for the rest of your life, what was it?

GENERAL ALMOND: It was a very important one. When Stonewall Jackson graduated from West Point and in fact after he was dead, a notebook made there by a cadet was found in his belongings which had this term, "You may be whatever you resolve to be". That resolution has remained uppermost in my mind in every task that I had that required all my effort and continued to require that effort. As a matter of fact, when I came back from WW II one of my classmates was superintendant of VMI. I went to visit him and delivered a speech to the Corps of cadets. I noticed that what I had seen as a cadet and taken as the quotation I have given above was missing from its former familiar place at VMI over the arch in one of the barracks, where you enter the inner court. That quotation was missing. I asked the superintendant where it was and why it wasn't up and he said that in the remodeling of one of the barracks buildings where it had been they had failed to replace it and it would cost something to replace it. I said, "by all means have this replaced and if necessary I will help to pay for it myself." It was replaced.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, when you graduated from VMI in 1915 do you recall the emotion of the Corps at that time or your own emotions upon graduation? Were you tremendously happy to be through the three years and ready to go out and join the Army or were you a bit apprehensive about going out into the world and possibly having to go overseas to war very soon?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, we were all elated at graduating and our attitude was happiness at being able to get whatever job that we could find and we were satisfied with and to work at it and accomplish the patriotic purposes which had been instilled in us during academic days.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you were graduated from VMI in, on June 15th, 1915. You were not commissioned as a 2LT of infantry in the Regular Army until 30 November of 1916. Exactly what did you do in this interim period from the time you graduated until the time you came into the Regular Army?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well I was available for commissioning after graduation but there were no vacancies in the Army because we had not then entered the war. We did not enter the war until April 7th, 1917, so I was without a position. Due to the fact that my classmate, Rutherford Spessard graduated first in our class at VMI he had gotten a job with Marion Institute in Marion, Alabama. Looking around for a job during the summer and not finding one, I communicated with my classmate, Spessard, in Marion in late August and asked him what was available in Marion, as a teaching job, while I was waiting for an Army opportunity. He arranged at once a conference with the President of Marion Institute, Colonel Murphy and found out that they would be glad to have me teach in their French and Physics Department and sometimes

mathematics when required and I made a report to Marion Institution September, about the 1st, 1915 and became an instructor on the faculty of that institution. I remained in this position until the next summer when I found out that there were probably vacancies in commissioning officers for the Army and for that time I attended a special school of training in Washington, D. C., and prepared for the Army exams at Fort Meyer, Va.

CPT FERGUSSON: At what time was that sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: The date of this was about a three weeks course prior to the Army examination early in September of 1916. When I had taken this preparatory course and the examination in September for a commission in the Army, I returned to Marion because I couldn't be given a definite answer as to whether or not I would be commissioned. Colonel Murphy understood that I was available for commissioning in the Army if I was successful. I was successful and had a very fine mark in my examinations and was commissioned as a 2LT in the Army of the United States effective 30 November 1916.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, to go back to your time at Marion before you were commissioned as a 2LT, this was the period I believe during which you met your wife to be, Margaret Crook of Anniston, Alabama. Can you tell me a little about this, when you were married and so on?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. When I got to Marion in 1915 I found that there was not only the military school of Marion Institute, a junior college in Marion, but also a girl's college, a woman's college named Judson College located there. It was a custom for the girls of Judson to attend the football games at Marion Institute and for the instructors and cadets as well to attend the gatherings, parties and receptions which were given at

Judson and also to visit the girls by appointment with the Dean of Women. I found out there were a number of pretty girls and charming ones, students in Judson College and as a young instructor with other young instructors at Marion, we used to attend these functions as well as the cadets. I repeatedly noticed a very pretty young girl who I discovered was named Margaret Crook of Anniston, Alabama, and the more I saw of her the more attracted I became and began to make engagements for dates and supper gatherings (at Judson primarily), but I always tried to get an engagement with Margaret Crook. This led to a better relationship and interest in marriage. So in the Spring of 1916 I proposed the question and it was accepted. Although we were engaged then, our actual wedding plans were not firmed up until the fall of 1916 after I passed the examination at Ft. Myer and received my commission as a 2LT. We married the following year, August 4, 1917.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, did you spend any time going to Anniston meeting her family and so on during that period while you were at Marion?

GENERAL ALMOND: I did the Christmas of 1916 after I was commissioned and there I made my presence and personality known to the parents of Margaret, who were Samuel L. Crook and his wife Ione, a very charming family group. Crook was a business man in Anniston, Alabama.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, could you give some more details about your wedding in Anniston on August 4th, 1917?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. One week before my wedding I was ordered from Gettysburg, where I commanded a company of the 58th Infantry, to mustering-in duty in New York for National Guard units. This was about to interfere

with my wedding set for August 4th, when I discovered that I could muster- in the unit assigned to me at New York at the Quartermaster and Military Police Unit of the New York National Guard Division. The Army of the unit was at 97th Street in New York and that this could be accomplished 24 hours before my wedding which was to take place on the 4th of August. So, I proceeded to New York, mustered-in the unit, the last unit at midnight on August 2nd, and immediately took a train for Anniston, Alabama, and arrived on the 3rd. In the meantime I had selected the attendants to my wedding on my side as rapidly as possible and secured four of my former colleagues on the faculty at Marion Institute, who agreed to arrive in Anniston by the 4th of August, and from these I selected my best man as Dr. Preston Jackson, a graduate of Washington and Lee University, at Lexington, Virginia, who taught languages at Marion. My groomsmen were fellow professors and about my age; Hunt Frasier from Selma, Wilbur Argo from Talledega, Doug Wingo from Birmingham, all Alabama. In addition to this, I selected four of my acquaintances in Anniston who had been friends of Margaret's and thus made up my groomsman's list for the wedding. The wedding took place in Anniston, Alabama, on the 4th of August at 5:00 P.M. and was attended by about 200 persons. The wedding was preceded on the evening of August 3rd, by a wonderful reception given by the friends of my wife's family -- Mr. Crook and Mrs. Crook, their friends and Margaret's friends. It was a fine reception and wedding altogether. The reception for our guests was held at the Country Club. This was a memorable occasion of my life of course. Margaret and I left immediately on our honeymoon to New York and Atlanta and after that returned to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where I was on duty in the camp of US troops (then splitting into battalion groups). This completes side #1 of tape #1 of the interview with LTC Almond.

This is side #2 of tape #1 of session #2 with LTC Almond. Interviewer CPT Fergusson. March 26, 1975.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you were commissioned as a 2LT in the United States Army on 30 November 1916. You were commissioned into the infantry at that time. Would you describe the commissioning ceremonies? Where were they located?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. I was commissioned at 2LT with the added qualification "provisional" as we all were temporary officers at the time. This commissioning took place at Ft. Myer, Virginia on 30 November 1916. As I say, this ceremony was a very simple one. There were about 30 of us candidates for commissioning present in the riding hall area and the commissioning was done in a simple manner by a Judge Advocate officer from the War Department. (In those days prior to the Pentagon that we know today).

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, after you were commissioned you returned back to Marion Institute, did you not?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. This commissioning was about a month before Christmas and I returned to Marion. Now that I knew I was to become an Army officer in a professional manner, I had to terminate my connection with the Institute as an instructor.

CPT FERGUSSON: After your Christmas vacation of 1916 you reported to Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas for a short three month officer candidate school. What are your memories of that course sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: My memory of that course is a very pleasant one and also is punctuated with incidents that arose from time to time with our course and with the future assignment that we all had. It must be stated that at this time that the Army was increasing its commissioned strength. The class that

I belonged to, known as the First Provisional Class, entered the Army prior to WW I and comprised more than 300 candidate officers who had succeeded in passing the examination the previous summer. Most of those being commissioned reported to the class at Leavenworth for this preliminary provisional course.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were all these officers infantry officers -- All these lieutenants?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, they were all categories, infantry, artillery, cavalry, signal corps and all the supporting branches. It was thought important to have them attend this school to be properly instructed in basic military matters, prior to joining their units.

CPT FERGUSSON: So you really did not get training specifically in how to function as an infantry lieutenant in that school. Your training as an infantry lieutenant only came after you had joined your unit -- is that correct?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not exactly, because at Leavenworth we had all these officers in certain groups on basic training problems and questions and also for athletic activities and equitation. For instance every other day I attended an equitation class in a riding hall to learn how to ride a horse (and others with me) when as a matter of fact I was assigned to the infantry branch of the Army and had no horses in prospect for some years to come.

CPT FERGUSSON: Well, did you get any specific infantry training in this course?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. In the period during the week the schedule would include purely infantry subjects including requirements for the student to exercise and give commands in the branch which he was assigned to.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you actually go into the field for any of these exercises?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, we had field exercises sometimes for purely infantry subjects and sometimes combined with cavalry and artillery usages.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you have an opportunity to command a platoon -- to lead a platoon during this training or. . .

GENERAL ALMOND: No, no I did not.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. After you completed your course at Ft. Leavenworth you were assigned to the 4th Infantry at Ft. Brown, Texas. During your first few months in the Army, you did not stay at Ft. Brown very long -- I believe you moved up to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Would you describe this initial assignment to the 4th Infantry and what happened to your unit?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I reported to the 4th Infantry at Ft. Brown, Texas, which was just across the Rio Grande River, in southeast Texas, from the Mexican city of Matamoros. My company at the time that I joined it was Company F, 4th Infantry and was engaged in border guard duty after the Pershing expedition in Mexico which occurred the previous year. I, as a 2LT, found myself in command of Company F with my captain on special duty in Ft. Brown investigating some incident for the colonel of the regiment, Colonel Hatch, and the next senior officer, 1LT Floyd was on special duty as an ordnance officer of the post. So I received instructions really from the 1st Sergeant of Company F who said, "Lieutenant you just joined the Army. If you do what I tell you to do we'll get along alright." And I found out that this was good advice. We remained at Ft. Brown on this type of duty until about the 1st of June 1917, when we departed for a new station,

at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where there were a number of troops in camp already. We travelled on a troop train from Ft. Brown, Texas up through New Orleans, across the Mississippi River at Baton Rouge on the pontoon bridge that the railway used at that time, and proceeded by train through Birmingham, Atlanta, and Washington to Gettysburg. We arrived there about the middle of June and went into camp for the purpose of dividing the 4th Infantry, my regiment, into three battalion groups when they became regiments. The 1st Battalion remained the 4th Infantry Regiment which was expanded by recruitment and assignment of draftees. The 2nd Battalion became the 58th Infantry and the 3rd Battalion became the 59th Infantry. Thus the 4th Infantry Regiment was transformed into a whole brigade and half of another brigade. The 58th Infantry and the 59th Infantry became finally the 8th Brigade of the 4th Division.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you remain in command of the company F during the period when you went up to Gettysburg?

GENERAL ALMOND: I was assigned in the reorganization to Company M, the machine gun company of the 3rd Battalion, 58th Infantry. That tour at Gettysburg was my initial opportunity to command a company, the new Company M of the 58th Infantry was very interesting, particularly, because all we had were our uniforms in the machine gun company and 16 mules without saddles or harness. And we had no machine guns at all, but we had the handbook on the Colt light machineguns and wooden guns to represent the parts of the gun itself which we used for gun drill and mock-up training. The real first month's training at Gettysburg comprised mostly training of the animals and getting the men used to the mules. We would take the mules out for

exercise along the battlefield roads that were famous in history for the battle of Gettysburg which was fought there in 1863. This was of interest to the soldiers as well as to the officers of the company. My interest was mainly to recall the events that took place at this historical site as I knew it from studies in high school, and at VMI.

CPT FERGUSSON: It seems incredible that you were training with wooden guns at Gettysburg in the fall of 1917 after the United States had already entered the war in the spring of 1917. What do you think accounts for the fact that you had to train with wooden guns -- why didn't you have real guns at this point?

GENERAL ALMOND: That's one of the lessons that we should have learned. Specifically, we should have learned that to go to war you should be prepared to do so. We just did not have the equipment to issue to the troops. We could take the men, put them in uniform, train them in the course that they were to follow in battle, but we had to have the equipment to make this training complete. We did later (after the organization was complete) obtain a few Colt light machine guns and this was our training equipment except for sidearms for the individual soldiers until we got to France in April 1918 in a training area under the British troops for three weeks and later by the French.

CPT FERGUSSON: You were a machine gun company commander in the 58th Infantry formed from the 2nd Battalion of the old 4th Infantry when you were at Gettysburg. Who was the commander of the 58th Infantry at that time?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well when we left the 4th Infantry Colonel Hatch was in the command. We left Colonel Hatch to become the 58th Infantry and it was taken command of by Colonel Hersey, sent up by the War Department in Washington.

CPT FERGUSSON: What type of an officer was Colonel Hersey, sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: Colonel Hersey had come from the Adjutant General's Department where he had been on a special detail and was very meticulous about things that had to do with staff activities rather than combat activities.

CPT FERGUSSON: You would not characterize him as a good field soldier, then.

GENERAL ALMOND: Well I wouldn't dispute his ability to command because later on he became the commander of the 4th Division and took it to France. However, he was soon transferred and we received a more combat oriented commander.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, you were married down in Anniston, Alabama during the time that your unit was at Gettysburg. Did you bring your wife up to Gettysburg then?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I believe it was stated that I received three days before my wedding, on 4th August, orders to go to New York to muster in some of the federalized National Guard of New York State. I left Gettysburg and after this mustering-in duty, went on leave on the 3rd of August to Anniston, Alabama for our wedding on the next day. After a short honeymoon of about five days, my wife accompanied me to my station in Gettysburg and we lived in the city, or town, of Gettysburg with Mrs. Sheely, a very pleasant lady who was very appreciative of our Southern heritage. My wife enjoyed this trip, but then we were sent to another station, and I might add here that when I got through with the rigorous duties at camp each day, it was a pleasant recovery for me to go back home and join my wife, and we had a very interesting and pleasant social life on weekends, and sometimes in the evening.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, did the government provide any housing for officers and their wives?

GENERAL ALMOND: No. You got a small amount of commutation of quarters and one ration. The pay of a 2LT per month in those days was \$141.61 pay; \$30.00 ration allowance; and \$20.00 each for two rooms.

CPT FERGUSSON: Where did your troops live there at Gettysburg? Did they have barracks for the enlisted men.

GENERAL ALMOND: No, the troops lived in tents..

CPT FERGUSSON: Did the troops live on the Gettysburg Battle Field sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: Right.

CPT FERGUSSON: After training for several months, from July to November of 1917, at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, your regiment, the 58th Infantry, moved to Camp Green, North Carolina near Charlotte. Can you describe this move and then your subsequent training at Camp Green?

GENERAL ALMOND: The split up of the 4th Regiment that had arrived at Gettysburg in June continued through the summer till November as three regiments described heretofore. At this time the War Department decided to form division/units and ordered the several regiments at Gettysburg to move by the end of the month to Camp Green, North Carolina where they would become a part of a newly authorized organization, the 4th Division. Therefore, the 58th Infantry including my Company M, moved from Gettysburg by rail to Charlotte, North Carolina and reported into Camp Green as required and became a unit, the 58th Infantry of the 4th Division. Colonel Hersey who had been our regimental commander originally became the commander of the 4th Division at Camp Green. There was another division there earlier than ours namely the 3rd Division under General Dickman. General Dickman was an

experienced combat leader and made rapid progress with the 3rd Division which departed Camp Green before the 4th Division did later in the spring of 1918 for Europe.

CPT FERGUSSON: During the training of your division, the 4th Division, at Camp Green, you went from being a company commander of a machine gun company to being a battalion commander, did you not sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. I served at Camp Green in the 58th Infantry for about two months in the beginning of 1918, when it was decided that additional units were needed to be organized to complete the division components -- namely three machine gun battalions, the 10th, 11th and 12th. The 10th machine gun battalion was a two company battalion and was designated as the divisional machine gun battalion. The 12th Machinegun Battalion and the 11th Machinegun Battalion were formed from four companies each, and the 12th Battalion became the Machinegun Battalion of the two regiment 8th Brigade, while the 11th Machinegun Battalion became the Battalion of the 7th Brigade. We thus began training and at that time we had our equipment augmented somewhat as far as the gun were concerned and the officers were put in the special machine gun training schools for two weeks. I was 1st lieutenant by that time and as a 1st lieutenant had eight officers, with 150 enlisted men, 16 mules and 4 escort wagons in that battalion. We became the 12th Machinegun Battalion. We had more trouble establishing our camp, securing our supplies, getting to learn our team mules as well as our machine-gun cart mules than we expected but we finally accomplished the purpose.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, you said you only had 150 men at the outset; that was not the authorized strength of the full battalion, was it?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, that was the cadre. We later received near the spring our full strength which was 730 men and 30 officers.

CPT FERGUSSON: How did you feel at such a young age and being relatively inexperienced to find yourself suddenly the battalion commander of an infantry machine gun battalion about to go over to war in Europe?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well I knew that this was only a temporary arrangement and that we were only initial cadre. As a matter of fact, that is what it proved to be. Within three weeks after I took command of the battalion I was notified that within another week a major would take command. He did take command. Major H. J. M. Smith became the machinegun battalion commander and would remain in command about two months. I became Captain of Company "A"

CPT FERGUSSON: Excuse me sir, he became the battalion commander while you were still at Camp Green and you returned to Company "A", 12th M.G. Br.

GENERAL ALMOND: At Camp Green.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now while you were battalion commander what sort of training did your battalion conduct?

GENERAL ALMOND: Elementary manipulation of the equipment that we had, the light Colt guns, and the thousand inch range firing, cart drills with the draft animals that pulled the machine gun carts, wagon handlings with four line teams, infantry drill and developing muscular exercises.

CPT FERGUSSON: Could you describe sir in a little more detail the organization of your companies and how those companies of the battalion worked to support the infantry in combat?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, we had a very basic knowledge of organization and modifications occurred, not in the organization strength, but in a method

of support, whether by direct or indirect fire or by attachment of platoons to rifle companies that developed as we got into the war.

CPT FERGUSSON: But in Camp Green sir, how was. . .

GENERAL ALMOND: At Camp Green we had machine gun companies of three platoons which enabled a company to support a battalion of infantry with a platoon of machine guns, four guns each, attached to rifle companies where necessary or the company could be employed as a company of three platoons for supporting fires. This was a basic training that we engaged in at Camp Green.

CPT FERGUSSON: How would you describe the state of readiness reached by the 4th Division before they left Camp Green to go to Europe? Were they at that point really ready to go into war?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well I would say that the Division was well drilled in the close order drill and small deployments -- company and battalion size. Machinegun companies were engaged mostly in familiarization with their equipment which they knew they were not going to utilize when they got to France. They knew they would receive other types of weapons, both rifles and machine guns. Still, we had to master the manipulation of our unit and the utilization of our weapons regardless of the special type they happened to be. The 4th Division was unit trained but not maneuvered to the degree that we could depend on their operation in combat.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the coordination of artillery fire with advancing infantry. Was this sort of training done with artillery ammunition at Camp Green?

GENERAL ALMOND: The artillery trained on its own behalf, but not with the division.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, was there any reconnaissance or cavalry unit within the 4th Division?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well we had reconnaissance troops, and I believe we had an organization known as the reconnaissance company. But we had no cavalry and only the field officers of the division were mounted as individuals in command of certain types of units. The artillery was more horse-controlled than the infantry of course.

CPT FERGUSSON: You completed your training at Camp Green, North Carolina as commander of Company A of the 12th Machinegun Battalion. You had given up your command by this time, as a major had arrived and taken command of the battalion. In May of 1918 your battalion sailed for England. Would you describe the movement of your unit from Camp Green to New Jersey and then across the sea to England?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well my company, as a part of the 12th Machinegun Battalion, moved by rail from Camp Green early in May to Camp Mills in New York from which it embarked on a big British liner for Liverpool, England, and moved from Liverpool down through London, at night, to Dover. . .

CPT FERGUSSON: Then you sailed to England not aboard a British commercial liner. Is that correct sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: That's correct and we had no equipment except our side arms. We knew that we would get our machinegun equipment and our animals when we arrived in England or France.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you remember anything about the trip -- was it a rough crossing, did you ever have threats of German submarines?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well there was a German submarine threat to any troop transport moving towards the war zone, but we weren't particularly concerned with that. We though. . .we were on a big liner and were happy to be there.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall if you had a naval escort?

GENERAL ALMOND: No I don't.

CPT FERGUSSON: When you got to Liverpool you then moved down to Dover. Would you describe what then happened from Dover?

GENERAL ALMOND: We immediately disembarked at Liverpool in trains, and moved through the night, and through London without being able to see it, to Dover. We detrained at Dover and spent the night in the barracks on the White Cliffs of Dover that you hear about in song and dance. The next morning we, by units, by companies, were moved across the channel, in small boats, and over to the French shore in about three hours. (Distance of some 22 miles.)

CPT FERGUSSON: Where did your unit go to train in France before you went to the lines?

GENERAL ALMOND: Our brigade went to the area of LaTurne, France which is a little village in Normandy and there we found a group of instructors with the 51st Irish Brigade, really British Empire forces who became our instructors in general. However, after only a few days of this association with the 51st Brigade we were informed that we would have French machinegun heavy equipment and French instructors. Upon our arrival at LaTurne, we had been issued Maxim machineguns and British instructors.

CPT FERGUSSON: How long did you have the British instructors sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: About a week or ten days.

CPT FERGUSSON: After those 10 days of training with the Irish 51st Brigade you then trained under French instructors -- could you describe that sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, we were notified that we would be equipped with Hotchkiss machineguns which was a well known combat weapon used by the French

very successfully although it was heavy and unwieldy. This unit that took us under its training wing was the 164th French Division which sent us its instructors in their area around LaTurne. We began to conduct at first an elementary gun drill with the Hotchkiss, and then learn how to fire it. We were in this operation for several months.

CPT FERGUSSON: During that several months did your battalion or your company begin to train more closely in combined operations with the regular infantry of the 58th, in other words did you. . .

GENERAL ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: In other words did you have live fire training?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, that was very sketchily done and I must say that prior to our entry into combat about the middle of July we had very little combined training with the infantry units that we were supporting in the battle of the Marne.

CPT FERGUSSON: Or with the artillery?

GENERAL ALMOND: Or with the artillery, that's right.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, before we go on to discuss the combat activities of your battalion in France I would like to return for a minute to some general questions about WW I and your impression of it. First of all, the American soldiers that you had in your unit, the raw material that you had to work with in molding a unit to go fight in a war -- what sort of men did you get into the battalion before you went to France?

GENERAL ALMOND: The answer to that is all sorts. Our draftees came from the labor areas as well as the intellectual areas -- from Detroit, from the mid-western states, from California, from the southern states and from

the northwestern states and from the Louisiana area, Texas, Oklahoma, as a matter of fact, all over. We, the machinegun company was composed of 172 men, 16 mules for drawing carts with guns on them, four extra in addition to the 12 for the initial armament of the platoon, and the company, and an escort wagon allocated to each company full line team. It was a very difficult matter to find the man to fit the mule or visa-versa. That was one of our problems. The educational advantage of most of our men was mid-high school or better, but there were some men who were illiterate and that had to be taken into consideration in their assignment to duty, especially a weapon like the machinegun which involved clinometers, compasses, and clearances in feet and yards.

CPT FERGUSSON: So at the outset of your answer to that question you indicated that your men came from all areas of the country and really from all walks of life. Would you say that during the First World War, at least in your unit, that even the sons of the wealthy families were serving as enlisted men, or were these kind of people able to get out of the draft in the First World War -- did you find that most of your men came from the lower or middle classes of society?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well most of the enlisted men who were well educated very soon were turned to applying for an officer's commission and going to Officers Candidate School. The sergeants and below were men who had limited educational capabilities, and therefore were the ones who stayed in the lower ranks. The incapable and the totally ignorant that we had to contend with remained privates. On the other hand, at one time in Europe, I found that my runner, a private and older than I, was a graduate of the University

of Alabama, and an artist, and had exhibits in Paris, but had no ambition to be an officer and admitted it, so we had all a cross section of the composition of our civilization here in America.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the non-commissioned officers that you had in the battalion and in the division as a whole -- were these very young people -- did you have to make a lot of sergeants quickly, or did you have a good cadre of experienced NCO's?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, the draftee was a man who could have been just out of graded school, and 18 years of age, or he could have been a man 35 years of age. We usually found that the more mature man developed quicker as far as non-commissioned officers went, and we would rather have a non-commissioned officer of mature age and discretion, than a young private soldier to become a sergeant overnight.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. Then at the company level would you say that even the first sergeant would have been a draftee or would he have been a career soldier who had been in for years before the First World War?

GENERAL ALMOND: He was a career soldier if you could find one. For example, my first sergeant was named Irby. He was older than I was and more experienced. His only trouble was that when he had an opportunity to drink too much on a weekend he would go to excess. On one occasion, he rode a horse up the back stairs to the second floor of the barracks.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, again going back to the period when you were first commissioned and were in training -- what sort of feeling do you recall having at the time of the United States' decision to enter the war in the spring of 1917?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, . . .

CPT FERGUSSON: What were your own feelings sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: My own feelings were that I was destined to serve in the Army as a professional soldier and every change in the situation before we entered the war and and as we developed our troops and organizations, and moved them overseas was one of intensification of desire to defeat the enemy, and we all were conscious of the over-balancing effect that America's entry into the war would have by stimulating the Allies. Of course, we were all shocked at what had happened to the British ever since the beginning of the war, and especially what had happened at Messines Ridge and Passchendaele.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall having a hatred for the Germans before going overseas to fight?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, we did and of course this was intensified in all our talks on the need for US participation in the war in order to defeat the Kaiser and the philosophy of Bismark and the atrocious action of the German troops as was being reported to us constantly.

CPT FERGUSSON: In other words you clearly felt that the Germans were the aggressor and that the French and the British were fighting just to defend their own territory?

GENERAL ALMOND: Decidedly so.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what about your expectations of warfare. I am sure you had heard from British officers who talked to your unit and even perhaps from French officers and you read in the newspapers about the nature of the war in the trenches before you went to France. What did you expect to find there? Did you think that you were being trained to fight that sort of war in the United States? Were you prepared for the long stalemate sort of fighting that went on?

GENERAL ALMOND: You have to remember that Marshal Joffre came to the United States in 1916, and with him he brought an aide named Le Clerc who visited Charlotte, North Carolina, close to Camp Green, and on weekends we used to have parties at which these French liaison officers would appear. The number of French as well as British officers was in evidence at each of our training camps and it was simple to ask them questions. We thus learned much from the allies that we would soon serve with on the battlefield. We were conscious of the German atrocities as they were reported to us by these French representatives and Le Clerc was one of our chief sources.

CPT FERGUSSON: What sort of German atrocities are you talking about sir? What type of things. You mean shooting prisoners and that sort of thing?

GENERAL ALMOND: We are talking about being callous and having prisoners shot, or letting them be exposed, or put them in camps where they would suffer physical indignities that were contrary to the rules of war.

CPT FERGUSSON: But what about the actual nature of fighting -- ground fighting in the trenches, or on the battlefields of France. What did you expect to find?

GENERAL ALMOND: Of course, I never experienced the trench warfare because when we joined the forces in France, the movements were all mobile, and very scattered, and went from one area to another. There was not much chance to find a trench operation in the summer of 1918 until the Armistice on November 11th.

CPT FERGUSSON: But before you went to Europe certainly you might have expected to fight in that sort of warfare; or did you expect because the Americans were going over there that our side would be on the offensive?

GENERAL ALMOND: I don't think we concentrated so much on what the future

would hold as the fact that war was difficult and we were learning how to win it as rapidly as possible by maneuvers rather than by stations and their lines, or by what the French and also the British had experienced in the early days of the war.

CPT FERGUSSON: I suppose what I am getting at, sir, is do you feel that you would have a new way of fighting, that you would avoid the stalemate that the British and the French had faced for so many years already before you had arrived there?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, we were told repeatedly that we hoped to rout the enemy as soon as possible and the way to do it was to drive him from wherever he was, and that the best way to do it was by maneuver rather than knock down, drag out frontal assaults, which the French, and the British too, had found very damaging to their own side with little result on the enemy.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was there any. . .

GENERAL ALMOND: It is the essence of combat if you want to win the fight.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was there any idea at this point, I mean before you went into combat of using tanks. Tanks were being used to some extent by the British as early as 1915 I believe, did you have any training at all with tanks after you got to France before you went into combat and did you ever. . .

GENERAL ALMOND: None whatever.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. What about with airplanes. Was there ever any idea of airplanes closely supporting the infantry as they moved forward at that time?

GENERAL ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: The commander of the American exhibitionary force in France throughout the war was of course General "Blackjack" Pershing. Did you ever

at any time before the war, or during the war, see General Pershing? Did you ever at any time before the war, or during the war, see General Pershing in person? Did he ever address your unit or appear in the front lines?

GENERAL ALMOND: No. The only time I saw General Pershing was after the war on the Rhine when he visited the 4th Division in the Army of Occupation in 1919.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you feel that Pershing was a popular figure among the troops of the divisions and the lower units? Was he. . .

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. Everybody had great confidence in "Blackjack" Pershing and the only criticism they had was they thought he might be a little too hard on occasion.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Pershing complained during the early portion of the American involvement in France that division commanders, being sent over to Europe were too old for their jobs. He repeatedly asked for younger men to command brigades and divisions because the older men that he was getting were not physically capable of the stress of combat and they weren't really the best men to command these units. Do you recall any of these type of men -- do you feel that this was a valid criticism of General Pershing from what you saw?

GENERAL ALMOND: I think General Pershing was perfectly right. We began the war with people who had been in command of large units or thought they could command large units rather than young active leaders. In my opinion the maximum age for a division commander is no more than 55 years old.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond after your machinegun battalion trained under the 51st Irish regiment you then had French instructors come in from the 164th Division as you have already stated. What was your initial impression

of the French Army as you saw it through these officers and what did you think of the French Army in general at this time?

GENERAL ALMOND: In general we thought that the French officer we came in contact with in a training way was an alert, educated, but sometimes emotional type. We thought that the units were flexible and loyal to the cause for which they were fighting, but it was difficult to depend on their promise of joint action unless everything was right from their standpoint. In the Soissons -- Battle of the Marne, the 3rd Battalion, 58th Infantry was commanded by Major Drake. I supported Drake frequently with my company in the 12th Machinegun Battalion. He told me that on one occasion during the second Battle of the Marne, he was told that a French Battalion would relieve his battalion on the line on the Vesle River and that there were 13 attempts for the French to move into his position and take over the town of before it was completed, which took all night long.

CPT FERGUSSON: You didn't then see any evidence when you first arrived of the French officers being very tired of the war -- they had had some mutinys in the French Army during 1917, quite serious in a number of units, in which soldiers simply refused to fight after suffering casualties over such a long period of time. You didn't see this sort of depression in the French Army when you arrived.

GENERAL ALMOND: No, we didn't come in contact with it, although we were conscious of the mutiny that you speak about. We knew that General Petain (who later became the President of France in the Second World War under the German supervision for which he has always been criticized) visited all these mutinous units and convinced them that they ought to change their attitude and national spirit.

CPT FERGUSSON: To sum up then General Almond about your period of training with the French would you consider the training you got under the French officers as useful?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. Very. Particularly in the teaching of our men through French training teams, the enlisted men, how to operate the equipment with which they were armed. The heavy machineguns, the Hotchkiss had proven unwieldy, but very reliable and stable, in the first two years of the war and we found it to be likewise. We received a change of this equipment when the war was over (and too late to be of any use to us) in the Browning water-cooled gun, but the French trained us well. They were considered by our men to be hard task masters in teaching the successful operation of the gun and in target practice.

CPT FERGUSSON: Incidentally sir, how did you communicate with the French? Did they speak English to you or were you speaking French to them?

GENERAL ALMOND: Personally I had been a French student in college and had some capability but most of our people were not speakers of the French language and at every gun position during the training we always had an interpreter who could do us enough service to be understood.

CPT FERGUSSON: Other than the fact that they were training you with their own French machineguns, the Hotchkiss, was there anything new that they were telling you about the way that you should employ the guns with the line rifle companies in combat?

GENERAL ALMOND: In all our lectures which would follow or be followed by practical training operations, both in firing the gun and manipulating it, getting it back and forth from positions of employment they would discuss

the value of the weapon, and what it could accomplish, and what the clearances were required for and how the flank protection that the gun afforded could be put in the right place in order to provide the best possible support for the infantry.

CPT FERGUSSON: During this period under the French instruction were you trained in close cooperation, or in close coordination, with the line rifle companies of the 58th Infantry Regiment or of the brigade, the 8th Infantry Brigade?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, not to any great extent. We were lectured on these points, but as far as actually getting out with the infantry and supporting them in practical exercises, that didn't occur.

CPT FERGUSSON: During this final period of training before you went to the lines in France, what were the feelings of you and your men? Were you impatient for having to continue training or were you eager to get into the fight?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well that is debatable and it was a matter of enthusiasm. As a matter of fact when we moved from the training area to the first reserve area down opposite the Marne when the Germans were trying to cross the Marne River and drive to Paris, our division was moved to, back up the French line in this area. The men were not too keen about getting mixed up in battle especially with the knowledge that sometimes the French were emotional about their changes of tactics.

CPT FERGUSSON: Major elements of the 4th Divisions, 58th and 59th Infantry Regiments of the 8th Brigade, fought along with or along side of the French 164th Division in the opening phase of the Aisne-Marne Offensive, which was

the period of 18 thru 22 July. Did your battalion participate in this action?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. The 3rd Battalion, 58th Infantry commanded by a Major Drake was supported by me in all these movements with my company the 12th Machinegun Battalion. The other battalions of the 58th Infantry had other companies of the machinegun battalion as I have just described for mine.

CPT FERGUSSON: This must have been then your first taste of combat action in this period of 18 through 22 July 1918. What do you remember about your first experience in combat? Was it a confusing sort of thing or did you feel that everyone knew precisely what they were doing. What were your impressions at that period?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well my impression of that period was to get my company from here to there and to join the battalion to which I was attached -- 3rd Battalion, 58th Infantry. I was so concerned with the local problems of billeting the men for the night wherever we were, of getting them properly fed, from the field kitchens with a hot meal, and the animals fed, and the company to move out from wherever we were by daylight sometime the next morning, that I had little else to think about, or to concern me, except immediate requirements of the command of a machinegun company, trying to get into the battle area. I remember in one particular instance there was a good deal of dysentery when we moved from the Bois de Brieuilles up towards St. Gengoulph which was our first supporting action of a French unit which was deployed on the Marne itself, and the 1st Sergeant came to me and said, "Captain, we have 172 men in this company and more than 100 of them want to go to sick call because they think they have dysentery." Well that presented a drastic problem to me. That was more than half of my company,

and I knew that if they all went to sick call it would be at least a long delay. My immediate response was, "Sergeant, there will be no sick call this morning. Everybody will march, and if they are not able to march they will fall out and be picked up by an ambulance." Needless to say that solved the problem and nobody had dysentery for the next 10 days.

CPT FERGUSSON: Although your company was moved up in support of the 3rd Battalion, 58th Infantry, you did not, I believe, come in contact with the enemy during that first period 18-22 July on the Marne River did you sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, the general employment of our battalion and rest of the regiment was in support of the French. It must be recalled that the XX French Corps was operating from Soissons towards Verdun at this time and that was the great stroke that General Foch made when he employed the corps that was moved from Paris in taxi cabs to the vicinity of Soisson, and a flank attack was made which took the Germans by surprise. Six French divisions had crossed the Marne River and completely defeated the German effort to reach the French line and to strike at Paris. Our company and battalion were in reserve in support of that operation.

CPT FERGUSSON: Your division was pulled out of the line on the 22nd of July, and then on the 28th of July 1918, was transferred to the reserve of the US 1st Corps. During the night of 2nd and 3rd of August, the 4th Division relieved elements of the 42nd US Division in the Foret de Nesles and continued the pursuit of the enemy northward to the Vesle River. This was part of a larger offensive behind the Marne. After heavy fighting on the 3rd of August, the division reached the south bank of the Vesle on the 4th of August. How was your battalion used during this period? This was really your first contact with the enemy.

GENERAL ALMOND: Our battalion was used as one of the two assault battalions of the 58th Infantry of the 8th Brigade. My Company A, 12th Machinegun Battalion was attached to this Battalion. We attacked at dawn from the area of Mont St. Martin and proceeded across the hilltops towards the Vesle River. The enemy was discovered by that time to be beyond the Vesle on opposite banks -- on the eastern bank as a matter of fact, and much of August 3rd was occupied with our getting to where the enemy was entrenched and in opposition and strong numbers.

CPT FERGUSSON: You were still south of the Vesle River at this point were you not sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were there still Germans entrenched on the south bank?

GENERAL ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: They had moved across the river.

GENERAL ALMOND: That's right. Our leading elements found the Germans had been moving to the southeastern bank of the Vesle and that then what we would be confronted with would be a river crossing of what really was a large stream.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were you being subjected to artillery fire at this time as you moved forward?

GENERAL ALMOND: Spasmodically.

CPT FERGUSSON: But you didn't actually see any Germans during this initial period?

GENERAL ALMOND: No. We knew that we were approaching their then occupied position along the Vesle River.

CPT FERGUSSON: On the 4th of August still south of the Vesle River you were wounded and were then evacuated from the front lines. Could you describe this incident?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well on the 4th of August, in the forenoon, the battalion to which my company was attached, 3rd Battalion, 58th Infantry, moved across the slope, I would say one mile and a half before we reached the Vesle River. The leading elements of the infantry battalion found that the Germans, by their opposing fire from the other bank of the Vesle, were causing a few casualties. We kept a dispersed formation. My transportation and mules, with their carts, had been sent to the rear area and the guns were being carried by hand with the ammunition carried behind. When the front elements of the 3rd Battalion, 58th Infantry were halted at the near side of the Vesle River that placed my company guns in position on the northeast slope of the last hill before reaching the Vesle River, so that they could execute overhead fire and fire across the stream. This was just before dawn. My horse was in the rear with the other transportation of the company, but my orderly, who was of Polish extraction, and an immigrant in America but fighting in American forces, brought my hardtack supper of jam and corn willy and a piece of hard bread up to the position I was sitting in when I was wounded. I had just opened a can of corn willy when a shell broke in our midst from across the stream, and although I had my helmet on it penetrated my helmet and the top of my head. Although I had a head wound I did not lose consciousness. My orderly who had brought me my supper was killed by another fragment, and a number of men in my vicinity

were wounded also, and a couple killed. My wounding was the result of my sitting in my observation post, surrounded by my guns supporting the battalion of infantry that had just been stopped by the enemy on the near banks of the Vesle River.

CPT FERGUSSON: So, at that time, your observation post was on top of this last hill overlooking the Vesle River?

GENERAL ALMOND: On the forward slope of the hill.

CPT FERGUSSON: On the forward slope of that hill.

GENERAL ALMOND: Where the guns could be employed and they were being employed at the time.

CPT FERGUSSON: Had you lost any of your guns up to that point, do you recall?

GENERAL ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: Had your company suffered considerable casualties?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, just a few.

CPT FERGUSSON: Just a few. What happened to you after you received this wound? What sort of medical evacuation procedures did they have?

GENERAL ALMOND: I was evacuated to the 58th Infantry Medical Aid Station.

CPT FERGUSSON: On a stretcher sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. I think so. As I recall it. And from there after preliminary treatment, immediate treatment, I was evacuated by ambulance to the rear at a collecting point, from there put in an ambulance and sent to a hospital down in south central France.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, would the ambulance have been horse-drawn or was that a motor ambulance?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, that was a motor ambulance, I believe.

CPT FERGUSSON: And then you were taken down to south central France.

GENERAL ALMOND: On the Allier River. I think it was a field hospital

located near the town of Allier and located near the city of Nevers.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was this an American army hospital or was it a French combined with American hospital?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, it was an American hospital. I stayed there for three or four weeks and then was sent on convalescent leave down to Biarritz which is one of the famous mountain resorts and seaside resorts on the border between Spain and France.

CPT FERGUSSON: To go back to the wounding, exactly how serious was the wound you received? Did you have a piece of fragment imbedded in your skull?

GENERAL ALMOND: A small piece of fragment penetrated my helmet and streaked across the top of my head for a cut of some three inches as I recall it. The scar is hard to find now.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you suffer any concussion or did you loose considerable blood at the time?

GENERAL ALMOND: I lost some blood but no concussion.

CPT FERGUSSON: So you spent about four weeks at the hospital and then went on convalescent leave. And then when did you return to the 4th Division?

GENERAL ALMOND: I returned to the 4th Division on the 26th of September. In the meantime the American St. Mihiel operation had occurred, and my division had been on the north flank of that operation.

CPT FERGUSSON: Isn't it true that you tried to get back during the St. Mihiel operation?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes it is.

CPT FERGUSSON: Why weren't you able to get back?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well we were clear across France almost and to get separated from the hospital wasn't assured in itself. But I was anxious to get back to

my battalion because it had a new commander, and a junior one, and I thought if I could get back regardless of my health that I could be of some service in seeing that the battalion functioned in the way that I thought it should.

CPT FERGUSSON: You saw an opportunity that you might have commanded the battalion at that point.

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: What happened to the old commander? Was he killed?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, he was transferred from command of the battalion to command of the 58th Infantry.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see.

GENERAL ALMOND: His name was Max Garber.

CPT FERGUSSON: You returned to the 4th Division and to your battalion just about the time your division was beginning its participation in the Meuse-Argonne offensive. It relieved the 33rd Division in the front lines southwest of Bethincourt during the nights of 26-27 September and the 4th Division then participated in the initial attack of the offensive as the left division of the US III Corps. After several weeks of steady advances the 4th Division was relieved by the 3rd Division in the area of Bois de Peut-de-Faux and Bois de Foret. During the period of 13-19 October, the 8th Infantry Brigade of which your machinegun battalion was a part, made the main attack for the 4th Division into the Bois de Fays on 4 October. You returned about a week before that. What sort of shape was your machinegun battalion in when you returned? Did you return and take command of the same company?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well I returned to the 4th Division area on the 28th of September -- 2 days after the attack had been launched. I stayed in the town of Cuisy and that night I slept in a truck and was rained on. I had

breakfast the next morning by hot fire, of fish and hot cakes and syrup. I then went over to the division CP which was located in a town, and I saw a general coming in from the front who looked like he was pretty well used by from a reconnaissance and I said to some soldier nearby, "Who is that?" He said, "That is General John L. Hines, the new division commander." So I then found out that General Hersey who had the 4th Division before that had been replaced by General Hines. This was the same General Hines who later, after the war, became Chief of Staff of the Army.

CPT FERGUSSON: Then you went on back to your unit from there?

GENERAL ALMOND: That day I left the 4th Division CP and with a guide went up to the brigade CP, commanded by a man who I later served under as a brigadier general in the Philippine Islands. His name was Brigadier General Kelly Parsons. General Parsons said, "I am glad you returned. You just returned in time. Your battalion commander has been made regimental commander of the 58th Infantry. You hurry up to that unit of yours and take command." I then was still a captain, but in a few days was temporarily promoted major. I fought the 12th Machinegun Battalion and my old Company A, in support of the 58th and 59th Infantry from there to the 19th of the month, October, when our division was relieved and placed in Brigade Reserve.

CPT FERGUSSON: What sort of shape did you find the battalion in when you returned to them at this point? Were they. . .

GENERAL ALMOND: They were in good shape and very reliable. Max Garber had been an experienced officer before the war and, although a young one, he delivered the goods with the 12th Machinegun Battalion in the previous actions that it had been in. He was promoted for that reason to command the 58th Infantry.

CPT FERGUSSON: The 8th Infantry Brigade, of which your 12th Machinegun Battalion was a part, made the main attack for the 4th Division into the Bois de Fays on 4 October 1918. What do you recall about this action?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well one of the things I recall off hand to begin with was that my V.M.I. classmate, Captain Humphries, who went on patrol was never heard of again and was still missing, for what reason nobody knows. We don't know whether he was captured by the Germans and exterminated, or fell in a hole and was never found, but the whole operation was one of very determined effort to drive the enemy from their position in the Bois de Fays in the Meuse-Argonne. My company supported the two regiments of the brigade. They were scattered initially from the Meuse River west to the left flank of the 4th Division front of attack. They supported these units in the 8th Brigade, effectively, first by overhead fire and then by pulling their guns up and moving them forward to position from which they could assist the attacking riflemen.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, by overhead fire, do you mean a covering fire from behind?

GENERAL ALMOND: I mean fire against any selected position and when the guns were not with the troops themselves. They were in reserve firing position -- the troops had to cross a low hollow ground and the machine guns rendered overhead fire support.

CPT FERGUSSON: And machine guns were behind them.

GENERAL ALMOND: And machine guns were behind them and delivering fire just as if they were artillery pieces.

CPT FERGUSSON: At what range were . . . what was your maximum range with that gun?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well about the range of a 1903 rifle, which is 184 yards over three miles.

CPT FERGUSSON: No, but the machine gun.

GENERAL ALMOND: The machine gun fired the same ammunition. Now the effective range though, the Hotchkiss gun at that time, the same caliber, was about 1500 to 1800 yards maximum range. We preferred 1000 yards or less to insure accuracy on the target.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall during this period actually being able to see the enemy. Were your gunners firing at actual targets or were they generally just laying down a covering fire.

GENERAL ALMOND: No, we fired at where we thought the enemy would be if he were in a position to fire effectively against us. Some of the barrages that we put out were on what we considered the enemy's front line and some on positions that we considered to be points of observation where he could see and direct the fire against our advancing troops.

CPT FERGUSSON: The brigade made considerable progress in this offensive. Do you recall a constant movement of your positions during this time?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not constant, but I recall that the advance was satisfactory and there were several assault units. The battalions of both regiments would move to position and open fire wherever they could, at where they thought the enemy targets were, while the artillery supported from the rear. When artillery support was from a distant area, the front line troops would halt or hesitate long enough for the artillery to be moved forward. That was communicated through the commander of the regiment from the artillery and from the front line battalions, and when we were all set again for another advance the artillery supported. And this is a good time to mention that something which developed for me in the Korean War many years later -- that is, whenever possible, supporting artillery should be in position and ready

to fire in support against the opposition that you send your men to wipe out.

CPT FERGUSSON: Rather than having them. . .

GENERAL ALMOND: Rather than having them anywhere where they have to be called on later when your casualties are dropping all around you.

CPT FERGUSSON: From the official statistics of the 4th Division in this period, I have learned that the 12th Machinegun Battalion sustained some 147 casualties, including 27 killed and 120 wounded. (This is during the period 26 September through 8 October.) Were you able to get trained replacements in quickly, or did you find that when you lost men in this period you had to fight on without any replacements?

GENERAL ALMOND: No the replacement of casualties was fairly prompt because that was one of the principles of combat as the French and British had explained to us in their experience. If the casualty occurs one day, the replacement should be there the next.

CPT FERGUSSON: By the time of this final offensive that you participated in did you consider or do you consider that your battalion was a battle-hardened unit -- really a group of veterans who were not really awed by going into combat?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes I do. This was the third battle experience they had. The first on the Marne and the second at St. Mihiel and here we were on the Meuse-Argonne in what turned out to be the last big battle of the war.

CPT FERGUSSON: How did your men hold up under the conditions of extreme adversity that they must have faced during this final period?

GENERAL ALMOND: Very well. There weren't any evidences of withdrawal without orders. They were cheerful in the reception of orders which they knew would be carried out with great danger and the spirit was good on

every occasion that I recall.

CPT FERGUSSON: The 4th Division, following its relief by the 3rd Division, on the 19th of October, moved to a training area where it remained until the Armistice on 11 November 1918. On the 20th of November the 4th Division moved into Germany as part of the Army of Occupation taking station west of Coblenz. The 4th Division returned to the United States in July 1919. What happened to you during this occupation period? I assume you did go in. . . continued in command of the 12th Machinegun Battalion -- did you not sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: On the morning of 11th of November, the day of the Armistice, my battalion was in march as a part of the newly formed 2nd Army that General Bullard was going to command. He was really assembling for another drive if the Bois de Fays and Bois de Briouilles and other areas in the Meuse-Argonne battle that we had just come out of recently did not terminate the war. My movement was therefore from one assembly area of the 1st Army to the newly designated assembly area of the 2nd Army in which General Bullard as I say was to command. We therefore were in a state of fluidity and not combat when a motorcycle rider came down the road yelling, "The war is over, the war is over!" Nobody in the battalion believed it and they all yelled back, "Oh! yes, Oh! yes, we know but you are a liar." However, this news turned out to be the truth and we immediately went into preparation for advance further into the Army of Occupation as it turned out to be, in the area of Coblenz, where the French were reaching at this time. Our initial assignment in the Army of Occupation as a part of the 4th Division was, as you say west of Coblenz, and almost to the Remagen Bridge as far as

the front lines were concerned. The 4th Division did not face the German army as the other divisions formed to the right in the Army front did. We were opposite the neutral zone from the 2nd Division location on the Rhine down to the Remagen Bridge. My battalion first moved to a little town called Seille on the Moselle River near where the famous Burg Cochem is and in a beautiful spot. We remained there until the spring of 1919, about March 15th, when we moved to the Rhine itself, opposite the neutral zone across the Rhine, in the vicinity of the Remagen Bridge, and my headquarters was at a little place called Krippe. Two of my companies were in Krippe and one in Norweiler and another at Arweiler. Norweiler and Arweiler are the locations of the famous apolonaris water which we knew in the States as a beverage of fine quality and very costly. An amusing incident in this connection was that one day I found that I had a small staff car, newly washed, and I asked the driver if he washed the vehicle in the Rhine. He said, "No, I washed it in apolonaris water up the stream." So the famous story for many years after that was that I didn't wash my vehicle in ordinary water; I washed it in apolonaris water, very costly.

CPT FERGUSSON: What was the nature of this occupation duty, General Almond? How did your troops get along with the Germans? Were people afraid of you or were they hostile, what sort of duty was that?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well the administrators of the areas that we occupied were more or less reserved and in some cases hostile. For example, the mayor of Krippe, which was our last station on the Rhine, until we came home in the month of July, was a very off hand, hard-beaten, type of German and had been a German officer during the war. Since he was the mayor of the town, he was the man I contacted to have the town cleaned up like I wanted it fixed and

not like he wanted it fixed. I gave him a week to accomplish this and he at the end of the week had not complied with my orders, whereupon I sent my MPs to his house and removed him to the confinement of a jail in my headquarters. This surprised him tremendously, but he understood it. The next thing that happened on Easter morning, while he was still in jail, his wife and two small children appeared in my CP to plead with me to release the father. I said, "Your father and husband could have been released before if he had cleaned up the town. If you will assure me that the town is clean within the time it is capable of being done, he can be released this morning, and attend your ceremony at the church with your children. She promised -- he did. The town was clean as it was desired. The firm attitude of the four armies of occupation caused the Germans to do what we wanted them to do and the Occupation was a success. They understood really that our Army of Occupation was to carry out the orders which was to be included in the treaty which was signed later on.

CPT FERGUSSON: When you departed from that area in the summer of 1919 did you feel that it was wrong for the Americans to be leaving the Germans there and perhaps creating a dangerous situation again in Europe?

GEN ALMOND: No. The same thing happened on that occasion had happened before and after. Everybody who had fought the war wanted to get home and the quicker they did the better off they were. So it was our real objective to get our troops out of Europe and let the people live there -- the French, the British and others since the war had been won, settle the local problems that would arise. We were all happy to come home.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you because of this sort of feeling that everyone wanted to go home quickly -- did you have particular problems disciplining your own men, were they unruly or. . . .

GENERAL ALMOND: Well they weren't unruly, but they were dissatisfied and eager to get home, and we compensated for this by seeing that at least once a week practically everybody, in some form or other, went on tours of famous localities in the Rhineland from Cologne to Frankfurt and Wiesbaden. For example, in my own case I found a riverboat about 30 feet long which we painted white and green, named it the Rock and Rye, and made the Chaplain of the Battalion the skipper of the boat. The boat was used every day to either go from the market area to Coblenz or to Cologne and Bonn, all of which were available. On Sunday the officers would use it while the enlisted men would use it in the weekdays. One of the pieces of equipment for the various trips was a barrel of beer and a basket full of schnitzels.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall any of your men ever getting into fights with the local Germans, say around the beer halls or things like that?

GENERAL ALMOND: Oh, not often. They were very well disciplined and knew better than to get mixed up with our troops so they stayed away from those brawling places.

CPT FERGUSSON: Getting back to what you said about your relationship with the mayor of the town of Krippe, as commanding officer of a unit in charge of a particular area, did you have pretty full authority to run that area the way you wanted to, or were you operating under close supervision of your brigade or division commander?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I was responsible for the area that was assigned to me and I carried out that responsibility. I had visits from the civil affairs officer and his group.

CPT FERGUSSON: An American sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, an American, and that civil affairs officer was located

at each regimental headquarters and the brigade headquarters, and the brigade headquarters civil affairs officer would supervise the activities in the whole brigade. But he did so through the regimental civil affairs officers. We also had a civil affairs officer of low rank in our machinegun battalion.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, could you tell us a little more about these civil affairs officers -- how were they assigned to your division? Where did they come from?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, when the war was over it was realized that the soldier's attitude towards the conquered enemy might be difficult to explain sometimes, and certain guidelines were promulgated and people to see that they were carried out were dispatched to the various troop areas. I had a junior member of the civil affairs continue at my headquarters simply to see what was going on and to insure that the proper relationship between soldier and civilian area residents occurred. If there were any great difficulties I depended upon on this civil affairs officer to straighten it out for me from higher headquarters.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, did you ever have an opportunity to visit Paris during the First World War or during the occupation afterwards?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. In 1919 the idea arose among veterans everywhere that there should be an association to promulgate information on the war's history and participation by its enlisted and commissioned personnel. The idea appeared in the United States about the time that it arose in the Army of Occupation and in Europe in general. It was proposed by different groups that representatives of each division that fought in Europe be sent to Paris, and to a designated place in the United States, Washington, on the same day in March 1919, to organize what turned out to be the American Legion.

I received this notification in my unit, 12th Machinegun Battalion, and decided to participate. I secured a leave for that purpose, and departed from Paris by rail down through the occupied area and on through France to Paris. We were quartered at our own expense in various places in Paris, and on the days designated we assembled in the theater in the center of Paris, and a group from the Army of Occupation from General Pershing's Headquarters and other units in France assembled and they called the roll of the division. I was the only member of the 4th Division that appeared and represented the division in the deliberation. That day we decided to have a veteran's organization and it was voted by all present to call it the American Legion. This happened in an identical way in the United States on the same day, and thus the American Legion was born simultaneously on two continents, and has existed ever since to the glorification of those who participated in World War I. This completes side #2 of tape #1 of interviews with General Almond.

INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL E. M. ALMOND

by

CAPTAIN THOMAS FERGUSSON

THIS IS SIDE ONE, OF TAPE TWO, OF THE INTERVIEWS WITH LIEUTENANT GENERAL ALMOND. INTERVIEWER IS CAPTAIN THOMAS FERGUSSON, CGSC STUDENT. THE DATE MARCH 26, 1975. THE INTERVIEW IS BEING CONDUCTED AT GENERAL ALMOND'S HOME IN ANNISTON, ALABAMA.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, when you returned from duty with the Army of Occupation in Germany, you were assigned as Professor of Military Science and Tactics at Marion Institute, Marion, Alabama, where you had served in a civilian capacity prior to your commissioning in 1916. Did you consider this a good or desirable assignment at that time? Did you request this sort of an assignment after coming back from Germany?

GEN ALMOND: No, I did not request this assignment and, as a matter of fact, did not know what the term ROTC meant until I got my orders to report to Marion Institute at the time of my arrival from Germany with my battalion. We detrained finally (after disembarkation in New York) at Des Moines, Iowa. When we arrived there, my thought was to continue on with the command of the battalion until it was demobilized . . .

CPT FERGUSSON: Excuse me, sir, you said Des Moines, Iowa?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: Why did you go to Des Moines, Iowa?

GEN ALMOND: Because the 4th Division was directed to depart from the Rhine by various ships and rail routes and reassemble at Des Moines, Iowa, as soon as possible.

CPT FERGUSSON: So that was the point at which you would be demobilized?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, unless certain units were to be retained which was then undecided but our mission was to report to the reassembly point.

Upon arrival there and the establishment of the troops in the wartime barracks, I received the order to report for ROTC duty. The Reserve Officers Training Corps was explained: a new organization to prepare various students in various colleges for possible commissioning in the Army when and where needed. I departed from Des Moines, Iowa, in a month's leave <sup>En -</sup> on route to Marion Institute and met my wife of some two year's duration who had come to New York to meet me in the city of New York where we spent a wonderful reunion and a second honeymoon there and finally moved on to Anniston prior to my reporting to Marion.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now you . . . .

GEN ALMOND: 1st September, 1919.

CPT FERGUSSON: What sort of . . . what were your duties in your job there? Was it clearly outlined to you what you would be doing before you got there?

GEN ALMOND: Not at all. All I knew was that I would attend a military school as a director of military science. Since I had experience at VMI, I was familiar with the cadets' life and I proceeded to organize and drill the cadets in the same manner that I had experienced when I was a cadet at VMI.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you think the fact that you had already served at Marion before had anything to do with the fact that you were sent back there?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, I'm sure that the War Department queried the President of Marion Institute and asked for their opinion although I'm not positive that my name was sent in, though I rather think it was because the Commandant who had been with me at Marion before, namely Rutherford

Spessard, and my classmate at VMI, had been discharged from the Army and had gone back to Marion as the Commandant of cadets. When I learned this I was glad of the assignment because I felt that I would have a friend and acquaintance on the faculty of the school where I was designated as a military instructor.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now you spent about four years there at Marion, did you not sir?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, it was exactly four years. I went there in 1919 in September and I left there in '23 to go to Fort Benning, Georgia, to the Infantry School.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were your four years at Marion a pleasant assignment for you?

GEN ALMOND: Very. Both of my children were born while I was at Marion and the President of the school was very accommodating and thoughtful, even to the extent of building a cottage that I occupied very pleasantly.

CPT FERGUSSON: Can you tell us about the birth of these two children? When were they born?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. My daughter, Margaret, named after her mother, was born in Anniston, Alabama, on the first day of September, 1920, and my son was born 15 months later in Marion, Alabama, on December 7, 1921.

CPT FERGUSSON: That was your son Edward, Jr.?

GEN ALMOND: That's right.

CPT FERGUSSON: In your assignment at Marion, did you have officers working for you on the faculty . . . on the ROTC staff?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. There was a tactical officer designated from the faculty who was a civilian professor but there were schools in cadetship

and military movement for each company. There were four companies comprising the battalion, three of them were known as civilian cadets and the other one was composed of Army and Navy aspirants who had to take a course which would enable them to pass an examination for West Point and Annapolis in the following spring of any year of their service. This was a very successful prep school for the Naval Academy and the Military Academy and everybody looked up to it with great respect. The other three companies were equally good as cadets but had no intention of entering the service, specifically.

CPT FERGUSSON: Then there was no way for a Marion Institute graduate to go directly in with a commission, into the Reserve Officers Corps?

GEN ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: Things didn't work that way?

GEN ALMOND: No, not like they do now.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. Well, of course, it was not a four-year college, either was it?

GEN ALMOND: No, it was a junior college.

CPT FERGUSSON: A junior college?

GEN ALMOND: Four years of high school and two years of junior college. We had many graduates of our school go to the . . . both academies and also to the universities. And some were satisfied with the two year college course.

CPT FERGUSSON: Who was your next higher headquarters when you were running the ROTC program at Marion? Who did you report to? Was there a ROTC director for the region or the nation at that time?

GEN ALMOND: No, there was a headquarters in Atlanta that supervised civilian school training and an inspector group from the Department of

the Army, then the War Department which in the springtime, made a troop inspection of all ROTC units. There were several teams and the team that had inspected me and enabled me to, by means of that inspection, gain honor school the first year of my service as Professor of Military Science. This was a great compliment to me and the school too, inasmuch as we beat out that year the Commandant of Staunton Military Academy, who was none other than the 7th Army Commander in the Second World War, General Patch. Also, my inspector at that time that we made this distinctive successful effort to become an honor school was Major W. H. H. Morris, Army officer and graduate of West Point who later in the next war was the XVIII Corps Commander and inspector of my 92nd Division that I commanded 20 years later. The honor school designation was one of fifteen throughout the United States of Military Schools and Colleges. So, I felt very proud of my first year of success. I was successful for the second year and the third year they declassified our school because of its educational limitations.

CPT FERGUSSON: Because it was only two years?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. That was because it was a junior college and not a full college.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. Did the inspector or did the headquarters in Atlanta write your efficiency report in that period or were they written by the President of the college?

GEN ALMOND: They were written from the headquarters in Atlanta because I was in a section that they supervised. Well, that's all I have to say about that.

CPT FERGUSSON: All right. Do you feel that the program of training, military training for the Marion Institute students was improved considerably during your four years there? Did you continue to develop it in more detail? Since you went in fairly cold in that assignment, were you able to build as you went through?

GEN ALMOND: Well, you might say practice makes perfect. We did the best we could. I had the drill sergeant and an assistant ROTC and a Captain Edward Cole of Norfolk, Virginia, and he was also a VMI graduate for two years of my period there. We improved on our method as best we could but what we did was to insist on military discipline and the proper uniform and courtesies that we had learned in former years in my own personal case at VMI.

CPT FERGUSSON: I believe that you were demoted to Captain, although you were a temporary Major as a result of your battalion command job during the First World War, after you returned to your job at Marion, you were put back to the grade of Captain, were you not?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. The Army in its demobilization also demobilized a number of its officers and reduced them from temporary ranks that they had obtained during the war to the permanent ranks that the various officers had obtained as I obtained mine on November 30, 1916, as a provisional officer. I was in the meantime promoted to Captain from this provisional rank and it was to that rank that I was returned from the temporary majority on the 1st January 1919 - 1920.

CPT FERGUSSON: This period of demobilization after the First World War, did you feel at that time that it caused officers of high

quality to leave the service unwillingly or did most people want to get out at that time anyway?

GEN ALMOND: Well, most of the officers of World War I, like World War II, were temporary officers because of the great expansion that had gone. The authorized strength, the commissioned strength of the Regular Army when the War started was 6,000 officers and about 180,000 or 200,000 enlisted men. And that being the status of the Army when the War began, when the Army was demobilized from War effort it returned to that status until Congress was induced to enlarge the Army as we thought the prestige of the United States demanded. I intended to remain in the Army so there was no problem for me.

CPT FERGUSSON: After your completion of your four years at Marion Institute you were assigned as a student at the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia. I believe you attended a course there from October 1923 through June 1924. I assume that you were attending a course similar to what is now called the Branch Advanced Course. Exactly what course did you attend there at Fort Benning?

GEN ALMOND: The course was very similar to what it is now but it was designated as the Company Officers Course. There was another course at Benning for the same duration composed of more senior officers, people who were majors and lieutenant colonels. That was called The Field Officers Course. These two courses were run at Benning for years, starting with the termination of World War I. I was retained after my graduation with a good deal of prestige. In 1924 I was assigned to the instruction group in the The Infantry School, specifically in the tactics section for the next four years, 1924 - 1928.

CPT FERGUSSON: Getting back to the course, sir. What . . . how was that course constructed? Did you spend any time at all in the field? Or was it all classroom instruction?

GEN ALMOND: No, it was classroom instruction in each course; in tactics and logistics; in history; in preparation and interpretation of maps; and in the various aspects of military operations. All were initiated in the form of lectures and illustrated by either . . . both demonstrations and field exercises in which the students participated throughout the year. It was a very excellent course based on the experiences of very capable instructors who had had combat experience in World War I. They put into the course the different aspects of military operations and combat in a very practical way, both as to firing their weapons and movement of units and in supporting fire, both artillery and machine guns.

CPT FERGUSSON: After your considerable experience in combat, to include service as a battalion commander, did not such a course seem relatively useless and uninteresting to you?

GEN ALMOND: No, not at all. I was selected because of my World War experience, which was known in the proper channels, as an instructor in the use of machine guns and supporting weapons which included mortars that we had learned to use from the French and the machine gun experience that we all had who served in machine gun units. These experiences were utilized in the tactics section, which had three subsections: the attack, the defense, and the use of supporting weapons. The tactics section at Fort Benning was very excellent in every practical way to demonstrate what we thought the lessons of the war were except one. And that was night operations. And when I left The Infantry School in 1928,

General Marshall, later Chief of Staff in World War II and then the Assistant Commandant in charge of instruction at the Infantry School, was very often an observer of my methods not only in the classroom but in tactical exercises in the use of supporting weapons. When I left the Infantry School in a detail for Leavenworth, I left a final report in the form of a letter to the Assistant Commandant, General Marshall, in which I said the Infantry School course is very excellent except in one respect. Our soldiers don't know how to move around at night and get to the place that was designated they were to arrive at by daylight the next morning. Later, I found out they changed the course, answering some of my criticism and I think to an advantage.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you base this criticism on an expectation that we would have to fight at night in future wars or because you had experienced problems in night maneuvers during the First World War?

GEN ALMOND: We had experienced many problems in moving at night in which we found difficulty because our leaders were not schooled either in the Infantry School or another place in night operations to the degree necessary to obtain practical and satisfactory results. In our efforts at Benning during my four years, in fact, five years, one year as a student and four years as an instructor, I only remember one all night exercise and that problem was merely to get from here to there as individuals moving by compass and by a known map location and ground comparison. The result of that operation was a fiasco and it was the supporting evidence that I used in my letter to the Assistant Commandant saying that we evidently needed more training in night operations. This, I believe, caused him to make the change in the course the following year.

CPT FERGUSSON: This was General Marshall?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, General Marshall.

CPT FERGUSSON: At that time he was what rank?

GEN ALMOND: Lieutenant Colonel.

CPT FERGUSSON: Lieutenant Colonel. Were you able even in . . . during the course you were taking to educate your fellow classmates on what you had learned in the War? I mean, did they ever call on you to teach part of the classes even before you joined the formal faculty?

GEN ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: Or was the teaching done strictly by the faculty?

GEN ALMOND: The teaching was done by the faculty and the questions were allowed during the time that they gave at the end of each lecture. This gave the people who had different experiences from the instructor a chance to express their views and either agree or disagree in the form of a discussion with what had just been said. As a matter of fact, one day during my discussion, I gave them practical experiences that I had had in World War I and I said, "Are there any questions?" and the first person to ask a question was the Assistant Commandant, General Marshall, who had come into the class not noticed by me when my back was turned towards the board. It did surprise me a little bit but I was able to answer his question which I think, in some form, impressed him a little.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall his question?

GEN ALMOND: No, I don't.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about your classmates in that course? Were most of them like yourself, veterans of the war?

GEN ALMOND: Most of them were my contemporaries. And some of these would look at me with a tongue in cheek as if to say, "How does he know what the heck he's talking about? I know more than he does." So it was a little bit difficult to be convincing unless you could well illustrate what you were talking about on maps and then take the class out on the ground and demonstrate practically what we were talking about.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the class again. Were you particularly close friends with any of the people in that class or were there any particularly distinguished or later distinguished individuals in your course at Benning?

GEN ALMOND: Well, one of my instructors was none other than Clarence Huebner who had a wonderful reputation and was highly decorated in the 1st Division in World War I. He had come to Benning a year or two before I had and when I found him there, he was an instructor, as I say, and a surprise to me because Huebner had never had any formal education and had practically educated himself. He had been a sergeant in the Army before the war began and was a member of the first provisional class and my contemporary 2nd Lieutenant when we reported to Leavenworth in 1917.

CPT FERGUSSON: But there were no particular memories of your class there that you would wish to comment on?

GEN ALMOND: No, I had so many associates or acquaintances and formal friends that later in World War II became general officers just as I did. One of them was Withers Burrell, another was Clarence Huebner and many others.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you say on the whole sir, that the quality of the officers going through Benning was high at that time because the Army had been whittled down to the regular Corps?

GEN ALMOND: Very high. It was the policy of the War Department to send former unit commanders who had done well to the Infantry School before they sent anybody else. Therefore, they got a high grade of leadership and military competence in their first graduating classes. And they went from there into the Army Staffs or to command units which needed their experience in training.

CPT FERGUSSON: And, of course, the school itself was able to nominate or to pick some of the officers out of each class to stay on as instructors.

GEN ALMOND: Definitely. That's the way they selected their instructors -- by the performance of certain students in the class throughout the year. I suppose that was the way I was selected. I was satisfied with my course and apparently the Infantry School was too.

CPT FERGUSSON: So you were happy when you were picked to be returned to stay on there at Fort Benning?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes, I was very flattered.

CPT FERGUSSON: Your family I assume came with you to Fort Benning even for the course?

GEN ALMOND: Oh yes, we lived in Columbus, Georgia, the year I was a student and I commuted from Columbus about ten miles into Benning every morning and back home at night. This went on for the student year but when I was designated to become a faculty member at the school, I was assigned quarters which were very satisfactory and also new for Benning, one of the best brick sets of quarters that there was. I was the "bull man" for four years and occupied those quarters and I always expected to be thrown out into a frame house because of being "ranked out" but it never happened.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you own a motor car at that time?

GEN ALMOND: Oh yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: When did you first own a car? Right after the war or . . .?

GEN ALMOND: Right after the war and the name of it was the Essex.

CPT FERGUSSON: That was the car's brand?

GEN ALMOND: The car's brand. It was put out by the Buick Corporation and it's General Motors now.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did most officers of your age group own cars in those days?

GEN ALMOND: Oh yes. At least . . . all that I know had a reasonably small car for family use and we would pool four officers to a car to allow the family to have its own car three days out of four.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall if the Army had changed over completely during this period to using motor transportation, say, for the type of things you did in the First World War in using mules and animals to draw your machine gun carts and so on. Were these sort of things being changed at this time?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, this was a period of rapid change you might say. For example, in World War I and as a commander of a battalion, I had one motor vehicle that we called the command car. It was a small Ford car or some similar quality. But when I got to Benning four years later from my ROTC detail, I found that there were many trucks in evidence and trucks used both to transport troops and to transport supplies. As a matter of fact, the jeep as we know it now got its first try-out at Fort Benning as a bucket seat Ford car which when World War II came along was the modern jeep. And the man who induced General Marshall to

look at this model car was a man who was at Fort Benning. As a matter of fact, I have ridden many days on horseback over the area of terrain, reconnoitering it for future problems when I could have ridden the whole area in two hours in the bucket seat Ford. The reason I rode the horse was that there were only two Fords there for the whole faculty to use and I very rarely ranked one. But later in General Marshall's period as Assistant Commandant he had adequate opportunity to see the value of these cars and when it was proposed that the Army adopt the jeep, he was familiar with its characteristics and capabilities.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, in a period of rapid change (and now I'm talking about the period after the course when you were on the faculty yourself), did you see your role and did the faculty as a whole see their role not only to teach but to develop a new doctrine and new ideas for how to use these motor vehicles in conjunction with combat operations?

GEN ALMOND: Well, our use of them developed capabilities and we could see the value of reconnaissance and command utilization primarily and also the supply capabilities of truck transportation and for ammunition and for food and water.

CPT FERGUSSON: But was someone else . . . was there some other agency or post whose job it was to develop new doctrines?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. At Fort Benning there was what they called the Department of Experiment and this Department of Experiment was a separate organization that operated under the Assistant Commandant of the Infantry School. It was the function of this Department of Experiment to test out as we had been doing heretofore at the Ordnance Depot, the Quartermaster Depot, or the Signal School all the things that Benning found were desirable and which they could test in their own way. The Department of Experiment had to determine methods

of utilizing this equipment before they could get it through the central departments of Ordnance and Quartermaster and various other institutions. Now the Army has conquered all that, of course, in its development of weapons but it had its beginning in those days of the '20's at the various service schools. Of course, there was a service school for artillery; and a service school for cavalry; and a service school for signal and medical and engineers, just as there was an infantry, but the infantry school was and is now, in my opinion, the finest tactical school in the world.

CPT FERGUSSON: The quality of the faculty was very high during that period was it not?

GEN ALMOND: The highest attainable.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were most of the instructors in the rank or grade of major or were there many captains teaching there?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, there were more captains than there were any other rank, of course, but I'd say the captains and majors were in the majority. Lieutenants were usually at this time, very junior officers and also lacked a lot of experience. Most everybody that was a captain had had some little experience as a lieutenant and those who were majors had . . . some had been lieutenant colonels and in one or two cases, colonels during the War and were reduced as I had been when I was on ROTC duty immediately following the War.

CPT FERGUSSON: Who were your main associates on the faculty?

GEN ALMOND: I had any number of associates, men of whom I have not thought of in a long time but I recall off-hand a number which I'll name who later became either major general or lieutenant general in World War II. They are Ralph Huebner, "Pinky" Burress, Leroy Watson,

Edwin Buetcher, "Chink" Hall, George Smythe. Smythe was a very famous West Point football player as a cadet there, and was known primarily for reversing the field, running towards his own goal until he almost reached it and then turning and running through the broken field and making a touchdown against his opponent. These and many others attained high rank during World War II.

CPT FERGUSSON: Among those people, did any of them impress you particularly as innovators or really great thinkers or were they just good solid infantry officers?

GEN ALMOND: They were considered good practical soldiers of various types and for that reason were dependable rather than of sterling, educational perfection.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about tanks? You certainly had . . . everyone certainly knew of the effect of tanks (the limited success anyway) of tanks in the First World War and I would expect that by this time people knew that tanks were the coming thing, or did they? What was the attitude about tanks at Benning or were there any tanks there?

GEN ALMOND: Well, the trouble with the tank aspect was that while we knew about their reported capabilities, there weren't enough tanks to furnish the special schools with tank units and tank operations. But we did have a tank school maintained by the Army at Fort Meade, Maryland. And that gave us the theory of operation and many times our instructors and sometimes our students would go to Fort Meade and watch demonstrations and operations in battle . . . projected battlefield or tank units would be sent by rail to Fort Benning for special demonstrations. So we were aware of the tanks aspect of warfare and what they had accomplished by those who had them in World War I. But our associations

with tanks was rather limited.

CPT FERGUSSON: You mentioned earlier, sir, that you had some association there with developments in the area of mortars. Can you elaborate on this? You said you had learned about them through the French and you had something to do with them on the faculty?

GEN ALMOND: Well, the French had a small mortar that we adopted and later became known as the 60mm mortar. Of course, then this was enlarged for World War II and the 80 mm mortar and the 4-inch chemical mortar that we had in World War II. But my use of instruction and practices at Fort Benning for the four years that I was there dealt with the very limited capabilities of the 60-mm mortar and the small infantry cannon that was a part of the headquarters platoon of every infantry regiment.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was the 60-mm mortar at that time seen as the possible infantry artillery piece?

GEN ALMOND: No, it was very limited in its capabilities and was just sort of looked upon as an adjunct to the howitzer -- in fact, they were called the howitzer platoon of the infantry regiment. Something between a machine gun and a 3-inch gun or 105-mm in capability.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now in your instruction duties at Fort Benning, were you teaching only officer students or were you instructing enlisted men in the handling of weapons, NCO's . . .

GEN ALMOND: Only officers.

CPT FERGUSSON: Only officers. Were there a large number of enlisted men coming through Benning for training at that time?

GEN ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: There were not.

GEN ALMOND: We had a demonstration regiment, the 29th Infantry, and we had a sort of demonstration service regiment, the 24th Infantry. The 29th Infantry was white soldiers and the 24th Infantry was colored soldiers. But the function of the 29th Infantry was to demonstrate the classroom lectures and the reading material and manuals that the instructors talked about before they went to the field. And then the 29th Infantry could demonstrate the types of fire, the types of maneuvers, the types of transportation, the method of defending position and so on and then the students had to go through the same process before they completed the course.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see, then where were enlisted men given advanced infantry training in those days?

GEN ALMOND: In their units.

CPT FERGUSSON: In their units. So they had their basic when they entered the service?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. Yes, we had nothing like advanced infantry training of the individual like we had for World War II and as we had for Korea and Vietnam.

CPT FERGUSSON: So they got their basic training and then they went to the unit and got further training?

GEN ALMOND: That's right.

CPT FERGUSSON: The officers that you were training there, were these . . . did these include brand new lieutenants who came down to be trained in their branch?

GEN ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: Or just the company officer course?

GEN ALMOND: That's right. Officers in a way slanted towards combat experience. In the company officers course there were captains and in the advanced course there were majors and lieutenant colonels.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, as a tanker, since you had only graduated from the company officers course, were you allowed to teach the field officers course as well?

GEN ALMOND: Oh yes. I was supposed to be an expert in the use of supporting weapons in the offense. Machine guns and mortars.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you teach a specific separate course by that name?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. How much . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: Machine guns in the offense was the course that I taught.

CPT FERGUSSON: And how much do you remember roughly, how much the student got from that course? How many hours or how much . . . what percentage of the total course was spent in your part of the course?

GEN ALMOND: My course was mixed in with all other courses.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see.

GEN ALMOND: But the machine guns came along after you got through the infantry squad tactics course. I'd say the course in toto, the lectures, the demonstrations and the participation by the students would cover a period of two or three weeks.

CPT FERGUSSON: Two or three weeks? Were you in charge of that whole course-did you have other instructors working for you at that time?

That part of the course on supporting weapons?

GEN ALMOND: No, the instructor was in charge of this course. If it was

a long course, he would have someone as a chief from the proper unit: first we had a chief of the offensive tactics section.

CPT FERGUSSON: And you worked for him?

GEN ALMOND: I worked for him. But I worked in my particular category and right across the desk from my desk in the headquarters/instructors building was Captain Watson, a West Point graduate that I mentioned before who was in charge of the infantry battalion in attack. Right across the room from us was a similar character who was the captain in charge of the instruction in infantry battalion in defense.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see, so there was an offensive department or section and a defensive section.

GEN ALMOND: That's right.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was there a logistical section, a separate section as well?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes. That was in a different group that wasn't in the tactics section, of course, and it had a different chief. For example, the Tactics Chief, Offense was Colonel Buetcher, and the Defense Tactics Chief was Colonel Roy Hill and the Logistics Chief was somebody that I don't remember but it changed every year, usually.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was there any instruction of combat intelligence within the curriculum or was this just part of the other courses?

GEN ALMOND: No, we had "intelligence procedures" -- the student had to write an intelligence report. The problem was to determine what to include in the message. The information was obtained through patrols or with captured documents and so on. It was a form of intelligence instruction which pertained to the infantry regiment or lower units.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. Could you return to the First World War just for a minute and explain just how the intelligence worked or how you got intelligence at the battalion level when you were in the front lines? What sort of intelligence did you get from higher headquarters?

GEN ALMOND: Well, for example, if the regiment wanted to know where the enemy was, it would communicate with the battalion commander and say, "Dispatch a patrol in the direction of Montfaucon, for example, in the Meuse-Argonne and determine where the enemy is located if anywhere." The battalion commander would call on some of his company units in which he had confidence and that unit would send out the patrol to determine the information. That was to determine the information on the battlefield, that was battlefield information. If information had been determined from another regiment of the same division, it was quickly obtainable by the persons who needed it. On the other hand, if it was obtained by another division there was some delay in getting the information over, but the method of passing on information to all units concerned certainly enabled those in operational activity, either in defense or attack to derive the benefit of any intelligence that was developed every 24 hours.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were you always aware of the source of the intelligence? In other words, did you know if an airplane had gone out and looked over the enemy lines?

GEN ALMOND: Not necessarily. I think the message usually gave the source, i.e., "an air observer found so and so" or "an infantry patrol developed so and so" or "the artillery observer at such and such a location saw from his position so and so." But people who used the information weren't so concerned with the source of it as they were with what was to be done with the result of it.

GEN ALMOND: Oh, well the result is what counted.

CPT FERGUSSON: Or was that someone else's job up at division?

GEN ALMOND: That was some one else's job and the intelligence officer of the division would usually evaluate the source.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. Would you comment also on the communications system within the division at the time of the First World War and then how this changed during the time you were at the Infantry School?

GEN ALMOND: Well, the communication between small units was usually by runner, battalion size. We knew nothing about such things as walkie talkies or flash signal or how it was to be interpreted or transmitted. We depended mostly on information that came down from higher headquarters to the battalion and the battalion was supposed to locate its own front in detail.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, during the time you were on the faculty at Fort Benning, did radios begin to come into use at the lower levels? At the tactical company and battalion level?

GEN ALMOND: No, I don't believe so. I don't recall ever using the radio. As a matter of fact, there were no radios at the battalion level.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you taught the employment of machine guns in the offense and light mortars. Now, how did these in the concepts that were being taught at Fort Benning in the 1920's, how did these fit in with the other weapons available to the infantry?

GEN ALMOND: Well, during World War I as far as the U. S. participation was concerned, we learned to adopt the French mortar employment and also to use the 37-mm gun in the last stages of the war. The 37-mm gun was a small cannon and was suitable to move around rapidly in the

same area in which the machine gun support was developed or utilized, therefore, machine guns and light mortars and 37-mm cannon were employed for the same purposes in support of an infantry/battalion in an attack or defense.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did the officer student that you were instructing in the use of these weapons actually go out and fire them as they would in a tactical situation?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes. During the course the student would be taught the employment of weapons from the artillery on down to the light machine gun. The course would indicate the employment first, then the student would be put on the range to fire the weapon before employing it tactically, knowing the fire power from the range practice, he could visualize more easily the effect of the use of the weapon when the field problem came on employing anything from the rifle on up to the 105-mm artillery piece.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, would you describe the working conditions and the hours that you put in at Fort Benning? Was it a rigorous sort of job that people had there on the faculty or was it a fairly relaxed atmosphere?

GEN ALMOND: No, it was rigorous in the case of all people who applied themselves and the majority of them did. Now, you'd find a slacker or a lazy man but not often. You were fully engaged in ten months in the job of instructing or preparing instruction for making reconnaissances for the problem that you expected to have in the field. So the time during which you were not actually teaching, you were preparing problems and reconnoitering areas for new problems to improve your course.

The officers' course was comprised of about ten months instruction and in the summertime the faculty would take as much leave as could be afforded in view of the preparation they had for the coming year. It was a very restrictive and compelling assignment but usually the persons who went through the efforts were compensated by good efficiency reports. In my own case, it was the means that I had of being recommended to take the general staff course at Fort Leavenworth upon the completion of my four years as instructor at Benning.

CPT FERGUSSON: Who recommended you for that course, sir?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I presume that the committee chairman of instructing groups was contacted by the Commandant at the proper time for making the recommendation and that the first reaction to that recommendation would be the committee chairman, next the section chief and that would go to the Assistant Commandant who controlled all the sections in the management of the course.

CPT FERGUSSON: That was Colonel Marshall at that time?

GEN ALMOND: That's right. It was Colonel Marshall the last two years and General Bjornstadt of World War I fame and reputation in the first two years.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you describe -- you've already mentioned somewhat, your having seen Colonel Marshall a number of times and so on and I know that later on in your career he was to play an important role in selecting you as a Division Commander. Was your relationship with him unusually close considering the fact that you were just an instructor then and he was the Assistant Commandant or had he known you before?

GEN ALMOND: Not especially, He knew that I was a graduate of V.M.I., the class of 1915, and I knew that he was a graduate of V.M.I. of 1901. This may have had a perfunctory relationship, but General Marshall never let such associations, especially of people he hadn't seen for many years, interfere with his action toward an officer, especially a junior officer. He very carefully checked all the instructors at Fort Benning and I described before in this interview that the first question I got in one of my classes was from a man whom I suddenly realized was the Assistant Commandant, General Marshall -- Colonel Marshall who had come in the class when I wasn't looking. However, I think the thing that impressed General Marshall was a casual observation of my instructing ability, and the letter I wrote about the night exercises being the chief need of the change of the course for the student officer.

CPT FERGUSSON: What year did you write that letter, sir?

GEN ALMOND: 1928.

CPT FERGUSSON: 1928, your last year there?

GEN ALMOND: The last year as I departed. I didn't write the letter until I departed. And I based it upon my four years' observation as an instructor and my one year as a student during which I got no such training.

CPT FERGUSSON: Had you attempted to make this change as an instructor yourself or you were not in a position to do so?

GEN ALMOND: No, I was not in a position and when I made the recommendation it hadn't been solicited by or directed by anybody. It just irked me to see the necessity for the type of instruction that I recommended.

CPT FERGUSSON: Of the first nine years following your return from the First World War, you spent eight of those years in teaching capacities at Marion Institute and at the Infantry School. Did you really like teaching?

GEN ALMOND: No not at all. And I knew that teaching wouldn't lead to a higher command or a higher staff capability. As a matter of fact, in those days following World War I the assignment to command troops was very rare and anybody who got troop duty was considered very fortunate. All officers desire troop duty which would lead to oommand duty. Very few attain it because of a very few units and those that we did have were small units and in isolated posts which prevented units of large size getting together for maneuvers and special instructions. But when I was selected to go to Leavenworth it was based on the fact that I wanted to be a capable staff officer and when I departed Leavenworth, I was assigned to the Philippines and to duty that I knew would be troop duty initially. It was a rare opportunity and a very welcome one.

CPT FERGUSSON: So, as you say, the Army during this period between the wars, was very small. Opportunities to be with troops were pretty slight. Writers have often characterized the attitude of the general public for the Army during this period as one of apathy or indifference. The Army was very small, it was isolated in its posts and there was very little relationship between the Army and the civilian communities because the Army was so small that its presence wasn't really felt as it had been in the wartime. What is your opinion of this? Would you describe the public . . .

GEN ALMOND: Yes, that's a natural apathy that followed every war that

I am familiar with. Not only the Civil War but the Spanish-American War and the Mexican War and before it. When the war is over most of the people in any command want to be released except those whose profession it is to be constantly employed by the Armed Forces. When I was ordered to the Philippines from the Command and General Staff School, I was assigned to the 45th Infantry, which was one of the Philippine Scout Regiment. Two battalions were located at Fort McKinley and one battalion was split up between the southern islands and the recreation area of Baguio. Shortly after I took command of this battalion the opportunity came for me to become the aide, senior aide, I had just been made a Major, and I was to become the senior aide of the Department Commander. I went to the Department Commander and said, "Sir, I have to obey any order issued me and I intend to do so, but you could not disappoint me more than to make me a member of anybody's staff when I have the opportunity to command troops." I said this to the commander because he had once been my Brigade Commander and he appreciated my position. And he said, "Well, if you are that anxious, if you have that attitude about troop duty, I admire it in you and respect your wishes and therefore, go back to your battalion." A second occasion similar to that was when the G-3 of the Caribou or Philippine Division failed to make the boat in the fall and it was learned suddenly that he would not arrive to take over the job of G-3 until three months later, on the next transport that came to the Philippines. Immediately the brigade commander, General Conrad, then later he was the Division Commander, sent for me and wanted to make me the permanent G-3 and relieve me from my battalion. I said, "General Conrad, I came over here to command

troops if possible and I will be the acting G-3 until the next G-3 arrives if you will let me command my battalion in the morning and act as G-3 on your staff in the afternoon." He inquired if I thought that was too much of a load. I said it was a fair-sized load but I would work harder at it, provided I'm allowed to retain my battalion command which I don't expect to get in the next ten years again." This he agreed to and therefore, I prepared the problem for the fall maneuvers of the Caribou Division, the Philippine Division and recomanded my battalion at that time. I did have the opportunity of participating in the maneuvers when they came later on in the same problems that I had prepared so I was familiar with the proposition before the maneuver ever began.

CPT FERGUSSON: Getting back to the question of civilians attitude toward the Army, did you find the attitude of your fellow officers and yourself to be one of distrust toward the civilians at this same time during the 1920's because of their attutude?

GEN ALMOND: No, not at all. We recognized the attitude as one of following the war that had just been completed and the disinterest of the average civilian wasn't true in all cases, particularly where the Infantry School was located near Columbus, Georgia. The citizens of Columbus were all very interested in the post, especially those in business and higher social position. They made great strides to not only recognize the military command whenever the contact was made but they went out of their way to give social gatherings and receptions for all the new officers at Benning and for the staff and faculty of the school.

CPT FERGUSSON: So there was a good social life between . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: There was an excellent social feeling between the officer corps at Fort Benning and the social individuals of the city of Columbus, Georgia.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you think that is an important thing, generally for the Army to foster this sort of . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I do. Yes, I do and I found that to be the case through experience of my 20 years of retired life and even up to the present time. The relationship between Fort McClellan, Alabama, and Anniston, Alabama, is excellent. It is sponsored by the civic clubs of the city and many people . . . the citizenship of the city know most all the officers of the post.

CPT FERGUSSON: Following your four years as an instructor at Fort Benning, five years altogether including your year at school there, you and your family moved during the summer of 1928 to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where you were to become a student at the Command and General Staff School. In those days, your course was two years instead of the present one. Could you discuss briefly, the course that you underwent at Fort Leavenworth?

GEN ALMOND: Well, the two-year course was initiated the year I went to Leavenworth. Not only did we have a two-year course of some 150 or 175 officers, but we also had the last of the one-year courses with about 100 officers and these two classes attended all possible formations and instruction periods that were given in both classes as one group. The junior course, in other words, the two-year course, was more in detail as to minor tactical uses of troops and staff duties required

the connection therewith for such things as military law; field operations; general application of artillery and logistics; in addition to infantry employment in battle. All students were required to take equitation in preparation for staff duty and in later years command and ceremonial duty. The course was insistent upon the student qualifying in equitation. My instructor in particular was the later famous General officer named Ben Lear of "Yoo-Hoo" fame who commanded the Second Army in preparation for World War II and later the ground forces when General McNair was killed in France.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you think possibly the fact that they required you at Leavenworth to have equitation training or classes was an outmoded requirement in that horses were really becoming a thing of the past for an Army in combat in those days what with motor vehicles coming in? Did you . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: No, I don't because in the first place, it was good exercise and a way to get everybody physically in shape and keep them that way and there were still many cases where the commanders and all our staff officers were mounted and the cavalry was still maintaining that it had a function in the war.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was most of your instruction at Leavenworth on tactics as opposed to strategy or did you have some instruction in strategy as well?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes, we had the course in strategy which dealt with the most important military engagements in the past in a very adequate manner. The differentiation between tactics, ground tactics and strategy, was emphasized, insisted upon in all courses. The staff action with . . .

this was a staff school we were going to, the Command and General Staff School, which necessitated problems that employed staff preparation in all its aspects. Personnel, intelligence, operations, and logistics.

CPT FERGUSSON: What did you think of the quality of the instruction that you received at Fort Leavenworth?

GEN ALMOND: I thought it was very excellent and it satisfied the student body in the large majority of the cases. There are always people who object to the methods in use by any command but we generally agreed with what was being taught and attempted to master the subject. Not only were tactics taught but military law and many aspects of supply and materials were very highly regarded and emphasized. To begin with the beginning of each one of these courses, whether it was a senior officer course or a two year course, for the first three months of the year involved the tactics and the physical manipulation of several arms of the service, artillery, cavalry, infantry, and especially communications as well as hospitalization and evacuation of the battlefield. It was only in the latter part of the year for the one year class and the second year for the two year course that field maneuvers involving major and minor tactics and the strategical concepts were emphasized.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall any particularly outstanding classmates of yours at Fort Leavenworth?

GEN ALMOND: I've been asked several times who my associates were at Fort Leavenworth in my two year course. There were many of my old friends at the Benning School and some of whom were with me in the 4th Division in World War I and many of these that I associated with for those two years at Leavenworth became general officers later and were

well known throughout their Army services. There are really too many to try to enumerate. I remember off-hand people who became division commanders who lived in my area and were associated with me and Margaret in our social affairs; Frank Culin became a Major General and a Division Commander in World War II; Pinky Burriss commanded the 100th Division in the Seventh Army and a number of others. The Commandant was Jimmy, James A. Breese who was a fine cavalryman to begin with and a social giant among people that he associated with. He later became a banker in San Antonio and the President of the Army National Bank.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did the fact that he was a cavalryman have any impact on your course of instruction. Was cavalry emphasized to any degree?

GEN ALMOND: Not especially, not only on his account. We would rotate the commandants according to my memory, that if the outgoing commandant had been a cavalryman the next commandant probably would be an artilleryman or infantryman.

CPT FERGUSSON: You stated a few minutes ago that part of the reason that horses or that equitation was part of the curriculum there at Leavenworth was because many people thought that the horse still had a useful function on the battlefield and that cavalry would still be used. Did you yourself think so after you had seen what the machine gun and what artillery could do in the First World War? Or did you think that the day of cavalry was really gone.

GEN ALMOND: No, I thought there might be uses for cavalry as mobile troops in areas that needed connection between larger forces and also in areas where the terrain was rough and the observation was poor. As a

matter of fact, when I became a division commander in World War II in Italy I found that the Apennines Mountains were so rigorous to negotiate that the first thing that I needed was either a horse or a mule. And I formed a pack company of mules and I had to scout around the country to find; and found out that a man with a load could carry enough food for himself for two days. Whereas, a pack mule could carry enough for 20 men. Therefore, I formed this provisional pack company and it was a great advantage when I was taking the division into the Apennines Mountains in Italy.

CPT FERGUSSON: Therefore, at Leavenworth in the two year course, did you do particularly well overall in the class?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I think so. You got an unsatisfactory report coming out which we called a U and I guess most institutions call them U's and I got two U's while I was there. One each year and I got it for doing dumb stuff that the instructor had warned us against. One was backtracking on a logistics problem and the other one was making a double envelopment in a field problem where the right flank was so close to the river, Missouri River, that there was no maneuver space. For those two things I got a U and I never forgot them.

CPT FERGUSSON: But overall, you did well there?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I think so.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did they have distinguished graduates in those days or did they select anyone for honors in the course?

GEN ALMOND: No, not that.

CPT FERGUSSON: You were either a graduate or not, is that right?

GEN ALMOND: That's right. People were designated as graduates when their records as students were tabulated so that you could tell the people who had gotten many unsatisfactory reports on an examination as well as those who got practically none as I've just said, I got two U's and that was a pretty good record.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you think that the performance of officers at Fort Leavenworth in those days was taken into account by people assigning them in Washington. Did it have any effect on their careers if they did well there?

GEN ALMOND: Well, it had an effect on who would be promoted in later days. But I'm sure that my record at the schools that I attended, being as satisfactory as I think they were, had a good deal to do with my being selected as a general officer when World War II came along.

CPT FERGUSSON: Of the subjects that you studied at Fort Leavenworth, were there . . . was there anyone or several which you felt that you got the most out of? For example, logistics. Was this a particularly useful thing since you hadn't had much prior training in logistics? You had been quite familiar with tactics having just taught at Fort Benning for the previous four years and perhaps you didn't have as much to learn there. Did you find this?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I found that a thorough appreciation of logistics was absolutely necessary to the preparation of any large scale military operation and that's being shown even in the Vietnam War today. If you cannot protect your line of supply which is vital to do, if it's in danger, you had better change the nature of your problem or not attempt the operation. The command that operates in the field of

unsure supply is very chancy and it brings out more clearly in any case what Napoleon's philosophy was of battles, when he said an Army travels on its belly. I know this to be a fact because of the operation that we had in Korea especially and that we now are observing in the Vietnam and Cambodian Wars.

CPT FERGUSSON: Your two years at Leavenworth family wise, were they pleasant for you?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes. My children went to school and they had great opportunities for the recreation that youth is partial to. We had opportunities to go to Kansas City and see plays and musicals and to participate in every social activity that occurred on a large post as Leavenworth was. It was a very pleasant and fruitful two years from the family standpoint.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you and your family stay in the Middle West during the entire two years or did you or your family ever return to the east for a visit or to Washington?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, both . . . in between the course . . . the summer between the courses of the two years and after the two year course was over and on the way to the Philippines, we returned to Anniston, Alabama and visited for the whole month at least, with the Crook family on Quintard Avenue.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, this brings up a general question. Throughout the years after the First World War, did you make frequent or did you make any visits back to your own home in Luray? Was your family still there at the time?

GEN ALMOND: No, my family was then living in Washington, D.C. My

father had died in 1925 when I was at Fort Benning.

CPT FERGUSSON: In Washington he died?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. And my mother was living there because my sister, whose first husband died, was employed there in the government.

CPT FERGUSSON: When had your family moved to Washington? What year had they moved there, before the First World War? While you were in V.M.I.?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, about the time I went to V.M.I. or a year or two later. My mother moved from Orange, Virginia and my father became engaged in business in Washington of the same nature that he had been in all my life -- the farm machinery business.

CPT FERGUSSON: So your mother lived in Washington until her death?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: When did she die, then?

GEN ALMOND: My father died in '25 and my mother spent her widowhood in Washington with my sister and lived until the year 1935 when I was serving on the general staff in Washington in the War Department. She was buried in Culpeper, Virginia in her sister's family burial plot of a large size where my father had been buried in 1925. They were buried together and there they are at this date.

CPT FERGUSSON: Had you maintained close contacts with your mother through the years after the First World War? Did your family ever visit with her in Washington?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes, we saw her frequently when we were stationed in Washington although she lived with my sister and not with us, I saw her at least once a week.

CPT FERGUSSON: You saw her once a week when you were stationed in Washington?

GEN ALMOND : Right.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. Did you feel that the course at Leavenworth on the whole was preparing you both to be a higher commander and a high level staff officer?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I felt that by going to Leavenworth I would become a good staff officer or have the possibilities of it and by my adhering to my inclination to serve with the troops, that that would teach me leadership and high command. And if any war occurred as it usually does, and in this case did, it would fit me for proper development as a commander.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were there any foreign students at Leavenworth in those days?

GEN ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: But the branches . . .

GEN ALMOND: There were Philippine officers.

CPT FERGUSSON: The branches represented there were representative of the whole Army? In other words, not just combat arms but you did have . . . all branches?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, yes. All . . . there were doctors, technicians . . . .

CPT FERGUSSON: Quartermaster?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: And every type.

GEN ALMOND : Every type.

CPT FERGUSSON: After leaving Fort Leavenworth, you and your family moved to the Philippines, to Fort McKinley where you commanded a battalion of native troops from 1930 to 1933. Would you describe the move from the United States to the Philippines?

GEN ALMOND: Well, we left the General Staff School in early June, as I recall it, and had to take the transport from New York in August. Between those two periods, we traveled back to Anniston, Alabama, and spent the best part of a month with the Crook family where our children would have the advantage of recreation and pleasure facilities and my wife would find a cook in the kitchen and she wouldn't have to do the work. Not only that, both the Crooks, mother and father of Margaret, were very fond of our children and insisted on our making the bulk of our stay a private departure for the Philippines at their home.

CPT FERGUSSON: Then you went to New York from there?

GEN ALMOND: Then we drove to New York in August to take the transport Grant in the latter part of the month. I remember especially an incident before getting to the Pier to depart for the Philippines. I knew that every car that we took to the Philippines had to be drained of gasoline and, therefore, I shouldn't arrive at the port with a tank full of gas. And I couldn't afford to do so and it would be useless. So, I inquired before I got there and I found out the distance and bought just the amount of gas to take me there which wasn't enough and I ran out of gas in the Holland Tunnel and had to be towed out. From there we were escorted by the city police, motorcycle rider to Pier 51 at Hoboken and departed for the Philippines, finally. We traveled through the Panama Canal and to San Francisco where we delayed for three days while the transport Grant reconditioned and resupplied itself preparatory to the long trip by way of Hawaii and Guan to Manila. We arrived in

Manila in due course and promptly moved to Fort McKinley where I set up quarters. This was Quarters #46 and was right next to the colonel of the regiment, Colonel Martin.

CPT FERGUSSON: You have already talked at some length about your command in the Philippines and how much you fought to retain it several times when you were offered other jobs. Were you designated as a commander before your arrival in the Philippines? Did you know you were going there to command a battalion?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I knew I was assigned to the 45th Infantry Regiment that stayed at Fort McKinley in the Philippine Islands.

CPT FERGUSSON: And that you would be a battalion commander?

GEN ALMOND: No, I could have been a staff officer.

CPT FERGUSSON: Because you were still a Major then?

GEN ALMOND : I was just assigned to the regiment.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. So that really, it was when you got there that your assignment was made by the colonel of the regiment.

GEN ALMOND: The colonel of the regiment because he had known that I had been to the Infantry School and had served four years as an instructor there and had gone to the General Staff School and had served two years there. And I had a combat record in the First World War.

CPT FERGUSSON: As a Major you were commanding a battalion there. Was it unusual at that time for a Major to command a battalion, or was that the regular thing?

GEN ALMOND: No, that was the regular thing. A regiment had a colonel, a lieutenant colonel, at least four majors, three of whom were battalion commanders and the other one was a capable officer, if possible, to do

the staff coordination.

CPT FERGUSSON: What was the function of the lieutenant colonel in those days -- used as the regimental executive officer?

GEN ALMOND: Right.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the troops that you had, the Philippine troops under your command in this battalion. What sort of troops did they make?

GEN ALMOND: They made good obedient troops, resourceful and polite . . . but they were lacking in adjustment to conditions in the field.

CPT FERGUSSON: Initiative, they were lacking in initiative?

GEN ALMOND: Right. For example, if the regulations said that a unit would deploy in open ground but also would deploy within 500 yards of the enemy and scatter its forces out, if the ground between the 500 yards and the enemy position was swampy and difficult to negotiate in, they would deploy anyhow which is not using your judgment but following the book.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were your non-commissioned officers Filipinos or were they U.S.?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, they were all Filipinos.

CPT FERGUSSON: All Filipinos except for the officers?

GEN ALMOND: That's right.

CPT FERGUSSON: None of the officers . . . .

GEN ALMOND: Half of the officers were usually Filipinos but they were officers who were especially selected and usually they had been to the Infantry School. . . .

CPT FERGUSSON: Were they officers of high quality?

GEN ALMOND : Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were they good officers?

GEN ALMOND: They were good officers within their capabilities.

CPT FERGUSSON: And what were they usually doing? Commanding companies or . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. Commanding companies . . . .

CPT FERGUSSON: Below?

GEN ALMOND: Or staff . . . some of them were staff officers and many of them were in the supply section and depot controllers.

CPT FERGUSSON: How was . . . was this battalion organized just like a regular U.S. Army battalion?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was it equipped as well as the regular U.S. Army battalion?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. It was a result of our operations in the Philippines when Spain was defeated and we became the controllers of the Philippine Islands with a governor-general which later was given up while I was in Japan in 1946, it became a commonwealth then. But, in the days of my service there, we had a governor-general in administrative control of the Philippine Islands.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did he take an interest in military affairs?

GEN ALMOND : No, not especially, although Teddy Roosevelt was the Governor-General for a short period and thought he was a great soldier and Commander.

CPT FERGUSSON: While you were there? Teddy Roosevelt was?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. Your battalion was organized, you say, just like a U.S. battalion. Did this include a machine gun company?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you have a headquarters company?

GEN ALMOND: No, we had a headquarters but not a headquarters company.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see. What rifle were you equipped with in that day?

GEN ALMOND: The 0-3 rifle.

CPT FERGUSSON : The 0-3. And the regiment was organized just as the U.S. regiment would have been organized? The three battalions in the regiment? And was there a weapons, a heavy weapons unit at regimental level?

CPT FERGUSSON: Just the three infantry battalions and the headquarters of the regiment?

GEN ALMOND: That's right. There probably would have been a weapons battalion or weapons company as we had in the States if there had been a prospect of war. At that time there was no prospect.

CPT FERGUSSON: I see.

GEN ALMOND : The war was just over.

CPT FERGUSSON: And then your regiment in turn was part of the division which you mentioned earlier.

GEN ALMOND: That's right.

CPT FERGUSSON: What division was that, sir?

GEN ALMOND: They called it the Caribou Division or what was known as the Philippine Division.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was it spread out over a number of posts within the Philippines or was it all at Fort McKinley?

GEN ALMOND: Well, the headquarters was at Fort McKinley and the 2nd and 3rd battalions, and I commanded the 3rd battalion. A Filipino who had been educated in the States in our military schools, Major Lance, was commander of the 2nd battalion and the 1st battalion was . . . the 45th Infantry was split up into, as I said a while ago, between Baguio, the recreation area up from Manila and in the Southern Islands.. The other regiment of the Philippine Division was the 57th Infantry which was similar to the 45th but they had three battalions all on post at Fort McKinley. The artillery and also the cavalry regiment was at Fort Stotsenburg which was about 30 miles northwest of Manila.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did your battalion or your regiment ever go into the jungles or into the inner lands in pursuit of guerilla forces in those days?

GEN ALMOND: No, no, the guerilla forces had been dissipated and there were marauders in the hills that sometimes came out and stole things from the highways but the guerillas as such, were all in the Southern Islands where the troops down there frequently went out to clear up certain situations that the guerillas had caused.

CPT FERGUSSON : Those were the Filipino units going after them?

GEN ALMOND: Right. Right.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you make a general comment about your assignment in the Philippines? What aspects of your job did you consider most difficult?

GEN ALMOND: Well, the most difficult part in my command of the battalion

was that I commanded a battalion in post administratively but the whole division was consumed by administrative efforts and supply efforts for the post for about 11 months of the year. And the only time I really got full control of my battalion for maneuvers and operational training in the field was the dry season in the fall and winter which enabled me to actually train the battalion in things that I had been practicing in theory at Benning and had practiced in the war that ended in 1918. So that was a problem that was unsatisfactory because of the fact that the battalion commander was interfered with in his manipulation of his troops both from a training standpoint and from a logistical standpoint.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was the regimental commander fully aware of this problem? Did he ever try to . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, but he couldn't do anything about it.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you consider that you had a fairly routine tour then with the 45th Infantry?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I was satisfied with it. I commanded the troops and saw the problems that the troops were concerned with, both training wise and administrative wise.

CPT FERGUSSON: Again, what about your family in the Philippines? Did they find it interesting? Did you find it a good place for them?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yeah. Yes. They enjoyed it and they went to school and at that time my daughter was roughly 11½ and my son was 9½ and they attended the grade school at Fort McKinley. And many interesting activities, touring resorts in the summertime when we could get our usual leave, we went to Bagio and spent a pleasant summer playing golf

and having social parties and swimming in the lake. Bagio, incidentally, has an elevation of 7000 feet while Manila was practically sea level. So, in moving from Manila to Bagio we went from banana plants to pine trees.

CPT FERGUSSON: How were the relations between Americans and Filipino when you were there? Were there any ugly incidents of any kind of any terrorism against the white Americans?

GEN ALMOND: No, none at all. No. That was developed later since World War II to some extent. But in those days the Filipinos got along with the Americans especially the troop elements in good style.

CPT FERGUSSON: Upon completion of your tour in the Philippines, you, I believe you took your family on a trip to China, did you not?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. I left the Philippines in June and had to report to the Army War College three months later and that gave us the opportunity of spending two months in the Far East coming home changing from ship to ship. This was at our own expense, of course. And they were usually passenger ships. We went from Manila to Hong Kong and spent a week during which time we went to Macao and to Canton up the Pearl River.

SECOND SIDE

THIS IS SIDE TWO OF TAPE TWO OF THE INTERVIEWS WITH GENERAL ALMOND ON 26 MARCH 1975.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, would you continue your description of your trip to China in 1933?

GEN ALMOND: Well, we continued our visit from Hong Kong to Shanghai. At Shanghai we traveled by the passenger ship, the Coolidge I believe, and stayed three weeks there. During this time, we attended the Asiatic Horse Races, the longest bar in the world which was more than a thousand feet long and toasted to the Queen of England's birthday. We also had an opportunity to see much of the Chinese life and the foreigners who lived there. We saw the Sickaway Convent and where the famous linen cloth, linen material and napkins are made. Margaret, of course, was delighted with this opportunity to resupply her table linen and this we did. Incidentally, we made a survey from the prior departures from the Philippines going home and had them write us where they found the best things to buy from a material standpoint. We were told and found to be true that Hong Kong was the best place for jade and ivory, that Shanghai was the best place for linens and tablecloths, that Tokyo was the best place for silks and various types of household toys, and that Peking was the best for rugs and for furs. This we found to be true in practice. Going back to Shanghai after staying three weeks there and going to the Horse Races and the bars and the other entertainments, we took off on a Japanese passenger ship called the Yalu Maru, I believe, and went to Tokyo. We stayed in Tokyo three weeks and then started off for Peking and China where we stayed three weeks eventually,

and one week in Tientsin. But we put our wives and children on the transport in the Tsushima Strait and the other family with whom we were traveling, the Rogers, (Pleas Rogers and myself had been old friends at Benning) and we two took off for Manchuria and Mukden and we got as far up through the Korean peninsula as Antung, which I was to fight in years later, as the Yalu River, where we were stopped and told that the Japanese prohibited Europeans from crossing the Yalu River, so we had to return to our southern area in Korea by a train and take a boat for China and finally got to Tientsin and joined our families. From there after a weeks stay, in our case with the Boltes, later General Bolte who came to visit me in Korea as a Major General and who commanded a division in World War II -- and then was a Major in General Marshall's command, 15th Infantry in Tientsin and we went to Peking for three weeks and stayed in the Chinese Villa owned by a Chinaman who was a graduate of Harvard University in the U. S. and during that time we visited all the sights to be seen where the American troops climbed the Peking Wall in the Boxer Rebellion. We saw the Temple of Heaven and the Chinese Concrete battleship.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you go to the Great Wall of China?

GEN ALMOND: We went to the Great Wall and the last ten miles of which we had ridden on donkeys and we traveled up and down the Great Wall for a period of two hours (and the distance was a half mile to show you how broad it was and how it was built) and saw a camel train carrying coal from Mongolia into the Peking area. The camel train was the most unique specimen that we saw during this trip. This whole tour from the Philippines to back home to attend the War College was one

of the most interesting periods of our lives. Our children enjoyed it. The only difficulty we had was that our little daughter, the oldest of our children contracted dysentery due to the prevalence of flies which contaminated the food. She almost died on the return and was very weak when we arrived at San Francisco. Incidentally, we stopped in Hawaii for two days and stayed on the transport during the time in which we had taken the Taku Bar coming into China. At this time Peking was taken by the Japanese who had not only taken Manchuria but had their troops advance down the mainland from Mukden toward Peking. Later they overtook the area and captured the Peking position.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were you aware of the possibility of Japanese coming down into China at that time that you were . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, we did when we were inconvenienced in getting into Peking. And one time I decided not to go there but changed our minds because we found out that no fighting was going on. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Rogers and Margaret with our four children between us, two each, traveled on a train for a short distance in which there were Chinese soldiers and Japanese soldiers on the same train and they were very convivial and jolly and as they got to the area in which there were Chinese soldiers and Japanese soldiers on the same train and they were very convivial and jolly and as they got to the area in which their troops were located, the Japanese would get off and join their forces and the Chinese would ride on to the other side and join their forces, which was very unique, of course.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was . . . did you ever . . . were you ever suspected by either the Chinese or the Japanese of being an intelligence gathering

mission out there in Northeast China in spite of the fact that you were tourists?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, the Japanese . . . we had to pass through the customs at each of these places. The Chinese customs at Hong Kong, no, the British customs in Hong Kong, the Chinese customs in Shanghai and the Japanese customs at Yokahama where we landed. When we were having our baggage inspected, the Japanese inspector suddenly turned to me and he said, "Why so many American officers come into Japan at one time?" And I tried to explain that it was because we had a leave coming to us and we were going back from the Philippines and that we were all left in Manila at the same time going to various assignments in Japan. He looked at me askance as if he didn't believe me but he took my word for it.

CPT FERGUSSON: Well, was that the complete truth or did you have any sort of secret orders to find out what you could?

GEN ALMOND: No, we had no orders whatever and as far as our official travel was concerned all we had was permission to not come home on a transport but we could come by our own means and be in Washington to go to the War College in my case, by a certain date.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did anyone ever ask you to make a report of your observations in China?

GEN ALMOND: No, no.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, you returned to San Francisco in 1933 and then did you go on across the United States by car or did you go all the way around by ship to the east coast?

GEN ALMOND: We traveled from Taru Base China where we took the Grant transport. In returning from the Philippines, we disembarked from the Grant at San Francisco and proceeded by train to Washington in order to report on time to the War College. We had little difficulty in getting established because we found a good real estate agent that was the wife of an Army officer on duty in Washington who found us a fine home but a small one on Porter Street in the Northwest section of Washington. And close to the schools for the next five years, my children attended Woodrow Wilson school for Peggy and the John Nixon school for my son Ned.

CPT FERGUSSON: Just to return a minute to general matters in the United States. Upon your return, the United States was still suffering from the Great Depression. Of course, the depression had started really or hit when the stock market crashed in 1929 during your two years at Leavenworth. Did the depression affect you and Army officers a great deal or were you relatively secure from the economic hardships that most Americans felt at this time?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, it affected us materially. For example, when it first started we had just gotten to the Philippines and we found that the President at the time, Mr. Hoover, had decided that the Army should bear part of the depression's cost and that every Army officer, in addition to his regular leave, should take an extra month's leave without pay. We had to do that and we had to leave our duty so that it couldn't be said that we were not paid for duty performed. So, in the Philippines, the last day of our service there, we took this month's leave at the expense of a month's pay. This we resented very much. When we got to Washington, we found out that although rents

had gone down, everything was very expensive and almost beyond the scope of our ability to bear them with the pay that we received at at the time.

CPT FERGUSSON: So that your time in Washington was a hardship in that it was difficult to live on the money you made?

GEN ALMOND: That's correct.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now your tours; you attended at this time in 1933-'34 the Army War College which was then at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C. Would you . . . how would you compare the scope of this course at McNair with the two year course you had already completed at Leavenworth?

GEN ALMOND: Well, there was very little similarity between the two courses. The Army War College was designed to discuss the wars of the past and such things as political control or governmental control of nations to be either sought for or patterned after. The War College course was a great advance in intellectual pursuit of national events whereas the staff course was . . . dealt more with operation of troops. The War College courses were informative as far as different services were concerned because it had the State Department and Navy and Air Force officers as well as Army officers in its classes. And for that reason, the first couple of months of the course was devoted to the techniques of the several types of troops operation that might become of concern to either the State Department, Navy officer, Army, Marine or Air Force officer, so that they would understand the technique of the troops employed. But the employment of great forces and the government

aspects concerned was the chief objective of the Army War College.

CPT FERGUSSON: So you had an number of high level civilian guest speakers during your time there at the War College:

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes. We had the highest level we could get.

Mostly, if we could get, we would get the Cabinet Ministers; Secretary of State or his representative of a high degree; Ambassadors of the U. S. who served in various countries, particularly Britain, France and Italy and many times the representatives of those countries would be asked down to speak. The Chief of Staff always gave a talk and the Deputy Chief of Staff would do likewise at the proper times for the courses.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you . . . were you required to write any large research paper or subjective paper while you were at the War College?

GEN ALMOND: No, but I had to serve as the Chairman of a study committee on the advance of our forces from the mainland of America to the Philippine Islands using the Navy and loading them up with the necessary troops to capture important intermediate points which would be used in supply of future forces being employed in Asia or the Philippines or to support submarine or destroyer operations along that line of advance, a distance of some 7000 miles from San Francisco to the area that we were concerned with from Guam to the Polynesian Islands.

CPT FERGUSSON: So, you were developing a contingency plan in a sense?

GEN ALMOND: No, we were making a plan for across ocean operation.

CPT FERGUSSON: In the event of Japanese aggression in that part of . . .?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, or to occupy insubordinate holdings that we had in the Philippine and Guam areas.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were there a considerably larger number of Army officers at the Army War College in those days than any of the other services or the civilians?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes. The total War College class numbered about 110 persons. Eighty-five of those probably were from the Army itself. The balance were in numbers of from 3 to 5 from the State Department, the Navy Department, and Air Force which had just become a separate force in the Armed Forces.

CPT FERGUSSON: They were part of the Army at that time, though?

GEN ALMOND: The Air Force, that's right, but they were fliers and the Marine Corps.

CPT FERGUSSON: At the completion of your year's course there at Fort McNair and the Army War College, you were assigned to the General Staff of the Army in the Latin American section of the military intelligence division of the War Department General Staff in Washington. Would you generally comment upon this assignment?

GEN ALMOND: Well, it was a great honor for a graduate student of the Army War College to be selected to serve on the General Staff at the termination of his course. And I considered this an honor in my case and was very proud to be so designated. I learned that my selection had been made by people who had known me in the years before, not only for what I accomplished at the War College but for the general tone of my service. I was designated to become a member of the Intelligence Branch which was known as G-2, of course, and the

Chief of that Branch was a friend of General Marshall who was then the Chief of Staff and a friend of Colonel McCabe, our Chief. Colonel McCabe was a graduate of the University of Virginia while Marshall was a graduate of V.M.I. but they were great friends and he, McCabe, was a great admirer of V.M.I. and all its products. I was assigned to the Latin American section, although I spoke no Spanish. But the Latin American section comprised the central and southern Republics, 20 in all, and I was assigned to all except Mexico, and I found my cohort and partner in this Latin American section to be Brightling Coulter who later commanded a corps in Korea. He was a Cavalryman and I was an infantryman but we got along pretty well on the whole. Our Chief of the Intelligence Branch first was Colonel Fay Brabson, Chief of the section the first two years and the second two years I was on the staff it was Colonel and later Major General George V. Strong.

CPT FERGUSSON: I can understand your gratitude at being assigned to the general staff of the War Department but I wonder if you were really pleased to be assigned to an intelligence job. Was not intelligence in those days a sort of a dirty word or something to be avoided in staff work or was this not true at the highest level?

GEN ALMOND: It wasn't a dirty word but it was ranked below the estimate of the Army in general; it was first the G-3 Division of General staff work and, second, it was the G-4 Division of general staff work, which was both tactics first and supply second. Then the intelligence was supposed to be an intellectual effort in the Army to learn about the enemy either in battle or in peacetime, but it wasn't considered a leader towards a command as compared to G-3 or G-4 capabilities.

CPT FERGUSSON: So you were somewhat disappointed at going into this business of intelligence?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I had rather I had gone to the G-3 section which I figured I had more experience in and more knowledge and was more attached to than any other branch of general staff work. However, I accepted my assignment as I think all officers should and did the best I could with the assignment that I was given.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, sir, can you explain the nature of your work there? Were you engaged in writing estimates of what was going on in South America or were you engaged in directing intelligence collection in South America?

GEN ALMOND: I was in a section that was supposed to prepare the records of the reports of the military attaches from the various countries. These reports were divided into appropriate assignments by the military attaches into five sections. These sections were classified under the general headings of geographic, political, economic, military, and social. The custom was to keep all the records of the countries in which we had friendly relations and which included the 20 Latin American countries, including Cuba. Under these headings, the military attaches from time to time made their reports. Then once a year the Chief of the section, in my case for the 19 countries and for Mr. Coulter for the Republic of Mexico to render a general report under each of the five headings. Of course, we obtained information from other sources than the military attaches. But the military attaches were our main responsibility for gleaning information of the country concerned. Other duties were assigned to us, particularly in the event that any conflict occurred between the two

countries or from any of the countries with the United States. We would receive, classify, and analyze all the information available and furnish memorandum on the subject or a study on the subject for the benefit of the Chief of the Intelligence Branch. The Chief of the Intelligence Branch was responsible for providing for the Chief of Staff or any other staff section in the Department of the Army with classified or unclassified summary of the news at hand and periodically the Chief of Intelligence Branch rendered such a report to the Chief of Staff.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, did officers at your level ever present briefings in their own areas to the Chief of Staff directly or was it always done by the Chief of the Intelligence Division?

GEN ALMOND: Very infrequently the officer concerned would be sent for to accompany sometimes the Intelligence Chief and sometimes was directed to report to the Chief of Staff. This was a rare occurrence, however, On the other hand, if the Department of the Army had a general conference or a specific conference, either with another branch of the service like the Navy or the Air Force or the State Department, many times the specific officer in charge of the specific section of the Intelligence Branch of the Army would attend these conferences. I've attended many conferences with Mr. Sumner Wells, who was under-Secretary of State during my service on the general staff.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you said already that military attaches provided the major source of information to you of intelligence. Did you have the authority or did your function ever include directing the

military attaches to get additional information for you in those areas in which you saw a need?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes, many times. But not by direct communication with the attache. The Intelligence Branch of the War Department contained a military attache section. And if I desired any information on the Latin American countries, I would frame my question and request the military attache section Chief to communicate with the attache and obtain the desired information. This happened many times during the Chaco War, which as we recall was between Paraguay and Bolivia and finally settled during the period that I served on the general staff. Another area that we were especially concerned with was the activity and difficulty of Cuba. Colonel Batista had assumed full control in a dictatorial manner of the Cuban government and our attache there at the time, was very much in contact with the Batista regime and, therefore, gleaned much information that other countries didn't secure from the Cuban disturbances.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you ever talk with the attaches face to face when they returned to Washington or when they returned to the United States on various business? Did they ever come to you and talk to you directly?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, very frequently and I think that was a part of the Intelligence Branch from which they were dispatched, really, and that would result in the Executive Branch sending for the particular officer. For instance, Colonel Ryder had the desk on China and Major Bratton had the desk on Japan and I had the desk on Latin American countries and we would be sent for and discuss or bring the attache back to our own

office and work out the information that we desired or they desired to give us.

CPT FERGUSSON: What is your general impression of the type of officer who was serving as an attache in those days in the important countries? Were they carefully selected for their knowledge of those countries or were they officers who would likely be impressive because of their decorations or because of their physical appearance or were they . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: No, each of the officers selected were carefully selected and he was selected because he had demonstrated his ability in a language way or in an interest way, historically, to be assigned to that country. However, an intelligence officer was a matter of individual selection.

CPT FERGUSSON: Who actually made the selections of the attaches? Was it the Chief of Staff or rather the Chief of Intelligence?

GEN ALMOND: The Chief of Intelligence would be called upon by the Chief of Staff to recommend certain officers or a certain number of officers to the Chief of Staff or assignment as attache for the particular location. This assignment was never made without the agreement of the State Department who had Ambassadorial or Ministerial control of the American representatives in any country. Usually the Ambassador would agree to the selection of the War Department unless there was some specific irritable deterrent.

CPT FERGUSSON: In that time, before the Second World War, the United States had no Central Intelligence Agency, no civilian agency to collect overseas intelligence; therefore, what the military services collected overseas in addition to the reports of the Ambassadors, was primarily in a large part our picture of what was going on in the areas

of potential enemies. Now, did the attache collect intelligence in a secret manner to your knowledge or did they merely engage in overt collection?

GEN ALMOND: No, we were sure that the attache collected all the information that was available in any manner that he could that wouldn't involve the United States in any diplomatic difficulty.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would this include sometimes hiring agents to report secretly to him?

GEN ALMOND: I couldn't say categorically of specific cases, but I'm sure that happened frequently and usually.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now you've mentioned some of the officers on other desks within the military Intelligence Division including Colonel Ryder on the China desk. Do you recall the organization for Europe? Was there an officer or was there a section which was responsible for Germany at this time?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes. There was one for Germany and one for Britain and one for France and I suppose other groupings but the British desk and the French desk and the German desk were separate and fully operated entities.

CPT FERGUSSON: The period of your stay . . . of your tour in the Intelligence Division was a time of great activity in Europe. A time when Hitler was building his power in Germany and even in the latter part of your stay, was beginning his moves toward the remilitarization of the Rhineland and the move into Czechoslovakia in 1938. Do you recall a conversation with those officers who were working on the

German desk at that time and what their impressions were of the goings on?

GEN ALMOND: Of course, we in the Intelligence Branch had close inter-communications and if any event of importance occurred, especially those that were generated by Hitler and his activities, we would discuss those in a current manner. I had nothing to do with the European desks, any of them and as I indicated before, was concentrating on whatever influence that Hitler's activities had in the Latin American countries.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you see or learn of some of Hitler's activity in Latin America even before 1938?

GEN ALMOND: Well, sporadic reports of his trying to influence the world at large, of course, were evidenced in the Latin American countries, particularly Brazil, Argentina, and Chile.

CPT FERGUSSON: Can you expand on that? What sort of things were going on in those countries that were related to Hitler?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, just sporadic demonstrations of the Hitlerite fever and they would hold mass meetings and expose their views in an effort to gain more domination for Hitler.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would any of these demonstrators or groups in the countries been more aligned with Mussilini's Fascism than Hitler's Nazism or could you really tell from your vantage point?

GEN ALMOND: No, I don't recall any instances that would testify to those facts.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about in the Pacific in this period. Were you, for example, concerned about a Japanese threat? What sort of conversations

do you recall with officers who were working on the Japanese desk?

GEN ALMOND: When I returned from duty in the Philippine Islands in 1933 in coming through Tokyo, the military attache in the American Embassy was Major Rufus Bratton. He was very kind to us in showing us around the city of Tokyo and in suggesting where we go in other parts of Japan, particularly up to Nikko, which was a famous Buddhist resort. When I came back to the States and finished the War College and subsequently was assigned to the Intelligence Branch, who should be in charge of the Japanese desk except my friend Rufus Bratton. For that reason and the knowledge and interest I had in Japan and their attempts to subjugate China . . . the Japanese Empire under The Mikado was gaining a foothold not only in Manchuria but in China proper itself. And I have previously described the Chinese-Japanese soldiers of the Peking area when we visited there in 1933. Then Colonel Bratton, having been promoted and assigned to the War Department Intelligence Branch was a strong platform on which to build my changing views of Japan and its menacing domination of the Far East. We frequently concurred and Bratton felt that I was familiar enough with the area, both of China and Japan, and the Philippines to interpret his views to me and to utilize them in building up my knowledge of the Far Eastern conflict.

CPT FERGUSSON: So you had quite a few conversations with Bratton concerning the growing Japanese power? And the Japanese moves in the Pacific?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: At this point in time, in the late 1930's, would you say that you felt the greater threat to the United States interests or to a greater chance of the United States going to war in the Pacific with Japan than in having to fight Hitler on the continent of Europe, or did you see any war coming on at all? At that time?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I think the general opinion of all members of the Army, particularly those in the Intelligence Branch was wrought with the dangers that occurred or might happen in conflict with the European nations and the inability of the French, the Dutch and the British to properly coordinate to oppose Hitler's dominating encroachments. At the same time, we were all conscious of the possible threat of the Japanese, which nation had begun to dominate the East China coast and to fortify its possessions in Manchuria and in Korea as well as the Pacific Islands. There was no clear-cut difference between the threats. One was on the European coastline and one was on the China coastline.

CPT FERGUSSON: So you saw the two threats as roughly equal and you didn't really decide which; the attention was directed in both ways in those days?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, we didn't try to differentiate which was the greater threat; we knew the threat existed in both directions.

CPT FERGUSSON: You mentioned a minute ago your trip to China in 1933 in connection with your conversations in Japan with Major Bratton. I'd like to go back to that trip for a minute and ask you to give your impression of the Chinese based on that trip. Did you form a general impression of the Chinese people at that time which might have come back to have value to you later when you were fighting the Chinese?

GEN ALMOND: I think at this time in 1933, I clearly discerned the difference between the Japanese as developers of new ideas compared with all other Asiatics which was mainly Chinese of course. The Japanese were the most alert, active and progressively successful interpreters of economic development and military capabilities of any nation in the Far East. They had the ability to observe European or American customs and to imitate them successfully whereas, the Asiatic mainland interests in modernization of any industry or economic matters in general was one of opposition rather than adoption.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about militarily? What was your impression of the Chinese fighting capabilities or the Chinese soldier when you visited China?

GEN ALMOND: My regard for the Chinese soldier and the Chinese military forces was a very low one and on the contrary the demonstration of alertness and technical development of the Japanese was exactly opposite. It was very imposing and astounding, really.

CPT FERGUSSON: Returning to your years on the Latin American desk in the Military Intelligence Division, what was your impression of the United States' commitment to the Monroe Doctrine during that period in the 1930's?

GEN ALMOND: The Monroe Doctrine since its inception under President Monroe was well established foreign relations procedure on the part of the United States. We felt in G-2 that the Latin American countries thoroughly accepted the Monroe Doctrine and would join us in opposing any incursion by any foreign country of their territory.

CPT FERGUSSON: Well, what about the capabilities of the Latin American

nations to defend themselves at this time. Did any of them possess efficient Armies in your opinion or would the United States have had to get involved in almost any outside incursion in Latin America at that time?

GEN ALMOND: I doubt if anyone except with the possibility of Brazil or Argentina was able to defend themselves unaided by the United States and the dependence by these nations on the military power of the United States really fortified the Latin American allegiance and alliance with our country.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you indicated earlier that you might have preferred to serve in the G-3 section of general staff at the time you were assigned in 1934. But after you had completed your four years before you went to the Air Corps Tactical School in '38, after you worked in intelligence for those four years, did you still have that feeling or did you . . . were you glad that you had worked there?

GEN ALMOND: Well, after I accomplished the task of four years in the Intelligence Branch I was proud of my opportunity and the knowledge that I thought I had gained from the service but my allegiance and inclination has always been towards the G-3 section and that had not diminished. Because I believe in . . . I believed then and I believe now that operations is the most important step to leadership and I found that to be true in my own case.

CPT FERGUSSON: After . . . at that point, had you become an expert in Latin American affairs and were you likely later on to be tapped as an attache in one of the South American countries?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I never considered myself an expert in anything but I realized my capabilities in all directions and my weaknesses. I believe the fact that I served in the Intelligence Branch for four years was the reason that I had the opportunity to go to Moscow as a military attache although I had never been on the Russian desk, when I chose going to Japan instead after World War II. On the other hand, I was required to return to the Intelligence Branch after I finished at the Naval War College and we were about to enter the World War II. So I was required to come back to G-2 and take over the Mexican desk because the Chief of Intelligence at that time, General Sherman Miles thought that my prior service in the G-2 section in the Latin American desk was required. I left the Naval War College on the 20th of June and returned to Washington and the G-2 Division of the general staff.

CPT FERGUSSON: Of what year, sir?

GEN ALMOND: 1940. And reported to General Miles with my tongue in my cheek and I told him so. And I also exacted the promise from him that if there was no war or rebellion in Mexico in October when he feared it, that I could be assigned to field duty station with troops. Would he agree to it? (Inasmuch as I had already served four years on the general staff and felt that I needed troop duty to round out my professional capabilities.) General Miles, as it turned out later, agreed but wasn't sure that it would ever materialize. However, it did.

CPT FERGUSSON: In 1938 you went to the Air Corps Tactical school at Maxwell Field in Montgomery, Alabama. Had you requested this school? If so, why?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. I was asked for my choice of assignments when I was about to terminate my service with the general staff and Intelligence Branch and I chose Air Corps Tactical School as first choice and tried every way possible to have that choice accepted because I felt that there was a great need for ground officers understanding the capabilities and possibilities on the Air Force in support of ground operations and I never regretted this choice.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were most of the officers attending that school with you pilots, Army pilots, or were most of them ground officers like yourself, being indoctrinated into the air capability.

GEN ALMOND: Most of them were Air Force officers and that meant that most of them were pilots if not all. As a matter of fact, I was required as a student at the Air Corps Tactical School to be appointed to observer status, not a pilot but an observation distinction in the course. And for that reason I made more than ten flights over a 1000 miles each to obtain this classification as air observer.

CPT FERGUSSON: What was the nature of that course? Was it concentrating on the tactical support of ground forces or was it dealing with subjects ranging from deep bombing and interdiction to close air support?

GEN ALMOND: The course was built around three aspects of air operation. Observation, attack, and bombardment. The bombardment course was a period of the development of the B-15's and the B-26 and the B-24 bombing planes. The pursuit and attack elements were built around the P-4 to P-8 type of pursuit plane and the attack aspect of the course was the attack plane and the observation plane.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were you especially interested in which?

GEN ALMOND: In support of ground operations.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, were you satisfied at this point that the Air Corps was giving sufficient attention to close coordination with ground commanders or were you concerned that possibly problems would crop up in combat where they would be more concerned with deep interdiction?

GEN ALMOND: I think the Air Force was and has been up until the present time, more concerned with strategic air bombings and bombing operations and fighter pilot operations than it has been in supporting ground troops especially close-in support. As a matter of fact, I rose in the class one day and asked the instructor in attack aviation a question. The question was based on his statement that he made in his conference that the close support that attack aviation could give was limited to distances less than the ground forces wanted. My question was why was this so and why we didn't develop an airplane for attack purposes that could fly slower and give this close up support. And his answer was that nobody ever asked them to develop such a plane. And my response was that I will try to see that such a question is posed in the near future.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, informally.

CPT FERGUSSON: But did it have any effect?

GEN ALMOND: Very little.

CPT FERGUSSON: What did you think of the caliber of the officer in the Army Air Corps at that time? What type of individual were they on the average?

GEN ALMOND: I thought they were a fine type of airman but overly impressed with their future employment in separate operations rather than in coordinated effort to support the ground troops and to limit their main activities to the battlefield rather than strategic and distant objectives.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you say then that you left Maxwell Field at the end of that course feeling somewhat worried that the Air Corps was concentrating too much on their own favorite tactics?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I did. I was convinced of that.

CPT FERGUSSON: You went from the Air Corps Tactical School where you had received up to the minute Air Corps Doctrine to spend the following year at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, again as a student. How did you manage to receive a second year of schooling and in a different service school. Again, did you request this sort of thing?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I requested and sought every means I could with the people I knew on the general staff. This was based on the fact that I thought the Army, Navy and Air Force required understanding of each other and I wanted to be sure that I understood the method of operation and the capabilities of the Navy just as I had desired to do likewise with the Air Force, thinking that my knowledge of the Army in World War I and my service since that would enable me if I ever attained high command to utilize both the Air and the Navy with my own operations to a better advantage.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was this uncommon in those days for an officer to go both, having already gone to the War College, to go to the Air Force School and also to the Navy War College?

GEN ALMOND: I don't know of any other person who has done it.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were there any that went to the Army and to the Navy War Colleges that you know of in those days?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes. Admiral Halsey is an example. Admiral Halsey was a classmate of mine at the Army War College. He had been a graduate of the Naval War College before he went there.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the Naval War College? How was their course set up and what did you get out of that course at Newport?

GEN ALMOND: Well, what I got out of the course was the fact that the Navy was trying to do with their Naval officers in a staff way and in a Naval service troop way the same thing that the Army was trying to do. They were trying to improve the intelligence and the understanding of their own officers first and to gain as much general information as they could of other services at the same time imparting such information to members of the State Department and the Army and the Air Force. In the case of the Naval War College, I found members of the State Department, the Navy and the Army at the Maxwell Field Air instruction courses.

CPT FERGUSSON: What was the rank of most of the officers attending the Naval War College at that time? Were they commanders and captains in the Navy or . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, they ranged all the way from captain down to lieutenant commander. And in my own case as an Army officer, I was a major.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the Air Corps Tactical School? Had those all been field grade officers attending that course or were some of them captains?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, most of the Air Force officers were captains and pilots.

CPT FERGUSSON: How was your year at Newport? Was it a pleasant . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: A very profitable one and I gained many acquaintances with whom I served in World War II.

CPT FERGUSSON: In the Navy sir?

GEN ALMOND: In the Navy.

CPT FERGUSSON: Who for example?

GEN ALMOND: Well, Admiral Hall was a Captain in the Navy at the time I was a student at the Naval War College and he turned up to be the Assistant Amphibious Commander of the force that took Patton to World War II and Casablanca in Africa. Another instance of friendship I made with a Naval officer of some distinction was Admiral Halsey. I had been a student with Admiral Halsey at the Army War College in 1933 and '34 and Admiral Halsey then went back to Naval duty mostly to sea duty and the next time he turned up was in the Pacific War as one of the major fleet commanders under Admiral Nimitz. When the War in the Pacific was over I had correspondence with Admiral Halsey concerning my grandson who was with me in Tokyo. Admiral Halsey had made the threat during the Pacific War that if he ever got to Tokyo he was going to ride the Emperor's White Horse. When I got to Tokyo after the War had terminated I carried with my dependents, my grandson, Tom Galloway, then four years of age. During the early part of my tour a friend of mind came over to visit GHQ Tokyo from the Department of the Army. His name was General Thomas Handy who was Vice Chief of Staff. Among the other things he wanted to see in the occupation was where the Emperor lived and his famous

stables and White Horse that he used to appear in the parades in Tokyo. We went to see the Emperor's White Horse named First Snow and General Handy had a picture taken with my grandson astride the horse. It occurred to me to kid Admiral Halsey a little bit so I wrote him a letter and said "during the war in the Pacific you threatened to ride the Emperor's White Horse when you got to Tokyo. Here is a fellow, my grandson, who did in this picture that I enclose. Come over and do likewise." I never expected to hear from Admiral Halsey but sure enough I did. He remembered the old days at the War College of the Army with me. He said, "I'm glad to receive your picture and see your grandson astride First Snow. Tell him he can have him, I want none of him."

CPT FERGUSSON: At the Naval War College, General Almond, in 1939 - 1940, was there a great amount of instruction on amphibious operations combined Army and Navy or Marine-Navy operations or did the Navy concentrate more on aircraft carrier operations, surface battles at sea, submarine warfare. What did occur; do you recall the orientation of the course?

GEN ALMOND: Well, the course at the Naval War College was based around Naval operations and Naval engagements rather than amphibious operations, although they had a course in "amphibious operations conducted by Marines senior officers and was composed of a fair description and including moving operations and amphibious landings that was informative and instructive. However, the Navy concentrated on ship operations and coordination with Naval Air as well as Air Force efforts from the Army. At that time, the Army Air Force was the only Air we had which did any air fighting or especially strategic bombing.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you compare the Naval War College with the Army War College? Was the Naval War College course as strategically oriented as had the Army War College course at Fort McNair?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, if anything, more so. Because the Navy concentrated on strategic operations of Naval forces whereas the Army made less reference to them and did more with the coordination of the Armed Forces.

CPT FERGUSSON: After you completed the Naval War College at Newport, you returned as you've already said, to your old post in the Latin American section for five more months. You've already mentioned your . . . the deal you made with your boss if there was no revolution in Mexico in October of 1940, you would gain release from your duties there. Would you comment at all on this five months? Would you have any comments on the five months that you spent again back at the Latin American desk?

GEN ALMOND: Well, from June to October I observed carefully and made frequent periodic reports to General Miles, my Chief about the dissatisfaction of the Mexican populace in general and the possibilities of a revolution. This revolution never occurred and the moment that the election of a new President was over I began to determine how I could get troop duty assignment. It just happened at this time Colonel Charles Ryder who had been in charge of the Chinese desk, as I referred to before, was selected to be Chief of Staff of the newly formed (on paper, as to this date) VI Corps which would have its headquarters at Providence, Rhode Island. Colonel Ryder left the G-2 section for Providence just before Christmas and one night called me to say that he knew that I wanted to go to troop duty and he thought the best way to follow that

course was to come with his staff in the VI Corps being formed effective 1st of January 1941.

CPT FERGUSSON: So in January of 1941, you did move to Providence, Rhode Island, where you became the G-3 of the VI Corps?

GEN ALMOND: That's correct. And I served until the following spring.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you seek assignment to the VI Corps at the time in the late 1940's believing that war was coming on very soon and that you wanted to be with troops?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I did and, as a matter of fact. The reason why the VI Corps and other Corps were being organized was because the War Department as a whole felt that war was imminent and our troops should have more and better organization in higher units so that maneuvers and practical training could be indulged in. I also felt that by detaching myself from the staff duty in Washington and getting out with the Corps in the field would promote my desire which was uppermost in my mind of troop duty and the exercise of leadership rather than staff duty which I had been engaged in for the last five years and three years of schooling, none of which contributed to familiarization with military operations in wartime.

CPT FERGUSSON: In the spring of 1940, just as you were finishing at the Naval War College and about the time you were returning to the Latin American Division, the German Armies had invaded the Low Countries and brought about the defeat of the French. What do you recall about your feelings at that time. Did you see the United States coming into the War or did you feel any regrets at our isolationist policy in which we attempted to stay out of the European conflict?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I felt as I think most well advised Army officers did, as well as other branches of our military service, that the Germans were gaining a hold that unless you jar loose at an early date would Nazify the whole of western Europe and the British Empire. We all felt that we were eventually going to be involved in the war through Hitler's aggressive accomplishments and requirements and that the sooner that we got in the better. At that time, the President, our President Roosevelt, was doing everything he could to aid the British sub-rosa, which we all knew. And it was just a question of convincing the public at large in our country that our interests lay with the Allies rather than to be . . . continue to be neutral.

CPT FERGUSSON: You say that we wanted to get involved--that you would have preferred for us to get into the War immediately or as soon as possible at that time but yet was the American Army and the American Armed Forces generally, really prepared for war? Weren't they still suffering under the financial restrictions, under the budgetary restrictions that had been prevalent ever since the First World War? Wasn't the Army still very small at that time?

GEN ALMOND: They were but we felt that by our taking a definite side with the Allies that at least we could logistically support them until we felt that we were able to send troop formations that could reinforce their field forces then in operation.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you think England would survive after the fall of France?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I'm not sure what I thought about at the time. All I felt was that they needed our support. At Dunkirk it happened, you know and that put the British at the mercy of Hitler's Air action at least.

CPT FERGUSSON: When you arrived at the VI Corps, who was the commanding general of the Corps at that time?

GEN ALMOND: The Commander of the VI Corps I knew by reputation and soon learned by intimate association was a very capable Major General Karl Truesdell.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you make any general comments about the VI Corps and your duties there, first as G-3 and then after January 1942 as Chief of Staff?

GEN ALMOND: Well, the two principal units of the VI Corps was the 1st Division at Fort Devens and the 26th Division in the Boston area which was National Guard. We had some artillery units, heavy units down to mobile field units and some railway artillery. These units were stationed at various places throughout the New England states. For instance, a cavalry regiment, the 101st Cavalry Regiment was a New York National Guard unit. The heavy artillery, the railway artillery, coastal defense was a coast artillery unit which was established at a camp in Southern New Hampshire. Some of our units were over in Vermont and these scattered units, including the two divisions that I mentioned; all were woefully weak in basic training and in small field operations. My job was to design, to inspect the units that composed VI Corps, to develop a training schedule that would assure their reasonably practical operations in the field from a technical standpoint and then to design maneuvers which would test their capabilities on the battlefield.

CPT FERGUSSON: As the G-3, sir, what was your relationship with the commanding general of the Corps?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I operated with the G-3 section and made reports weekly and sometimes daily to the Corps Commander but always through the Chief of Staff, Colonel Ryder.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you get along fine with Colonel Ryder?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes, he was one of my great friends and associates at Benning, at Leavenworth, and on the War Department General Staff. I had known Ryder always. He was in the same class at West Point that I was in V.M.I. in 1915.

CPT FERGUSSON: Colonel Charles W. Ryder.

GEN ALMOND: Colonel Charles Ryder, class of 1915 at West Point and a classmate of Eisenhower.

CPT FERGUSSON: You said the VI Corps was not in very good shape when you joined the staff in January of 1941. What sort of shape was the Corps in by the time of Pearl Harbor in December of 1941?

GEN ALMOND: Well, it's not that it wasn't in good shape; it had just been organized and had been assigned these units that weren't in good shape. The VI Corps was a brand new organization and its effort was to improve the units to the practical standpoint of operation effectively that concerned our staff. We worked hard at it and after the technical improvement was noticed we began to maneuver in the field. We conducted a maneuver in August which employed the 26th Division, a four regiment division at the time and the 101st cavalry regiment from New York which was a Negro regiment and some other artillery units making the field force very effective. The 1st Division was also a member of this New England maneuver group of August. Later in September we moved by truck many units from the New England area to the Carolina maneuvers which

took place in November and it was on the return troop movement period that Pearl Harbor occurred, which catapulted us into the war and made the training of the VI Corps more effective and more important than it had been previously, of course.

CPT FERGUSSON: What happened in January 1942 for the opening at the Chief of Staff position, what happened to Colonel Ryder and why did you then move to the Chief of Staff?

GENERAL ALMOND: Colonel Ryder had been made a Brigadier General just after Pearl Harbor and had been transferred to the 90th Division on the West Coast. That left the vacancy of the Chief of Staff of the VI Corps to which I was promptly appointed.

CPT FERGUSSON: After the time of Pearl Harbor, once we had entered the war, did you feel at that time that you would rather be in a unit that was more likely to go overseas quickly or were you happy to be where you were. Did you want a command of troops at that point?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I had always sought a command as I mentioned heretofore, several times when I was on the War Department General Staff on my return from the Philippines and the War College. Even though I was appointed Chief of Staff of the VI Corps, my desire was still . . . assignment with troops with the hope that I would get to be a battle-field leader and be transferred to wherever the war was being fought.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, in view of the fact that you received promotion to the rank of full Colonel in October, 1941, serving with the VI Corps and then rank of Brigadier General in March 1942 just as you were leaving Providence, do you consider your duty with the VI Corps as a

stepping stone to high rank and responsibility during World War II?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I do. The Staff of General McNair and the ground forces in Washington were in the Army War College building there in the City of Washington. Two of the friends that I had in previous years were Mark Clark, Chief of Staff to General McNair and Lloyd Brown, G-3 of the Army ground force staff. Both of these officers observed me in my operations in G-3 of the VI Corps in the New England maneuvers in August and the Carolina maneuvers in November. I think their observation of my planning and conducting these courses convinced them that I had the capabilities of being promoted. Therefore, when I was made a Brigadier General I was immediately assigned to the 93rd Division then in training at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and ordered to Fort Benning for a three weeks' course in general officers' duty and troop development.

CPT FERGUSSON: So you went to join after this short course, you went to join the 93rd Division which was training in Arizona in March of 1942?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: As Assistant Division Commander? You were with the 93rd Division for exactly how long, sir?

GEN ALMOND: I was with the 93rd Division from approximately the 1st of April to the 1st of September of that year.

CPT FERGUSSON: And all that time, you were at Fort Huachuca?

GEN ALMOND: Right.

CPT FERGUSSON: Who was the Division Commander of the 93rd at that time?

GEN ALMOND: General Charles P. Hall.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you wish to make any comment at all on the 93rd Division and what you were doing at Huachuca at that time?

GEN ALMOND: Well, we were engaged in small unit training.

CPT FERGUSSON: How long had the 93rd already been activated? How long before your arrival there had they been activated and what sort of shape were they in?

GEN ALMOND: Well, they had been activated the previous fall and probably had been in training, assembling and training from a cadre to a full development of the division for six months. When I arrived there, my job was to concentrate on the development of the three regiments as operational tactical wise in the field and many administrative problems of special character that occurred such as minor courts and inspections and equipment, resupply and remodeling and reconditioning.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did your family accompany you to Fort Huachuca at that time?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: Following a short period during which you were assistant Division Commander of the 93rd, you were named to Command the 92nd Infantry Division which was being activated at Fort McClellan, Alabama, in October of 1942. Did General Marshall, then Chief of Staff of the Army personally select you to command the 92nd and, if so, why?

GEN ALMOND: I really think that my name was initially put on the selection list for Division Commander for the newly-to-be organized 92nd Division by my friend Lloyd Brown, G-3 of the Army ground forces. I'm sure that General McNair and General Clark who had seen me in operation, staff operations of the VI Corps, agreed to that. I believe that this recommendation came from the Ground Forces to General Marshall's desk and that General Marshall, remembering our service together and his personal knowledge of my instructorship at Fort Benning years before,

was the culminating point in General Marshall's approval of the new Division Commander for the 92nd Division.

CPT FERGUSSON: It has sometimes been said that you were selected for this command partly because you were a southerner. Is there any truth in that?

GEN ALMOND: I think that General Marshall felt that General Hall, who was in Command of the 93rd Division when I was Assistant Division Commander and was from Mississippi, understood the characteristic of the Negro and his habits and inclinations. The artilleryman at that time was General William Spence from North Carolina as I recall, who also had that understanding and I being from Virginia had an understanding of southern customs and Negro capabilities; the attitudes of Negroes in relationship thereto. I think that my selection for the 93rd and 92nd Divisions was of the same character.

CPT FERGUSSON: Whether it was deserved or not, the 92nd Division had emerged from World War I with a reputation for failure. When it was announced that the 92nd was to be activated again for duty in World War II, quote: "There was" unquote (I'm quoting from Major Paul Goodman's Fragment of Victory) quote: "An air of expectant failure in some circles, mixed with a hope for success in others." Unquote. What were your own feelings at the time about becoming the 92nd's Commander?

GEN ALMOND: I knew of the failures of the 93rd and the 92nd Divisions in World War I. I was unable to find in any library a description of the type of failure, the nature of the exercise that was being criticized or the result thereof. I found lots of opinion by people who wrote off hand reports of the 92nd's World War I exploits but nothing was

definite enough. Therefore, I decided not to make my mind up in any direction until I saw for my own satisfaction the capabilities of the components of the 92nd Division and I advised my officers to do likewise. My main theme announced repeatedly was that if we work hard enough we can accomplish anything and don't admit failure before you try to succeed.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you make any attempt at that time of your assignment as Commander of the 92nd to get another assignment?

GEN ALMOND: No, I did not.

CPT FERGUSSON: When the 92nd was activated, a cadre of 128 officers and 1200 enlisted men were taken from the 93rd Division, also a Negro Division. Did you have much choice in the men, particularly the key officers provided by the 93rd at this time?

GEN ALMOND: No, I had no choice in selecting my cadres of enlisted men or officers except my Division Chief of Staff and key staff officers. I selected those from the Army at large and then later, had to take them as they came.

CPT FERGUSSON: With major portions of the division scattered about the U.S. in three training camps, in Indiana, Kentucky and Arkansas, in addition to the headquarters and remaining units at Fort McClellan, the 92nd conducted its individual training program from November 1942 until April 1943 at which time the entire division moved to Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Unit training began at Huachuca and continued until the division participated in the Louisiana maneuvers in February until April 1944. After several additional months of intensive training at Huachuca, the 92nd Division began to deploy overseas until July 1944.

Whereas normal Army plans call for a newly activated division to be trained and ready for combat, ten to twelve months after activation the 92nd Division training period lasted over 19 months. Is there an explanation for this? Would you comment, generally on the training of the 92nd and some of the problems you encountered?

GEN ALMOND: My comments are very general. We took longer than the average division for the training period prior to entry into combat because it took longer for the instructor to secure a sink-in result in any instruction that we offered. Rifle marksmanship, for example, required three to four times as much ammunition quote, "For instruction practice," unquote, before we went to record practice and consequently more time in combat firing was required than we should have for men but we stuck to our job until we were declared reasonably prepared and completing each course in its turn until the XVIII Corps Commander, Major General Morris, who was the same inspector that I had at Marion Institute, Alabama, many years earlier, had brought a testing team to Fort Huachuca to give us our rating prior to our entrance into the Louisiana maneuvers in Louisiana maneuvers in April, 1944. The men of the division being largely illiterate or class 4 in intelligence, took longer about the training than anything and more effort on the part of the instructors to get across the lesson being taught.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, if you had it to do over again, would you have done anything different as Division Commander in this training period of the 92nd, could you have done anything different to improve upon the training that they received?

GEN ALMOND: No, I would have done over again what we did in our method of training at Fort Huachuca and then later on in the Louisiana maneuvers.

CPT FERGUSSON: During the Louisiana maneuvers which were in the spring of 1944, several officers from the War Department informed you of a decision to send one combat team, one regimental size combat team of the division overseas alone, individually. Evidently you were very much opposed to this and made your views known at the time. You insisted that the entire 92nd Division be sent overseas and the War Department then modified their decision. Combat team 370 would be sent in advance but the rest of the division would follow. What were your reasons for so resolutely opposing the War Department on this issue?

GEN ALMOND: Primarily because I had promised all my officers, especially the senior ones, that their most energetic efforts were required on this job and not fail to use true efforts and it would not be in vain as some of them believed. I said that I would do everything I could to see that they went overseas and into a combat area and I think I convinced them of this fact and got better service from the drill masters and executives controllers of the division as a whole. I told this to General McNair, our combat ground Commander, when he visited us at the Louisiana maneuvers and I learned that the plan was to split up the 92nd and I said to him, quote, "General, you can't let me down on this purpose. I promised these officers and I have tried too hard to do a good job and so have they and I promised them if they stood behind me, I would stand behind them." General McNair said, "I'll see what I can do."

CPT FERGUSSON: And so you think you convinced them at that time?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. However, before the first unit, the 370 combat team that you have mentioned departed Fort Huachuca for Italy in June 1944, General Marshall himself came to Fort Huachuca to inspect the 370 CT and he spent the night in my quarters.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you describe General Marshall's visit, sir?

GEN ALMOND: Well, General Marshall arrived at Fort Huachuca secretly in his plane and accompanied only by his aide at six o'clock one afternoon and the next morning at seven o'clock after spending the night in my quarters, General Marshall appeared with me for the review of the entire 370 combat team which, of course, included the regiment itself, an artillery battalion and some signal and medical and quartermaster units which would go with the combat team to make it a complete field unit.

CPT FERGUSSON: What were General Marshall's comments to you about the readiness of the 370 combat team?

GEN ALMOND: He was very brief and when the review was finished and he was moving to his plane to take off at nine o'clock as he had another scheduled appointment, later in the day elsewhere he turned to me and said, "I think they are all right. Go ahead."

CPT FERGUSSON: General Marshall was not the only high level visitor from Washington to come down to Fort Huachuca during your training period with the 92nd there. Brigadier General Benjamin O. Davis, Deputy Inspector General of the Army, visited the 92nd Division at Fort Huachuca in the summer of 1943. In his report of his visit, he noted evidence of decline in morale and a growth of dissatisfaction and resentment within the division as evidenced by stoning of officers riding

through enlisted areas, an "unusual number of men in confinement, various other evidences. Can you comment on this, General Almond?" (Quote)

GEN ALMOND: Yes, very definitely. The officers' strength of a division in total is about 700 men. When the 92nd Division was first formed all our officers were white officers and this continued in the early days of the training of the 92nd Division. Upon our arrival at Fort Huachuca in the spring of 1943, from four different stations in the east we received an order from the War Department that every thirty days, 30 Negro lieutenants would arrive or captains would arrive for replacements and 30 white lieutenants or captains would be released. This changed, however, in several months; the officer personnel from roughly 700 white officers to roughly 400 white officers and 300 Negro officers of low rank, usually 1st and 2nd lieutenants and a few captains. When these officers began to settle in their duties in the division, we perceptibly realized a change in the attitude of the enlisted men toward the authority and discipline that was required. Many Negro officers were of low caliber and inexperienced. For example, one with whom I talked shortly after his arrival from a three months' course at Fort Benning or some other officer candidate school had grown up as a boot black.

# Section 3

## INTERVIEW WITH LTG EDWARD M. ALMOND

THIS IS SIDE ONE OF TAPE THREE OF THE INTERVIEWS WITH LTG EDWARD M. ALMOND. INTERVIEWER: CAPTAIN THOMAS G. FERGUSON, CGSS STUDENT, THE DATE: MARCH 27, 1975. INTERVIEW IS BEING CONDUCTED AT GENERAL ALMOND'S HOME IN ANNISTON, ALABAMA.

LTG ALMOND: I asked this officer what he had done before he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army. He said, "I ran a boot-black stand." I asked him his degree of education, and as I recall it, he had never been higher than high school. This was the type of replacement that we were getting for what had been effective white lieutenants and which we were giving up at the rate of 30 each month, over the summer of 1943. The average person cannot understand the drop in the capabilities of our instructing staff and attitude of undisciplined men towards observing discipline.

CPT FERGUSON: Isn't it true, though, General Almond, that you did not feel the Division's morale to be as much of a problem as General Davis did? You didn't see it the same way he did at the time, and you made these views known to the Inspector General of the Army, General Peterson?

LTG ALMOND: General Davis, the Assistant Inspector General was sent to Fort Huachuca to look into, as Inspector Generals should do always, a report that there was a depreciation of morale, and effectiveness of training, in the 92nd Division as reported by, usually the Negro press of Chicago, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Norfolk, Virginia. These reports indicated gross disorder at Fort Huachuca especially in the 92nd Division area. Now, I disagreed with that report of General Davis, because his opinion was based upon the specific cases of men then under trial or investigation for flagrant breeches in discipline. As a matter of fact,

when General Davis visited at Fort Huachuca at a time in '43, I had three Negro officers in jail, all for gross departures from what was commonly understood as discipline in the Army up to this time. A Negro lieutenant was put on officer of the day for his company area on Saturday afternoon, and within an hour of his having been given this assignment, he went AWOL to Tuscon, Arizona. Another case was the one of an officer being arrested at his quarters and confined to his quarters bedroom, the mess hall, and the latrines. The officer of the day, a white major on OD duty, was inspecting this particular individual as to his observance to restriction to barracks. He found him out of barracks and in a different place. He said, "Lieutenant, get back to your quarters." The Negro replied in a form that had never been heard by any of my senior officers before. These were his words, "I'm not out of quaters, you sonofabitch. Now hit me." The colonel of the regiment, the 370, reported this fact to me immediately and asked what he should do. I said, "For such a breech of discipline and disrespect that has been exhibited there, put him in the guardhouse." When this happened, Mrs. Roosevelt, the wife of the President, who was very alert to Negro complaints, sent an individual in the War Department to investigate this particular incident. General Davis came to Fort Huachuca and this among other cases, formed his opinion on the morale of the Division. My reply was that discipline was going to be maintained if the division ever got any further than the port of embarkation towards the war. And this was my purpose in putting this individual in jail, under guard, where he could not roam around the terrain until his trial came into effect. Although General Davis in our conversations appeared

sympathetic to my problems, his report didn't indicate such an attitude.

CPT FERGUSSON: While General Davis did have an opinion that the morale of the 92nd Division was low, at the same time, he did write in his report "There were no complaints or reports of racial discrimination." He also, in talking about you in his report said, "General Almond was held in highest respect by all officers. The colored officers were especially profuse in their praise of him for his fairness, and deep concern for the advancement and welfare. He had, on all occasions, shown a personal interest, even in their comforts and entertainment." He added also, in another section of his report, that General Almond "appeared to be an able officer" and his belief that now, "since he is well aware of the situation, and because of the fact, that in all cases, on fairness or misconduct, involving racial issues, he has taken remedial action, action will be taken to remove the causes of unrest." Now, did you have to take disciplinary action with white officers who were discriminating against Negroes? Do you feel that there were problems in that area as well?

LTC ALMOND: Yes, and I'll illustrate that by a special example, which has just come to mind. The Negro corporal in one of the artillery battalions, was on duty one night when a drunken soldier came into barracks. This soldier was especially obnoxious towards the Negro Corporal of the Guard, and abused him in indecent and foul language. The Corporal marched to the rear and awakened a white lieutenant, who was the Officer of the Guard that night, and told of the abuse, coming in drunk. When the white officer appeared, the drunkard was still there and they happened to be in the recreation room, when the white officer entered. The Negro, seeing the

white officer come in, made a lunge toward him and the white officer grabbed a pool cue and hit him over the head and knocked him out. This was reported to me the next day and as Division Commander, I ordered an investigation of the white officer for taking undue forceful action against the Negro who had by then recovered, but of course, sore from the attack. This was an unreasonable attitude of the white officer. I realized it, and I realized that it should be punished. The lieutenant was punished for not acting properly, even though he was under attack by the Negro. Such things of this are examples of my effort to act against white officers as well as Negro officers if they were in the wrong.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you consider opportunities for promotion among Negro enlisted men and officers in the division to be equal to white soldiers elsewhere? In other words, was a capable Negro able to get promoted, if he showed promise?

LTC ALMOND: Of course, and they were promoted. My only requirement was whether or not the person to be promoted was capable of performing his duties as he had demonstrated, and was he capable for advanced ranks.

CPT FERGUSSON: What sort of a place was Fort Huachuca for training a division for going overseas? Was it a good training area, in your opinion?

LTC ALMOND: It was a good training area because there was plenty of space and although it was hot and dry usually, there was little rain and little interference with scheduled operations.

CPT FERGUSSON: Could you discuss briefly your division staff - the primary members of the staff which you had in training and which went on with you

into combat in Italy.

LTG ALMOND: My staff was a very capable one. The Chief of Staff was Colonel Frank Barber, born in Boston, Massachusetts, a long-time friend of mine and instructor of the Infantry School in my days there. Colonel Barber was a very meticulous and capable administrator and took much of the load of administrative routine off of my shoulders as a division commander, which allowed me to get out with the troops, which I did - daily - and as long during each day as possible. My G-3 was Colonel Rawl, later promoted several ranks during the war. My assistant G-3 was Lieutenant, now Lieutenant General, retired, William J. McCaffrey. And other staff officers were of equal capabilities.

CPT FERGUSSON: After you had the final intensive period of training, following your return from the Louisiana Maneuvers, in the spring of 1944, the 370 Combat Team moved to Hampton Roads and sailed in July of 1944. The remainder of the 92nd Division followed in stages during September. In spite of your recommendation to the contrary, the War Department ordered that some 850 men, known to be unfit for combat, be taken overseas with the 92nd. What explanation can you offer for the War Department overruling you on this matter?

LTG ALMOND: Well, early in our training, both in the East and at Fort Huachuca, all unit and battalion and higher commanders discerned a tendency in a number of individuals in their units to skip drill or fall out during the day at different drill periods, with the excuse of some ailment or sickness. We would have these individuals report to the regimental medical officers or to the station hospital if it seemed urgent, but in

every case, to a medical officer. In most cases, the doctors could find nothing wrong with these men. This increased within several months, or after we arrived at Fort Huachuca, to an extent which we considered very excessive, 10 or 15 men in each company, claiming "sickness or pains" that could not be proved by a doctor. We decided as a last resort to put these men in a special camp which we called the 92nd Division Casual Camp. And they stayed there for training until they met the requirements of time. They became worse and more were declared to be malingerers by the doctors. At one time we had about 1100 men in this camp at Fort Huachuca and when the 92nd Division was ordered overseas, we had some 800 or 900 men in this camp. None were sent with the first unit, the combat team 370. As the other units prepared to depart from Fort Huachuca we reported these "casuals" as unfit for combat duty in a war zone. The message came back from the War Department, "Unless the doctors can find a medical reason for these men not being sent overseas, then we will have to take them overseas." I protested taking malingerers to the combat area. I made an air trip to Washington to protest to the War Department itself, and to the Chief of Staff, General Marshall. General Marshall was not there, but I saw LTG McNarney, Vice Chief of Staff, whom I had known when I was a student there at the War College, and he gave me the same answer that the War Department had sent me. And he would not change it. So, I said to McNarney, "Very well, I can do nothing except comply with this order and take them to the War Zone. But I promise you if I am still in command of the 92nd Division, they will never get into my

combat area." General McNarney, an Engineer, laughed at me. What he did not know was that in 2 months, he would be the Italian Theater Commander in Italy, of the whole force. So, we took these malingerers to Naples, Italy and put them in a casual camp in Naples. Then we reported their location to General Joseph McNarney and I told him personally, "They are yours, you sent them over here." He laughed again, but when I got to the 92nd sector, in the 5th Army front, he sent a Major General, my old friend, Jimmy Janes to Viareggio and to my combat CP to tell me I would take these men into my area. I told General Janes the history of this case and ended thus, "Tell General McNarney my story and then I hope he will change his mind, but if not, to relieve me from command because I will not command such men in battle." That's the last I heard of it. I relate this episode because it is illustrative of the position a high commander must take when he is convinced of the right of his position.

CPT FERGUSSON: Returning to the movement of the 92nd Division overseas, the 370 Combat Team departed first in the middle of the summer of 1944. Had you and your staff selected men for the 370th with the idea of making it the best of the three regiments, and therefore, likely to perform well in combat on its arrival in Italy? Or was it merely one of the three regiments?

LTC ALMOND: At the time we selected 370, for the first element of the 92nd to go to a war zone, it was the opinion of me and my staff that it was the best commanded and the best staffed and probably was more fit for early injection into the combat area than any other unit in the division. That's why we selected the combat team 370 to be the first to leave Huachuca.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the entire division at the time the division left Huachuca? Did you think at that point that they had a good chance of performing well in combat, or were you still somewhat apprehensive about them?

LTG ALMOND: I was uncertain as to what the result would be on entering into combat. All we could do was think that they had been trained for 19 months as we mentioned before, compared to 12 months for a white division, that they had adequate equipment and complete equipment, that they knew how to handle it, but we did not know with what their moral attitude toward the battle would be and this we had to learn after the test was made.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you feel that at the time of their departure, for Italy, the morale of the division was given a boost by the fact that they were going overseas, that they were going to fight?

LTG ALMOND : I hope so. But, I was not sure and all I could do was to hope.

CPT FERGUSSON: What were your commanders, your regimental commanders, telling you at that point, were they pessimistic, or . . . ?

LTG ALMOND : Oh, yes, they were satisfied that the training had been complete and the training staff of the XVIII Army Corps so testified. As to their marching ability, their deployment ability, the utilization of their weapons, their strength to command what they controlled, the only thing we were uncertain about was the moral attitude towards the battlefield.

CPT FERGUSSON: The 370 Combat Team arrived in Italy in late August, 1944.

and was attached by the IV Corps of the Fifth United States Army to the 1st Armored Division. Its battle indoctrination began along the Arno River in the Pontedera area near Pisa, during which it was attached to Combat Command A, 1st Armored Division. Between the 24th of August and the 5th of October, CT 370 advanced about 30 miles against a relatively light resistance. In October, as a major combat element of newly formed Task Force 92, CT 370 was directed by IV Corps to attack from its position in the Ligurian coastal sector west of the Serchio Valley north to seize Massa. Confronted for the first time since its arrival in Italy with determined German resistance, Task Force 92 netted a gain of only 8,000 yards in 6 days and failed to seize its objectives while sustaining over 400 casualties. General Almond, would you comment on the performance of the 370 in this initial period before you arrived in Italy, or at least before the 92nd Division had arrived and you had taken command of the Division in Italy. It did relatively well, as I said, in the initial phase, and then when it was given the order to attack, against resistance, to seize Massa, it bogged down and had considerable trouble. Were you in Italy at that time? And, if so, what are your general comments about the 370th operating independently before the 92nd arrived en masse?

LTG ALMOND: The operations that you have just described are historically correct and the failure to advance in the 92nd Task Force Operation indicates that the 92nd Division was woefully weak on the offensive, particularly in view of the 370th Combat Team after its experience in August fighting along the Arno River and later when TF 92 involving the 366th Infantry, which was the 4th Regiment when attached to the 92nd Division

had been physically in separate depots duty in southern Italy. This regiment was not capable of a combat offense, to a satisfactory degree. One explanation of the failure to advance and hold the advance position, was the fact that Task Force 92 was attacking against the high ground of the Apennine Mountain whereas from the Arno River and along the Arno River the advance that they had made was on more even terrain and not so easily defended by the enemy. The enemy withdrew to the position that was TF 92 attack area, as you described it, and were in a stronger position to repel in advance.

CPT FERGUSSON: During October and early November, the rest of the 92nd Division arrived in Italy and by 10 November 1944 the entire division was deployed against the enemy. Although many local attacks with limited objectives were made from time to time, the division's mission throughout the winter was primarily one of defense and the protection of the Fifth Army's left flank. Exactly when did you arrive in Italy and what are your comments about the winter period of the 92nd Division in Italy?

LTC ALMOND: Well, I had departed from the United States while the entire Division, except the CT 370 was in the process of either moving overseas or getting to the port of embarkation. I did not take command of the division, until it was settled in Italy. On 6 November, 1944, the 92nd Division came out of the direct control of the Fifth Army and Task Force 92 no longer existed. However, by the 1st of November, I was in the Arno-Florence area of the Fifth Army and began to observe the activity of my units which were under command other than mine. I had no staff to assist me (my staff officers were en route from the United States to the

combat area). Therefore, my efforts were to make the assembly easier by detecting needed correction. As a matter of fact, my division was entirely deployed against the enemy by 10 November. While I had assumed command of Task Force 92 by 5 October, that was a force of Fifth Army troops of various descriptions and the 370th Combat Team. This area in which the division was being assembled and deployed out of the IV Corps was a front extended from the sea to the boundary of the 107th AAA Group. And also, the open mountain area between Borgo-Monzzano and Bangni Di Lucca. Also, between the general areas of Pisa and Florence.

CPT FERGUSSON: Where was your headquarters, initially, sir?

LTG ALMOND: Viareggio.

CPT FERGUSSON: And how long did it remain there?

LTG ALMOND: My headquarters remained at Viareggio throughout the winter months and until the April 7th attack in the spring of 1945.

CPT FERGUSSON: At what point did you acquire the additional regiment, the Negro regiment, the 366th, which was composed of former anti-aircraft troops?

LTG ALMOND: The 366th Infantry, a regiment of organized reserved, arrived in Italy in 1944 in May for air base guard duty. It was split up in a number of units that served in southern Italy. However, in November the Fifth Army was trying to establish a greater strength in the II Corps area north of the Fista USA Pass, and had decided to move the 366th Regimental Combat Team into that area. The 366th Infantry arrived in the 92nd Division area early in November, and was assigned to a location between there and the vicinity of Pietrasanta and operated along the Cinghiale

Canal as far west as the coast of the Mediterranean along the Apennine area.

CPT FERGUSSON: How did you find the 366th to be in comparison to your other regiments, your original regiments of the 92nd?

LTG ALMOND: I found them to be less capable of carrying out instructions which involved the movement of troops in a defensive line and especially in offensive operations.

CPT FERGUSSON: Up to this point, of course, only the 370 had been involved in attacking heavily fortified enemy positions and it had run into trouble at which time some had noted a tendency to "melt away". Had you observed this tendency and if so, what was your opinion of the division's fighting capability at this time?

LTG ALMOND: Well, the fact was that a strong effort supported by artillery and air action enabling the smaller units in battalion and company size, to advance their position to a desirable tactical locality, had been successful in the initial effort, but they were disappointing in their ability to remain in the position won. This began to be termed "melting in the face of the enemy" and weakened our confidence in the combat quality of our well trained division units.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, also in this period, some observer, or some who were there at the time, reported your being constantly in the front lines, to supervise closely the operation of even the front line companies. Some officers criticized you for this. Why did you spend so much time in the front lines? Were you supervising more than you would of normally in a regular division?

LTG ALMOND: Decidedly so. And my purpose in visiting the front line which I attempted to do at least once each day, in a different sector, was to convince the soldiers operating there, that I was in as much danger as they were and it was my business to coordinate their efforts at every opportunity. I felt my presence at the front line instead of in the rear was the cause of a greater combat effort on the part of the front line troops.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you expect your primary staff officers to do the same thing?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, I did and I frequently sent G-1 and G-2 forward in really exposed areas to inspire the confidence I felt was lacking there at the time.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall during this period of November and December 1944, if you encountered logistical problems? Were your supplies coming through in good shape?

LTG ALMOND: Well, our supplies were reaching us in the back areas, but the problem was to advance the supplies to the front lines in a mountainous area with difficult passages to reach the front line troops to assure the troops stationed there and operating there that they need not fear of not being fed or not being equipped with the proper amounts of ammunition. This difficulty caused me to form at that time a transport team of locally procured mules which we did with success. Instead of using battalion capabilities, and our own troops to carry supplies to the front line units, which were up in the mountains, at various spots on our front, we used the mules (led by Italians and procured locally) to carry five times

as much support for the front lines than a man could carry. This was of great help in various sections of the front. We had gotten this idea from the fact that the Alpine chasseurs of the Italian Army had Alpine mule teams to do just these things. This gave us the idea and we formed our own; the Army commander was invited over to inspect this team when it was ready for operations. It took us some 3 months in November and December and January to perfect this team. General Truscott was very complimentary of our efforts to support ourselves in this supply manner.

CPT FERGUSSON: And eventually this system paid off in that you were able to supply the forward units partly by means of the mule operation?

LTG ALMOND : Very decidedly so. It was a local extemporizing effort which succeeded and was admired by all senior officers visiting our front.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you receive help from Italian partisans other than in helping you supply forward units? In other words, did you get help from them in matters of intelligence?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, we always found it useful to get the local civic leaders, the mayor of these various villages or towns, especially the town of Viareggio, who would acquaint us or put us in contact with what he considered reliable partisan information. These partisans would move from our lines as sheep herders or cattle rustlers through the front line and into enemy lines as civilian occupants of the territory, and when they gained information later on, would filter back into our area and impart that to us. As a matter of fact, in the early spring attack of '45, which eventuated the termination of the war in our sector, and the capture of Genoa, the partisans provided us the information and the actual weapons support

to enable us to get through the difficult spot between Viareggio and Genoa.

CPT FERGUSSON: What was your relationship with the partisan leaders? Did you ever have face to face meetings with the leaders of these Italian groups? Or were you merely getting cooperation from them by means of message communication with them?

LTG ALMOND: I left the communication and the contact portions of our operation to my Division Department of Intelligence. My G-2 met with these leaders and transmitted my wishes and orders.

CPT FERGUSSON: During the winter period, besides the information you were getting from the partisans, how else did you get intelligence? Were you getting any captured German prisoners during that period?

LTG ALMOND: Oh, yes, we captured prisoners now and then but about all the information we could get was the knowledge that they knew very little of operations higher than their own battalion. They knew where they had been moved from and where they were located at the time of their capture. But they knew little more than local information of roads and defenses in their front lines.

CPT FERGUSSON: What was your estimation of the quality of the German units you were facing in that sector of Italy?

LTG ALMOND: Well, we knew that they all wanted to go home, and we weren't impressed with their combat determination. As a matter of fact, we found that many of the Germans captured in the coastal area between Viareggio and the French border and as far north as Turin up in the Po Valley had been scraped together from coast defense units and supply

units in order to furnish the replacements that the German battalions along the front lines required.

CPT FERGUSSON: Isn't it true that your division captured an unusually large number of prisoners during January of 1945?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, the records show that we captured 166 prisoners during that month on the front of the 92nd Division which turned out to be 70% of the whole number captured by the Fifth Army.

CPT FERGUSSON: To what do you attribute this unusually large percentage? Did you put out orders to take prisoners so that you could gain intelligence information or was this merely a fortunate coincidence that you captured so many?

LTG ALMOND: I would say it was merely a happenstance and was the product of offensive efforts by patrolling into areas in which the enemy was supposed to be located and really we determined later on that the enemy wasn't too unhappy at being captured and put in the safe position in our line.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you describe, sir, your relationship with your Corps and Army commanders during this period? Did you see very much of them?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, we saw them frequently, and staff officers more often. They were always sympathetic to our needs, desirous of helping us and did, in many cases, do everything except doing the actual fighting.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, the Corps Commander, I believe, was General Crittenger? Major General Crittenger? Or Lieutenant General?

LTG ALMOND: He was a major general, commanded the IV Corps at the time

we arrived in Italy. He was our commander until the preparation for the spring offensive in 1945. When we became an independent force, we were ordered to operate along the coast line for the purpose of capturing Genoa and regions near the French border, while the bulk of the Fifth Army moving from the Futa Pass was to capture Bologna in the low part of the Po Valley. We deployed under the IV Corps command supervision about mid-March, 1945.

CPT FERGUSON: During that period, the Fifth Army Commander, I believe, was General Truscott?

LTG ALMOND : Yes, that's correct. Lucien Truscott, who had made a very great impression upon all higher commanders by his acting command of the 3rd Division both at Messina and before the attack in southern Italy, and before the capture of Rome, and also later, at the landing at Anzio. That promoted him to the Fifth Army command in late '44.

CPT FERGUSON: Did you feel that the higher commanders, General Truscott and General Crittenger ever exhibited impatience with the 92nd Division troubles in their attacks, in the early stages? Or were they understanding of your problems?

LTG ALMOND: They were very impatient of the results obtained by the 92nd Division, but they were patient with me, personally, because they understood our problems and the ineffectiveness of the offensive capability of the troops which made the attack. They were always helpful as they could be, both in their staff support and in the material support, or supply, especially ammunition, whenever it was thought necessary for our use.

CPT FERGUSSON : Around Christmas of 1944, the 92nd Division encountered some serious trouble in the Serchio Valley sector. Could you provide an account of that action from your viewpoint?

LTG ALMOND: Well, we had been building up our strength in the Serchio Valley the best we could for more than a month. But in late December we discovered that there was unusual enemy activity on the front of the 370th regiment in the area north of Monte de Luca and we were alarmed at this development. It materialized in the form of a strong attack by about five German battalions.

CPT FERGUSSON: What size units, sir?

LTG ALMOND : Battalion sized units. On the 26th of December, the day after Christmas. And they drove a gap in our line which was considerable and of considerable concern to the Fifth Army and the 15th Army Group as well.

CPT FERGUSSON: What action did they take to plug this gap?

LTG ALMOND: They immediately dispatched a brigade which was in Army Reserve to relieve the distressed and pressured troops of the 92nd Division, in which a gap some 5 miles wide had been driven. This did not materialize in anything especially alarming however, and it was discovered by the information we obtained that this is only a reconnoitering force to see how strong the defensive line of the Fifth Army turned out to be. As a matter of fact, it later developed that the Germans had no intention of returning to the general offensive, they were more concerned with protecting the Po Valley ARCA, in case they had to retire, which they eventually did later in the spring.

CPT FERGUSSON: In February 1945, the 92nd Division conducted a coordinated limited attack to seize the Strettoia hill mass dominating the coastal plain north of the Cinguale Canal and to advance the Serchio Valley position to the Lama di Sotto Ridge. The end result of this offensive effort was that the lines of the division remained about the same. A disproportionately high number of officers were lost. As a result, higher headquarters now judged that the division was incapable of strong offensive action. And the 92nd Division was completely re-organized. The 366th Infantry was detached from the division and the 473rd and the 442nd Infantry Regiments were attached. Would you describe this period and the reorganization of the 92nd Division prior to the offensive later launched in April?

LTG ALMOND: Well, to begin with the 92nd Division was occupying the defensive line in the sector west of the Futa Pass and to the coast, a front of 45 kilometers including the Serchio Valley area and the coastal area along the Cinguale Canal. It had made no determined attacks to advance its line in a general manner until the February planned attack. My idea really, in planning this attack, was to test the division as a whole and determine its capabilities to attack in any given sector with satisfactory results. I made the plan, or I had my staff prepare the plan under my directive, and secured the permission of the 4th Corps to make such an attack on the front just mentioned by you. This attack was to be a limited objective attack by the whole division with a few regimental front widths some three miles or maybe a little more on the front and to have the necessary air support and artillery support and the ammunitions justify such support, in hand before the attack was made. The attack was

made on the 7th of February, and it was watched with intense interest by the commander of the 15th Army Group, General Mark Clark and the Fifth Army commander, General Truscott. As a matter of fact, General Truscott on the 2nd day of the attack was present in my observation post watching the effort of our troops. It was evident by the middle of the second day that it was difficult to advance our forces and the advances that had been made at the end of the first day were useless because the troops withdrew from the positions gained, which were only slight distances, such as 1,000 yards at one place and 2,000 in another, but during the night, they withdrew without orders to do so from these positions, to their original positions of the day before.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, why do you think that those troops withdrew from those positions that they had just gained?

LTG ALMOND: Because they saw safety in going back to the area they knew and they had a tendency to be flighty at night. As a result of this attitude at the end of the first day, it became evident that straggling had to be stopped one way or another, and we thought that at the time, instead of stopping a soldier who was straggling to the rear and putting him in the stockade in the rear, we would return him to the front line under guard and put him in action again. This to some degree, stopped the straggling, and we thought it was very effective and practiced it in the future.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, did you put any of the blame for this, the loss of these positions on the company grade officers, the officers who were actually commanding the men out there? Did you see any failure of leadership, as well as the men's unwillingness to stay on a position?

LTG ALMOND: Well, we found out that in every case, the excuse of the local commander (platoon, or company commander) was that they put the man in position and couldn't depend on his staying there because they couldn't see him in the dark. When they went to find the place they had put him in, the man wasn't there. It was for this reason, that we established the straggler line back of the front line as a matter of three lines, one at battalion level, one at regimental level, and one at division level. It was only when the stragglers were discovered, (and if he didn't get caught on one straggler line, he'd get caught on the other) that they would be moved back to the front line instead of the rear and safety.

CPT FERGUSSON: Well, at the end of this operation when the division had really not gained much ground, did you come to the same conclusion that the higher commanders did? Were you in agreement with them, that the division was incapable of sustained offensive action?

LTG ALMOND: Very much so and to illustrate this, at the end of the second day when General Truscott, the Army Commander was with me in my observation post looking at the inability of the troops to advance in the direction that they were pointed, he advised me to call off the attack which went in the next day. I pleaded with him to allow me to continue the attack to the extension of our ability as planned. He deferred and delayed his decision and said, that upon his return to the Fifth Army Command Post, he would discuss it with his Chief of Staff and his staff. He asked me what other assistance I would require if I continued this attack another day and I said, "None. Because I have a regiment that hasn't been used at all, as a reserve regiment, for the division effort,

the 371st, and I need no ammunition. I have half of the ammunition with which I started. All I want is your approval and the continued support of the air units that are supporting this effort today and yesterday. He said, "I will advise you of my decision when I return to my command post up on the Futa Pass area north of Florence." Within two hours of that time, my telephone rang and General Truscott was on the phone. He said, "General, go ahead with your attack, if you need no assistance from us." I said, "Thank you very much sir, and the orders will remain unchanged." The next day the attack did continue and the use of the reserve was made, but there was no material effect. So, at the end of this time, after 3 days I concluded that the offensive capabilities of the division were sadly lacking. We had been supported by air and artillery on all occasions, but had been unsuccessful due to the lack of determination to hold the ground gained and the problem of stragglers who had to be returned to the front line in order to keep them anywhere in the combat area.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, could you go ahead and describe the re-organization that occurred and why you got the regiment you did.

LTG ALMOND: As a result of this February attack by the 92nd Division, and the failure to accomplish in any way the plans that had been made for the advance for our troops in a difficult situation. The 15th Army Group was then busy planning an all out spring offensive and needed all the organized troops it could get. There were not sufficient organized troops available to permit reduction of the 92nd Division to a secondary role. This need to retain the 92nd Division as a unit, was recognized by all and the discussion as to what the solution could be, was participated in by not

only by General Truscott the Army Commander; General Critt<sup>er</sup>enberg, the Corps Commander; and General Clark, the Army Group Commander, but with General Marshall himself. The Chief of Staff of our Armed Forces, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. General Marshall had been visiting General Eisenhower, the commander in France, whose armies had just repulsed the German offensive of December 12th, 1944 (known historically as the Battle of the Ardennes). General Marshall then decided to visit Italy, especially on account of the 92nd Division's fate that he had learned of. When he arrived, I, the division commander, and the others named above were in deep conference as to the measures to be taken. When General Marshall arrived at my command post, he looked at me with an eagle eye and said, "You have had a heck of a time in the last two weeks, haven't you?" I said, "Yes, General, you can rely on that." He then said, "If you had some re-organization in this division, would it help you if I sent the Japanese-American Regiment known as the 442 Infantry Regiment to be attached to this Division?" I said, "Anything you did in that manner would help me. It would be particularly desirable to have you send the Japanese-American Regiment to assist me in any way possible. I understand that this regiment is very reliable in a combat way, particularly its 100th battalion which has demonstrated great heroism in all occasions." General Marshall said, "Then that will be done. You can expect them to arrive within the next 10 days from the Seventh Army area in France." This turned out to be the salvation of the 92nd Division combat capability. But, in addition to this, it was decided by the group that we've been discussing that not only would we receive the 442 regiment of Japanese-Americans

but that one of the regiments of the 92nd Division would be replaced by another regiment, the 473 Infantry. This unit of anti-aircraft troops had been engaged in infantry training for the past 6 weeks. The solution was still incomplete in that we had to discern of how to dispose of some of the regiments of the 92nd Division which had been engaged in combat in the past few weeks. It was decided that each regimental commander would select the most capable, combat effective individuals in their respective regiments. Two thirds of each regiment would be transferred to the other regiment and vice versa so that when we ended up, the best soldiers would be concentrated in one regiment and the least capable combat-wise, would be transferred to the other two. This resulted in all the good men so-tabbed by the three regimental commanders, about one third of the regiment each were all transferred to the 370 Infantry and the rejects, so to speak, were transferred to the 365th and the 371st in turn. These regiments were moved out and put in defensive areas, between the gaps in the line, between the IV Corps and the II Corps and the British on the far eastern side of our 15th Army Group. While the 370 was turned over to the 92nd Division to be used in the new spring offensive along with the two new regiments attached to the division, the 442nd and the 473rd Infantry Regiments.

CPT FERGUSSON: From this point on, the point of re-organization, the 92nd Division performed very well throughout the rest of the war in Italy. Specifically in the spring offensive of 1945. How did the remaining Negro regiment, the 370, which was composed of the best men of the division, do, as part of the division, in that period?

LTG ALMOND: Well, knowing the capabilities and demonstrated effect of the 442nd Japanese-American Regiment, for the balance of the operation and a new spring offensive which culminated in the finish of the war in Italy and elsewhere, my confidence was highest in the 442nd. After the 442nd in combat capability came the 443rd, the anti-aircraft unit which had been trained in infantry tactics only three months ago.

CPT FERGUSSON: The 473, sir?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, the 473. And which originally had been anti-aircraft coast artillery corps. This group was commanded by Colonel William Yarborough, a young but trusted and tried battle commander who made a famous name for himself in the Anzio landing earlier in the year. The 370 and its combat classification were estimated to be reasonably safe but with constant attention and careful leadership. This regiment during the future operations for the next month, starting around April 1 became satisfactory for such utilization as flank protection, and reserved for use after the enemy had been dislodged from his prepared positions. When the spring offensive started on 7 April 1945, the leading element in the attack was the battalion of the 442 regiment, which was moved during the night time to Saravezza and kept under the cover all day and the next day moved to the back of hill X in back of the enemy line and the first knowledge of the Germans had of this movement was the fact that their kitchen area and support areas were under attack by one platoon of the Jap-Amer Regt (442) by daylight and by 10:00 a whole battalion of the 442 Regt. This dislodged and surprised the enemy tremendously because they had no fear of being attacked successfully by the troops that had been confronting them, the Negro troops of the 92nd Division. It was

two or three days after the main attack of the 442 that the enemy realized that they weren't fighting American Negroes any longer, but were in combat with the Japanese or Japanese type troops.

CPT FERGUSSON: In your estimation, sir, what made the 442 such a splendid, such an outstanding unit in combat? Was it their leadership or the individual soldiers in the unit?

LTG ALMOND: Both. Most of the commanders of the 442 were American officers and all of the soldiers were Japanese-American individuals who were trying to prove their worth to the American Army. They had been rejected at the beginning of the war, and put in a concentration camp in California. And they were anxious after the success of the 100th Battalion and its frequent demonstrations of courage that they also should be so respected and it was the purpose of the increasing the authorization and qualification of citizenship as American citizens that they made such drastic efforts in the combat area. I was completely charmed with the leadership exercised by what I say in the majority of the cases is vision and flexibility of the American officers in command and a determined attitude of courage and fortitude by the Japanese soldier in the attack, defense, or any other military mission assigned him. I so expressed myself to General Truscott. I say I'm only speaking from experience and the various troops I've had to command so far.

CPT FERGUSSON: Didn't you later have a conversation with General Eisenhower about the fact that the Japanese-American regiment was taken from him?

LTG ALMOND : After the war I made a trip to Paris and to the Meuse-Argonne area where I had fought in the first World War. On the way home to Italy,

I had to stop by Frankfurt to see General Eisenhower, whose headquarters were located there. The war was over when I had an opportunity to discuss freely the various aspects and then when I visited General Eisenhower, whom I'd known for many years, since we served together at Fort Benning, in 1924 and he jokingly said, "If I'd had you in my control about 2 months ago, I'd have wrung your neck." I laughingly replied, "Why?" He said, "Because I lost to you in Italy the best regiment from the 7th Army in France, much to my disappointment because of the fine combat qualities of that regiment." I replied that the suggestion to take the 442 from his forces and the appointment to mine was a matter of choice made by the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Marshall. General Eisenhower smiled and said, "I knew that and was glad to assist you as much as we could."

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, would you generally discuss the spring offensive and the final stage of the 92nd Division's combat operations in Italy?

LTC ALMOND: Well, we have mentioned the partisan support that I received before. My G-2, Colonel McWilly, had such close contact with the partisans that he found out that they had a detailed knowledge of the road system and the German defenses between our then front line along the Cinguale Canal to the French border, a distance of some 150 miles. So, he secured the agreement of a partisan to give us the details of the defenses, because they all involved the protection of tunnel areas and bridge areas along the highway, the only road west of the Apennine Mountains between the Mediterranean sea coast and the mountain top, that we could use for

our supplies. This again, demonstrates the value of logistical support of any military effort. That has to be assured before the final plan can ever be considered. We had enough confidence in the partisan's support to confide with them about when our attack would be launched. And we got their agreement that they would furnish battle groups at every important pass and tunnels between Massa and Genoa to begin with; that at the time we attacked, the partisans in turn would attack in the various locations and discourage the German in their efforts to protect such passes and tunnels that we needed to secure. While the Japanese-American regiment operated around Mt. Altissimo and moved generally parallel to the highway, the 473rd anti-aircraft regiment turned infantry under Colonel Yarborough, attacked along highway #1, along the Ligurian coast all the way from Massa to Genoa. First, to be captured was the city of Massa, that had long been our objective but never obtainable. With the capture of Massa by the 473rd and the support of the partisans, we proceeded north and the next capture was Strettoia and the famous sea base of La Spezia. La Spezia had been a famous fortification area with all around defense - seacoast defense guns topped by defensive equipment.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, did your division encounter heavy resistance from the German forces as you moved through Massa and then against La Spezia? How and when did the 92nd Division move into La Spezia?

LTG ALMOND: Well, the efforts to capture our first objective, Massa, was really started on the 5th of April when the 370th Regiment initiated their advance and were relieved by the 473rd Regiment which eventually

captured Massa without difficulty. They moved in after the partisans had triggered the defense in that area. The next real objective was La Spezia and the 473rd Infantry was ordered to press on to capture this important sea coast defense which we found great aid in capturing due to the fact that the Germans found that the partisans were helping us and withdrew. So, when we reached La Spezia we found it was occupied by our friends, the partisans. From that place on, we moved toward Genoa as rapidly as possible. During the night of April the 22nd, 23rd we were as far north as Aulla, which was a considerable distance; some ten miles. The enemy withdrew in front of the 370th, which was operating on a flank, and the division moved on beyond Carrara and La Spezia and found that only delaying forces were left behind.

CPT FERGUSSON: What were you intending to do then?

LTG ALMOND: I ordered the 473rd Regimental Team to push on to the west to seize Genoa, while the 442nd was to follow as rapidly as possible protecting the northeast flank of the division zone of the advance, the sea being on the other flank. The 370th at this time was to drive north up highway 63, in the Cisa and Cerreto Passes. They were the funnel through which the enemy had to pass on its way to the Po Valley to withdraw.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, at this point, could one say that the enemy was in retreat and you were merely moving forward and mopping up along the coast?

LTG ALMOND: Yes. We must remember that by the 20th of April, the Germans were pretty well satisfied that they were ill-fated and their main forces were then withdrawing toward the Brenner Pass through which they later

withdrew into the area around the Swiss border and into southern Germany.

CPT FERGUSSON: What were your own actions, as the Division Commander, during this period? Did you continue to make numerous visits to the forward elements of the division, as it moved to the north and west?

LTC ALMOND: Oh, yes. When the forward elements of the 473d Regiment reached San Margherita which is just north of Portofino, and 30 miles from Genoa, I, with a jeep and a small guard, reached the forward elements and stood on a portico in the town of San Margherita and watched the artillery support and a leading element of the 473rd shell along the remaining enemy artillery defense positions in the area of Portofino. Following this exhibition, when our troops advanced further, I rode in my jeep to the artillery position that the enemy had just been shelled out of, near Portofino, and inspected the damage done. I was constantly along with the front line elements, and was at one point able to divert one battalion, which had lost its way and was headed north and out of the battle zone entirely. This was because I well knew by map, at least, of the areas through which we were going and the battalion commander had failed to note the cut-off road.

CPT FERGUSSON: Your division was rapidly moving forward during this period. Again, did you have any troubles in keeping up, in getting your supplies up to the front line units?

LTC ALMOND: No, but this was all the result of partisan assistance in guarding the vital points, which as I mentioned before, were the tunnels and bridges which would have obstructed our supply activity. By the 24th

of April, 1945 due to the attack that we had started on the 5th of April, down along the Cinghiale Canal, the division front had become so fluid that no front line in the area existed, only pockets of resistance were left and it was expected that Germany would fight a delaying action until pressure forced them to capitulate. This was the final thrust of our force to capture Genoa. In this period covering from the 22nd of April until the 2nd of May, Bologna fell to the Allies with unexpected ease. Of course, this was on our right flank and not of immediate importance to us, but the German line had been broken and the enemy forces were split in two. The Fifth Army along with the rest of the line was deployed north from the Apennines to Lake Garda, while we were northwest to the areas of Genoa, Turin at the head of the Po Valley and Ventimiglia on the French border and almost to Monte Carlo. When we captured Genoa, a peculiar control problem arose. Because our communications line had become extended, to a point where it was impractical for the Fifth Army to control the advance of my force, the 92nd Division, on 25th of April, was placed under the operation and control of the 15th Army Group, commanded by General Clark. This attachment lasted until 1 May. In other words, the divergence of our effort prevented General Truscott from exercising reasonable command of the force driving north from Florence, to capture Bologna, and the 92nd Division Group driving northwest or west to the French border was too much front for the Army to control. To sum it up briefly, at 7:45 a.m., on 27th of April, the I and R Platoon of the 473rd Regiment entered Genoa and by 9:30 the colonel of the regiment, Colonel Yarborough,

with the 2nd Battalion and the 1st Battalion following shortly, moved into the city. We had captured Genoa, in fact, on 27 April, about 10 days before the end of the war. I have said that we entered Genoa and occupied it beginning on the 28th of April. By the 29th, the enemy resistance had collapsed and the 442nd elements and combat patrols had entered Torino and Cuneo. When I learned, as Commander of the force, that the advance elements of the 442nd had entered Turin, I took my aide and a jeep and struck out for Turin through the country. Not knowing exactly where it was safe to go, but thinking our troops that had reached Genoa, it exhilarated me to the point where I wanted to get with the forward elements as soon as possible. I, therefore, reached Turin, passing through historic areas where Napoleon had fought, particularly when I passed through the sight of the Marengo battlefield, which made Napoleon famous in his invasion of Italy across the Alps in the 1800's. I soon returned to my own headquarters. By that time, it was in the middle of Genoa and I took the opportunity of going in a western direction to the French border as soon as possible.

CPT FERGUSSON: After the long period of frustration with the 92nd Division during the winter months and in February of 1945 particularly, this final offensive during which your division enjoyed great success must have given you quite a bit of satisfaction. What were your feelings during that final period?

LTG ALMOND: Well, you just made a statement that it gave me a good deal of satisfaction, and it would be difficult to describe what satisfaction I received from finally capturing the objective that we had never been able to achieve. The Ligurian coast campaign from the 5th of April to the end

of the month and capture of these points that I've described, was heart-warming and most impressive to me and to all concerned. The Fifth Army, the 15th Army Group, and I received many congratulations, even was made a "Citizen of Genoa," for the efforts that we had made. As a matter of fact, just before we were released from the Fifth Army and put under the 15th Army Group, General Brand, the G-3 of the Army Group with General Clark pooh-poohed my determination to fly towards Genoa at the greatest speed possible and offered to bet me that I wouldn't make it. I bet him \$10.00 that I would, but there was never any payment on the bet because later on, General Brand was killed in an accident in Austria after the war and I never saw him again.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, in commenting on this final period of the 92nd Division, after its reorganization, you paid high compliments to the 442nd Infantry Regiment. Can you give an example of an instance when you observed this regiment in combat, which was of particular interest?

LTC ALMOND: Yes, I have already intimated that the initial breaking of the enemy's front on the 5th of April occurred when a battalion of the 442nd moving one night before the attack, the 3rd of April and staying in concealment all day on the 4th, attacked on the 5th in the mountains near Mt. Altissimo, and from the direction of Seravezza. I stood at the OP in rear of our effort and watched the Japanese-Americans under their fine leadership, advance up a very rigorous terrain with artillery support, so that I could even see the squad action of the front line. And they moved exactly by the book, with artillery support first and then up and rushing to seize the first objective. Then lifting their artillery fire

up to the next objective and when the squad concerned or the platoon concerned suffered casualties to the degree that made them ineffective, it was relieved. These squads and platoons were relieved in perfect order and the new units resumed the attack and advance with artillery support, just as the book said, they really were marvelous in small unit actions.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about when they seized Turin, were they particularly good at digging in and securing the ground?

LTG ALMOND: They were good in every aspect of combat operations, that included.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, one personal question on this final period of the war. I believe during the final months of the war, you suffered a great personal tragedy in the loss of your son, and also you had lost your son-in-law before this. Could you briefly describe this and how you learned about it?

LTG ALMOND: Of course, the description of these losses would take a volume if I went to the extent of expressing the disturbance that I mentally received by these two events. The division I commanded was moving to the combat area in the summer of 1944, when we first learned that my son-in-law Major Thomas Galloway, a flyer in our Air Forces, had been declared missing over St. Lo in France on the 25th of June (about the time that General McNair was killed by a close-in bombardment by our own forces in the French front lines). Galloway was flying a mission, as a matter of fact, over General Patton's Third Army. We didn't know what had happened to

Major Galloway until about the time that we were moving to the attack in April in the Italian theater in an effort to reach Genoa. At this point, we received a firm notification that he had been killed in action. My daughter, the wife of Major Galloway, and their small son were living with my wife in America at the time this happened. Later, in the same period, during which I was engaging in the final phases of the April offensive in Italy, by the Fifth Army and by my force, I learned that my son, Edward M. Almond, Jr., was reported killed in action in the 167th Regiment, 45th Division fighting with the Seventh Army in France.

Both of these pieces of information came to me first for verification, that Major Galloway had been found buried in St. Lo, 70 miles west of Paris, and my own son, Ned, had been killed as a Company Commander in France, came to me about the time, that my force was in the active capture of Massa and La Spezia. As a matter of fact, I learned of my son's death on the 10th of April at the same time that we all learned of the death of President Roosevelt. My feelings were very pronounced, of course, but I tried to exercise personal composure and bravery in the matter and to conduct my business as if nothing had happened. This, I learned later, impressed many of my associates to a deep degree and that was some satisfaction to me but very little compensation for the grief that I suffered. All I can say is that it was intense.

CPT FERGUSSON: During April of 1945, as we have just been discussing, the 92nd Division attack swept 100 miles to the north and west until all the German forces in the northwest portion of Italy had surrendered and some 3,000 square miles had been overrun. In June, after the 442nd and

the 373 rd regiments had been detached from the division and the three original regiments, the 365th and the 370th and the 371st had been brought back under division control, the 92nd concentrated south of Viareggio and began preparing for re-deployment. You left the 92nd on the 12th of August, 1945, leaving Brigadier General John E. Wood in command, and returned to the United States. Would you briefly comment on the 92nd Division during the final few months you commanded it after the fighting? After the end of the war.

LTC ALMOND: Well, as you stated, the 92nd Division moved to a concentration area south of Viareggio when it was re-assembled from its combat acquisitions along the French border in Turin and Genoa. The division was detached from the IV Corps and attached to the Fifth Army on the 16th of June, and as you have stated, began an intensive training program until my departure on the 12th of August. Now, our principle objective during this period was to keep the men of the 92nd Division, all Negro units, again, so occupied as to keep them out of personal trouble and diversion, until they could be moved home. This was reasonably successful except for the contacts made with lewd women and AWOL experiences that we had during this period. All I can say is that the problem was to keep the men busy and to reduce the venereal rate, which was very high at the time. The venereal rate rose to nearly 30%, so much so that General Truscott sent me to the 10th Mountain Division Area to determine how they controlled the ailment. This I did not find out but did the best I could to squash medical infractions and indiscretion on the part of the men. My main concern

during this period, that is from early May to the 12th of August, when I departed from the division, was to prepare a record of accomplishments for the service of the division in combat, as well as the training area. To do this, I appointed a board of officers, comprising the three regimental commanders, the assistant division commander (who was President of the Board), the G-3 of the Division, and the G-2, who knew all the intelligence aspects of whatever we had done. We attempted to decide what the deficiencies were of the individual soldier or officer of the Negro components. We analyzed every type of action from squad to division size. We attempted to rate the participants on a number of characteristics, such as bravery, courage, physical ability, morale, determination, aggressiveness, alertness, compliance with orders, and a number of others. When this report was completed, I reviewed it as I would have any other report. After it was prepared, it was transmitted to higher headquarters. I was determined that a true record by those that had participated in the operations discussed, could be at the hand of the War Department for any future war that we engaged in.

CPT FERGUSSON: This completes side one of tape three of the interviews with General Almond.

THIS IS SIDE TWO OF TAPE THREE OF THE INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL ALMOND.  
THE DATE IS MARCH 27th, 1975.

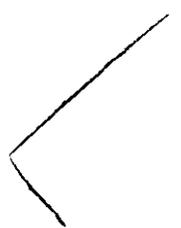
LTG ALMOND: The report that I referred to I carried personally to General Truscott, then at Fifth Army Headquarters. I explained to General Truscott that I desired to have this record of performance by the 92nd Division because it was a Negro division and under questioning by everybody concerned in the various grades of Army control, that I thought it would be incomplete to leave the division with no record of the characteristic of performance of military duties especially on the field of battle. General Truscott looked at me with an inquisitive glance, and said, "Do you think this will do any good?" And I replied, "It will do me good and the officers that have struggled so determinedly to accomplish what seemed to be a very difficult task of troop perfection in battle. I would like to deliver this report to General McNarney, the Force Commander of the Theater, at his headquarters in southern Italy." He gave his approval and said that he would read the report and forward it with an endorsement. Once having said this, he merely glanced at it and signed his name. When I took this report to General McNarney, he was very appreciative and said that it was a general part of his report on performance of American troops under his command in the theater. This report and various secret documents were submitted to the War Department and I suggest that any individual historian, or any group of historians who desired to learn the characteristics of the Negro in battle, in that period could refer to this report by application to the Department of the Army.

CPT. FERGUSSON: General Almond, if you had had to make a recommendation at that point, about the future use of Negro troops in the US Army, would you have recommended the continuation of segregated units, or would you have recommended integration of combat units in the future?

LTG ALMOND: I would have agreed to the integration of combat units to the extent of utilizing Negro personnel in areas that did not require exposure and decision of individuals and bravery in offensive operations. That means that the combat battalion and the squads that composed the companies of that battalion would be jeopardized by integrating Negro elements into units that had to operate in combat areas. The Negro is a useful individual; he is an American citizen, he should be employed in the defense of this nation, but to expect him to exercise characteristics that are abnormal to his race, is too much and not recommended by me.

CPT. FERGUSSON: Certainly you must recall exceptions to your general observations of Negroes who individually were quite brave in combat, and capable of sustaining offensive operations?

LTG ALMOND: I do to a degree. I know of individuals who have been very faithful and very strong, and one is a Lieutenant Birdsong who was a combat leader in Italy in the fall of 1944. But Birdsong himself was deserted by his own patrol when he got into a precarious position in the Apennine Mountains where the enemy was in control of the area, and Birdsong was cut off from his front. The people who were with him on this patrol deserted him and left him to his fate, which was death in the immediate future. Those who ran had abandoned their leader in combat.



CPT FERGUSSON: Do you think they deserted him because he was leading them into danger?

LTG ALMOND: They deserted him because they were afraid of their own future and disregarded of their comrade.

CPT FERGUSSON: In looking back on the 92nd Division, what do you think was your greatest problem as a Division Commander? Or, what were the biggest problems you had to solve as the Division Commander in Italy?

LTG ALMOND: That is difficult to sum up in a few words. But the greatest problem that I can recall, on reflection in general, was the undependability of the average soldier to operate to his maximum capability, compared to his lassitude toward his performing a task assigned. While there were exceptions to this rule, the general tendency of the Negro soldier is to avoid as much effort as possible. Those who doubt this have only to serve in the capacity of supervisor to such requirements to determine for themselves what the results will be.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now you left the 92nd on the 12th of August, 1945 and returned to the United States where in September of 1945, you assumed command of the 2nd Infantry Division at Camp Swift, Texas. Almost at the very time you were traveling back to the United States from Italy, Japan had announced her surrender on 14 August, 1945 following the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. When had you first been notified that you were going to command the 2nd Division, and had you not expected to take that division to the Far East for the invasion of Japan, when you first learned you were going to command it?

LTG ALMOND: I was ordered to the United States about 5 July, 1945 and

given a 30-day leave of absence on arrival in the US, on completion of which I was to assume command of the 2nd Division at Camp Swift, Texas, preparatory to its movement to the Pacific command for the invasion of Japan. This invasion was being planned by General MacArthur. My feelings were very pleasant and I was anxious to command a white division in another war zone in the Pacific. The 2nd Division was re-deploying from Europe to the US and its state of discipline and training were unknown to me, of course. And when I joined it, I discovered that the troops there were like most other troops were later at the termination of the war; many of them were anxious to return to their homesteads. The Division was in a state of flux. Everyone with any chance wanted to go home as soon as they could. The problem of every commander was to tone down this urge for discharge from the war. I was also concerned with the restoration of discipline and order. This was accomplished in my opinion by January the 1st, 1946 and from then to June 1946 when I departed for Japan we pursued a course of normal training and were designated as a division in the Army General Reserve. For our general, we had Jonathan Wainwright; he was the Fourth Army Commander with headquarters at San Antonio. General Wainwright came to visit us as often as possible and always was a great attraction to all the soldiers because of his being a prisoner for more than three years of the Japanese. He was a very considerate and interesting commander, and I had known him before when he was a Major at Fort Myer during my tour on the general staff in Washington, 1934.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did many of your staff in the 2nd Division come from the 92nd Division, or was it an entirely new staff working under you there at

Camp Swift?

LTG ALMOND: No, I found an entirely new group and a new tone of activity although not a better one, I would say, because my staff of the 92nd Division were completely capable and efficient.

CPT FERGUSSON:: Didn't you encounter some problems in the Austin area, in the discipline of your troops? Weren't there some problems with the local authorities, with the mayor and so on?

LTG ALMOND: Well, yes, to the extent that the 2nd Division had been designated by the War Department as the "Discharged Area of Separation" for eight other divisions who were going to be retired from active service entirely. These men would come from their divisions in groups and be attached to the 2nd Division in a Casual Camp until discharged. We found that these men had no intention of submitting to any discipline, even to the proper wearing of the uniform. Not only that, but they went on pass whether approved or not, into the city of Austin, 40 miles from Camp Swift and became very unruly. In some cases, they went into restaurants, ate a meal, got up and told the proprietor, "Charge it to the US Government," and walked out. When I found this out, I was very disturbed of course, not only that, the radio stations in Austin deplored such activity and procedure, but took no efforts to render assistance in curbing such things and when they found out that the commander at Camp Swift was taking drastic action to correct it, they criticized him instead of the men who were committing the indignities. When I called the mayor of Austin, to tell him that I didn't like the attitude of the press and radio descriptions of me as a

camp commander, he said, "What can I do about it?" And I replied, "That if any more of it takes place, that troops of the 2nd Division, as long as I was in command, wouldn't participate in any of the ceremonies in Austin." This brought him to his senses, and the castigation that I had been receiving over the television and radio ceased. What I did was to block out the city of Austin and make a checkerboard and put an officer and detachment with a truck or two in each of these checkerboard areas with instructions that if any soldier appeared undisciplined in disorder, or out of uniform from Camp Swift area, that he was to be placed in the truck with others who did likewise and returned to Camp Swift immediately and confined to the Post including confinement to the stockade if necessary. This broke up the disgraceful attitude of the American soldier coming home from war and acting like a renegade. As soon as the men learned that they still had to be disciplined while they were in uniform, they proceeded to do so.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were you able to conduct fairly normal training around Camp Swift? Was there sufficient facilities?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, we had no difficulty after we restored discipline in conducting our training and inspections and ceremonies in the usual military manner of any command in time of peace.

CPT FERGUSSON: Now, during your command of the 2nd Division, the Division moved from Camp Swift out to Fort Lewis in Washington, did they not?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, they did. And they moved at a time of celebration of the Army entering into World War I, namely April the 1st, 1917. We moved

by train, having turned in all of our equipment to San Francisco. We stayed there a week, during which time we drew equipment again, trucks, artillery pieces, tanks and all the related equipment, equipped our units, practiced the parade, in the camp that we were located in near San Francisco one day and the next day paraded in the city with perfect discipline and good order and to the admiration of all the Americans who viewed the parade, including the Army Commander who was none other than General Stilwell of famous Burma-Chinese warfare fame (with Chiang-Kai-Shek).

CPT FERGUSSON: What, sir, was the reason for the division being moved out to the state of Washington? Was this to put it in a better permanent home, or for some other reason?

LTG ALMOND: No, Fort Lewis Washington to which it was moved, although a western station, and a distant one, was a well constructed fort, with adequate facilities for garrisoning our troops in barracks and Camp Swift was mainly a wartime camp of temporary construction.

CPT FERGUSSON: You only remained in command of the division for a couple of months after the move out to Fort Lewis. Do you have any comments at all on that period, or was this generally routine?

LTG ALMOND: No, it was not routine, except to the degree that all the officers who had fought in the Pacific war and those that had been absent from the United States, some to the extent of three years, were anxious to get home. That required the Department of the Army to re-adjust its assignment of general officers. I had no choice in going overseas, I was told I had only one year of foreign war service as a general officer and I could go as Military Attache to Moscow or to the Pacific command of

General MacArthur in Tokyo where the occupation was in force, for a specific assignment there. I chose Tokyo and departed San Francisco with 12 other general officers by plane.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you stated that at the time you were re-assigned from command of the 2nd Division at Fort Lewis, you were offered the opportunity to go as the Military Attache in Moscow. What were your considerations about that job and why did you turn it down? Would not this have been a very important position?

LTG ALMOND: Well, I considered it a very important position. I had never admired the Russians or the takeover in 1917 that they performed. And I did not admire the Communistic principle in any respect. I had had enough knowledge of their operation in the war to seek service elsewhere, and that was my reason for rejecting the Moscow assignment. Furthermore, I didn't have a desire for attache duty and I have always preferred troop duty or command duty anywhere rather than in staffs or attaches activities.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, also, during this period, after your return from Italy and before you departed for Japan, had you not been offered the position of superintendent of Virginia Military Institute?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, I had. I found out that General Marshall had been approached by the man occupying the superintendent's job at VMI, General Kilburn, who had a marvelous reputation in the Army and was well liked by all, but he was retiring as superintendent. He had approached General Marshall as a senior VMI alumnus to know if I was available for assignment. General Kilburn came to Washington to see General Marshall about this and called me during my leave period at the hotel and I told him very politely

that I was still in the active service and had no intention of resigning and that I hoped to go to Japan as I had been ordered. This was not very pleasing to General Kilburn, but was my decision.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you ever have any second thoughts about that? Did you ever wish that you had taken that opportunity to go to VMI?

LTG ALMOND: Not at all, although later when I retired from the Army, I became extremely interested in VMI's activities because I had the time to consider them and later became a member of the Board of Visitors and served for two terms in a limited occupancy.

CPT FERGUSSON: It is now March 28, 1975 and the interview with General Almond continues at his home in Anniston, Alabama. The interviewer is Captain Thomas Fergusson, CGSC student. General Almond, would you explain exactly how you came to get an assignment to Tokyo in June, 1946? Had you known General MacArthur at all previously? Had he requested you, or were you merely being assigned by the War Department to fill a vacancy on his staff without him requesting you?

LTG ALMOND: When the war in the Pacific was over and the occupation of Japan was initiated I was in command of the 2nd Division at Camp Swift, Texas, where I had reported on return from Italy about 1 September, 1945. On the 1st of May (at Fort Lewis, Washington now) 1946, I was called by the staff officer in the Pentagon, General David Barr by name, who said, very directly, "I understand that you're to be transferred to foreign service." And my reply was that it was news to me. Barr explained that my transfer to foreign service was due to the fact that I had about only a year in foreign command in the war time operations in Italy and that many officers had had more service than that and they were to be ordered home

from the Pacific which would create vacancies there in the general officer grade. And that I would either go to that duty or the Military Attache Duty in Russia if I chose it. I chose not to go to Russia learning that I was to be assigned to the Pacific because of my small amount of foreign service. I at once began to prepare to deploy and did deploy to Tokyo on 6 June, 1946. As I said, the occupation had been in force since the previous September. When I arrived in Tokyo, I was among 12 other general officers awaiting assignment. I learned on reporting to the Chief of Staff, General Paul Mueller, that I was to be retained at GHQ for a staff assignment rather than be assigned in the field. The other officers who had come with me were assigned to various places; one of whom was General Biederlinden, retaining service in the GHQ headquarters.

CPT FERGUSSON: Had you ever had any previous contact with General MacArthur? Did he know you at all at this point?

LTG ALMOND: I knew General MacArthur by sight and he knew me not at all, although in the last six months of his tour as Chief of Staff of the Army, I had reported on July 1, 1934, to the Intelligence Branch on the General Staff in Washington. However, General MacArthur did not have any knowledge of me because I had no occasion to appear in his presence. I learned later that the reason that I was retained at GHQ was because I was recommended for that assignment (the assignment as G-1) by the Chief of Staff, General Mueller, to General MacArthur.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, your initial assignment was as G-1 of GHQ, Armed Forces Pacific. You held this assignment from June, 1946, until November 1946. You had had no previous experience in the G-1 area of staff work. Why do you think you were assigned to that job at that time?

LTG ALMOND: I think it was because there was a vacancy in that position, that needed to be filled and that General Mueller knew me well enough after a long association prior to the war and during the war to have confidence of my performing the task assigned and related to the G-1 operations.

CPT FERGUSSON: What was your approach to performing as a G-1, General Almond?

GEN ALMOND: My previous knowledge involved the general duties of G-1, and I felt that I could fill the post if I applied my efforts to learn all that I could about that particular position.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were there any particularly critical problems facing you as a G-1 at that time? Do you recall any of the issues?

LTG ALMOND: The chief concern of a G-1 at that time was the proper assignment to fill the vacancies of the requirements of the GHQ occupation duties as well as the troop duties and to see that all personnel required for the occupation were properly requested. Replacements necessary for those that had to go home was a major concern. Where there were deficiencies that were not filled, it was my business to recommend actions to be taken that would cause the War Department to furnish those fillers. Another thing that was very important was the assignment of dependents' quarters to the officers who were already in Japan and other parts of the Far East so they could bring their dependents to the area and be properly quartered.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, what was your initial impression of General MacArthur when you first reported for duty at GHQ?

LTG ALMOND: As I've said before, General Mueller who recommended me for

the assignment was an old friend of mine and acquaintance and we understood each other and our method of operations thoroughly. He took me immediately to present me to General MacArthur. Initially, I was highly impressed by his words covering the mission of the occupation force and generalities on what our Pacific operations had accomplished.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were you impressed only by his words or do you recall being impressed as many others were, by his mere physical presence and his manner?

LTG ALMOND: Both.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was your office initially in the Daichi Building?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, it was on the 3rd floor while General MacArthur's office and the Chief of Staff's office were on the 5th. The building was six stories high.

CPT FERGUSSON: What sort of routine did you have as G-1? I believe you spent a lot of time traveling, did you not? Throughout your time?

LTG ALMOND: Well, I began my job as G-1 by staying in the office long enough to learn the various aspects of the command as a whole. I was responsible for finding out the needs, personnel-wise, of all the commands composing not only the occupation forces, but the Far Eastern military forces which stretched from the Philippine Islands up through Okinawa to Japan and then clear to Korea. I had to first, find out what their needs were by the records, and then I made it a point to visit all units of brigade or higher size and all isolated detachments in Korea, in Okinawa, in Guam and in the Philippines.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was morale a problem within the American Forces at that

time?

LTG ALMOND: Well, I found that the people who had been on duty for a considerable amount of time in the Pacific area, were anxious to get home. That was one of the chief jobs of my personnel instruction - to find out who wanted to go home and how badly he wanted to go home, and how we could release him, but only on the condition that a replacement was obtained whether he was a soldier or an officer. It was important to keep the spirits of the occupying force at the highest possible level and this desire to get away from a long-type of Pacific detail was generally recognized and we tried to satisfy the replacements.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were there any unusual disciplinary problems among the American occupation forces at that time, that came to your attention as G-1?

LTG ALMOND: No, not especially. The usual difficulty of enforcing discipline and applying a punishment for anything that needed punishing. I wouldn't say it was unusual.

CPT FERGUSSON: As G-1 did you see General MacArthur on a daily basis when you were in Tokyo?

LTG ALMOND: No. I saw him on occasions that required it, whether there were special problems to solve or when a special type of personnel was needed to fill a vacancy or to supply the needs of a newly created function. I would deal with the Chief of Staff directly, on general matters, but when a decision was necessary by the commanding general on the recommendation of the Chief of Staff, I usually went in to see General MacArthur with the Chief of Staff to discuss the situation and find out the desires of the

Commander.

CPT FERGUSSON: You did not find it particularly difficult to get access to General MacArthur? In other words, he wasn't, he didn't build . . . ?

LTG ALMOND: No, I had access to General MacArthur whenever I thought I needed him, but I never abused this privilege and I never asked for a conference unless it was fundamentally essential that the Commander know and hear the details of what I had to say.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, at the time you arrived in Tokyo and took up the position of G-1, General MacArthur was still very much involved in the reconstruction of Japan, rebuilding of the economy which had been destroyed by the war. He also was attempting to rebuild the confidence of the Japanese people and convince them that he was not there to punish them. What do you remember about the Japanese you saw when you first arrived in Tokyo? Did their mood appear still to be that of a people demoralized by defeat in war, or were they beginning to come out of it?

LTG ALMOND: Well, as I've said to begin with, I arrived in Tokyo about nine months after the occupation had begun. And it was my understanding when I got there that the Japanese attitude to begin with, when the occupation began was one of great apprehension and suspicion of the man who had been this successful commander against their armed forces through the Pacific war. Tojo had tried to convince the Japanese that General MacArthur was a viper and a criminal, and had threatened to hang him from a tree near the Daichi Building if he ever was captured with the Japanese forces. However, by the time I arrived in Japan, the Japanese as a whole, were beginning to learn that General MacArthur not only did not intend to

exterminate them or to impose undue hardships on them as a people or to dispose of their Emperor whom they adored, (and considered him a deity, equal to the God of all creation) they began to have confidence in him and this was on the increase. General MacArthur did everything possible to show the Japanese that if they would respond to his democratic approach to their problems, economy wise, and security wise, that he would be a great asset to the revival of their nation.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, do you recall any conversations or encounters with individual Japanese in the first few months there, that might be symbolic of their attitude?

LTG ALMOND: No, I had no occasion to come in contact with the Japanese; that was an occupation duty and I was G-1 for personnel to supply occupation functionaries and military functionaries.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, would you describe the working relationship between members of General MacArthur's staff? Was there any friction or lack of coordination between the G-1 and the G-2 and the G-3 and the G-4? And also describe your relationship with the Chief of Staff.

LTG ALMOND: No, I think our staff functioned very smoothly. And there was concern in a dual manner with occupation needs and troop requirements to carry out the supervision of those needs. General Mueller, the Chief of Staff, was a wearer of two hats; he was Chief of Staff for various commands, which involved the troop aspects, our troops, that is, and he was also Chief of Staff for SCAP (Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) which had to do with the occupation function. There were two Deputy Chiefs of Staff and a complete staff dedicated to the purpose of

both the duties of the Far East Command.

CPT FERGUSSON: In November of 1946, you became one of those two Deputy Chiefs of Staff, under General Mueller. Can you describe this job? First of all, why did you move to that job at that time, and then describe the job, sir?

LTG ALMOND: At the time I was G-1, from June to November, the Deputy Chief of Staff, Far East Command, was General Percy Clarkson, who had been in the Pacific the past four or five years and was in the position to be transferred back to the States. When this occurred, General Mueller recommended to General MacArthur that I be moved from the G-1 job to the position of Deputy Chief of Staff, FEC, which meant the Far East Command. This duty I assumed under General Mueller, and under the command of General MacArthur, and my duties covered all troop activity connected with the Occupation. This was in contradistinction to the control of the Japanese people and their government. This, as I said before, was known as SCAP Section of General MacArthur's staff. I reported to the Deputy Chief of Staff, General Mueller, who was both the Chief of Staff of FEC and SCAP, as I've said.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what was your relationship with General MacArthur, as Deputy Chief of Staff?

LTG ALMOND: My relationship with General MacArthur was most interesting and worthwhile. As Deputy Chief of Staff, I constantly visited all units in Japan, Okinawa, Korea, and the Philippine Islands. I made many reports to him personally on conditions in all these areas. At one point, General MacArthur was keenly aware of the dissatisfaction of the distribution of rations and other supplies in the XXIV Corps, then assigned to the Occupation

of Korea. General MacArthur called me into his office and gave me instructions to go to Korea, take as many officers as I wanted, and find out what the real story was on the dissatisfaction that was being reported in the press, particularly in the Detroit Press concerning conditions in the Occupation area. He gave me what he thought would be the things that I would find, which can be summed up by his feeling that it was a matter of inexperienced troop leaders not disposing of the supply that they already had in a prompt and efficient manner. This, I found to be exactly true, and came back and gave him a factual report which was based on the investigation that I and the 14 officers that I took with me for this occasion, had made. This detachment that I took to Korea represented not only the combat arms of the Army, but the medical corps and logistical activities. I had these men in Korea for the best part of one week and during that time, we visited 187 different units in more than 80 different locations throughout the southern half of the Korean peninsula. We thought that we found all the answers and essentially the fact that the officers in charge of the distribution of supplies were slow in the distribution and none of them were sure that the bulk of what they had done had been done effectively. As I can recall, this trip to Korea to help solve General Hodges' problems in the XXIV Corps was about February or March of 1947, shortly after I had become Deputy Chief of Staff.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, by this time, had your wife and your daughter joined you in Tokyo?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, when I first arrived in Tokyo in 1946, June, and had located the quarters that I would occupy and I secured from the housing

element in our staff an effort to rehabilitate the house which was owned by a Japanese familiar with American methods and very satisfactory to us, and had it prepared for occupancy by mid-August of that year. That determined the time at which my wife and daughter and her son, (young Tom Galloway, at this time was about 2½ years old) could come to Japan. They arrived on a passenger vessel in Yokohama and we met and immediately occupied the house that I had been preparing for the past two months. This was the latter part of August, 1946.

CPT FERGUSSON: In your opinion, how much credit does General MacArthur deserve for getting Japan back on her feet, after the war? Would you please discuss General MacArthur's approach to the massive problems confronting the Japanese during the first several years of the occupation?

LTG ALMOND: I would say that General MacArthur was almost totally responsible for getting Japan and its government back on its feet. He was usually opposed on every hand. As to the British, he was opposed in his desire to rehabilitate Japan's shipping, its steel industry, its textile industry, and many other activities that would compete with the British economy. He was opposed by the Chinese delegation in matters of steel, textiles, and food products, and the effort to move part of the Japanese production machinery to the Chinese mainland, but when our headquarters tried to determine how these textiles and steel or plants that they desired, moved should be operated, the reply was, "Oh, by the Japanese, of course. We'll send operators with them." This killed this project. He was opposed by the delegation of the Philippines who desired all the economic manufacturers and pulp mills that the Japanese had to be dismantled and

moved to the Philippines. He was opposed by the Soviet Union in all political matters, and in the true Communist fashion. The United States made it difficult for Japan to secure the necessary fuels, particularly coal and coke and the labor union influence from this country interfered with the Japanese back to work effort. Most of the other nations on the Allies side opposed him where their interests could be improved by further debilitation of the Japanese economy and know-how and construction capabilities. Whenever any proposal was made by General MacArthur, he usually stood alone. He was involved in a knock-down battle before his desires prevailed. General MacArthur's approach was one of discipline, guidance, and enlightenment for the betterment of the Japanese people and the restoration of their national economic recovery. He maintained the status of the Emperor and a diet both of which were contrary to the views of the Allied governments.

CPT FERGUSSON: How did he successfully overcome their opposition, sir? Just by virtue of his decision?

LTG ALMOND : By dogged determination and continuing to recommend. What he recommended was the most practical route in that Japan's economy was the first essential in its solution of its national unity and friendship to other nations of the world.

CPT FERGUSSON: A prominent historian of modern Japan (W.G. Beasley, author of The Modern History of Japan, New York, 1963) has written that while democracy and reform was a main preoccupation of General MacArthur's headquarters during the first two years of the Occupation, by early 1948, the emphasis had shifted to the strategic aspects of America's position

in Japan, giving greater importance to the country's role as a base, less to its interest as a political experiment. What are your comments?

LTG ALMOND: General MacArthur was the first, in my opinion, and at the beginning of the occupation, to recognize the importance of the strategic aspect of Japan from the US's viewpoint. He knew that unless the Japanese were in our orbit, in a democratic attitude and economically self-sufficient they would be taken over by the Soviets and the Chinese at any likely opportunity. The 3rd and 4th year of the occupation, were devoted to carrying out the plans that General MacArthur had exposed to the Japanese Diet and to the people at large. They realized that what they were doing was re-establishing the Japanese abilities and increasing and improving the supplies that they were receiving. General MacArthur realized this, and then began to emphasize, as you have indicated, that the strategic relationship of Japan to the United States should be strengthened and he did everything possible to tilt the attitude of the Japanese toward trade and military understanding between the Japanese nation and ours.

CPT FERGUSSON: One of his aims at the outset of the occupation, had been to destroy Japan completely as a military power. One of the ways, for example, that he attempted to insure this, was to give women the vote in Japan. He believed that this would prevent the rise of militarism in Japan again. There were many other approaches, many other facets of his overall plans, yet, to make Japan militarily weak would not seem to be supportive of a policy in which we depended on Japan as a strategic base in the Far East, unless the United States expected that its military power alone would be sufficient, merely using Japan as a base. Do you think General MacArthur

really intended for Japan to be weak militarily in the long run, and that this would be in the best interests of the United States?

LTC ALMOND: I believe that General MacArthur felt that basically it was necessary for Japan to have a sufficient organized strength, whether it was the National Police Force or a small national army adequate to the preservation of peace and order in Japan itself. And that by accomplishing this status, it would be favorable to American discussion. The United States, in its world relationships ought to insure that Japan was on our side in any event that might arise that would require military action. I think that General MacArthur realized that our Navy with base facilities in Japan, and also air action, could cope with anything that would threaten either Japan or the out-posts of the United States in the Pacific Ocean. This was a general attitude and General MacArthur realized that if threat of war or war itself arose, the Japanese people were stable enough to respond to a call for military assistance.

CPT FERGUSSON: But, sir, isn't it true that in recent years, when the United States has wanted to withdraw more and more of its power from the Far East, that we have been disappointed by the Japanese unwillingness to take up a role of strategic defense. They've been, they're so dominated by the pacifist strength in the ranks of their people that they have been unable to build up their military power sufficiently. Do you see this possibly as a result of the early policies of the Occupation days?

LTC ALMOND: Not necessarily. I think that the Japanese opposition to American policies is merely political jockeying by the public attitude of the Japanese nation. I believe that the Prime Ministers of Japan since the Occupation have always cooperated with the United States. They are desirous of course,

of gaining more economic independence and improving their manufacturing and other activities as best they can nationwide.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, after you had served in a position as Deputy Chief of Staff for several years, you became Chief of Staff for General MacArthur in early 1949. Why did you move to that position at that time? What was the reason for the vacancy and why were you selected at that time?

LTG ALMOND: Well, in late '48, General Paul Mueller, who was then Chief of Staff, both of the Occupation Forces and FEC activities, realized that he had been in the Pacific area for a number of years (during the war as the Division Commander of the 81st, US Infantry Division, and when the occupation started he became General MacArthur's Chief of Staff) decided that he wanted to go home, and he recommended that General MacArthur substitute me for him, upon his departure. This, General MacArthur accepted because he had had enough relations with me as Deputy Chief of Staff, Far East Command and the various special missions that he had given me not only the one that I had described about going to Korea to find out about supply difficulties, but I had gone to Washington to represent General MacArthur's views before Mr. Forrestal, the Secretary of Defense and others in the Pentagon area. This mission had concerned the future military strength of occupied force of Korea, the XXIV Corps under General John Hodge. General MacArthur proposed to the War Department and also to the State Department through the Secretary of Defense that unless the XXIV Corps could be kept in combat ready strength, which it was not entirely at the time, that he made this recommendation in 1947, that

the control of the Korean area should be turned over to the State Department and handled on a diplomatic basis. This eventually was the solution of the State Department because the Department of Defense felt that they were unable to furnish more troop strength for the Korean occupation. This and other missions that I had performed for General MacArthur, I think convinced him that I was capable of occupying the post of Chief of Staff for FEC and for SCAP, which I occupied when General Miller returned to the United States for duty there.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what was the relationship between General MacArthur and his Chief of Staff? What do you recall about your days as Chief of Staff, in the usual manner of operations?

LTG ALMOND: General MacArthur's custom was to deal with his staff through his Chief of Staff. He required that every staff member discuss with the Chief of Staff any important decision that he was expected to make. He, therefore, saw his staff as a whole very rarely. Every staff officer understood that to get his particular idea adopted, he was first scheduled with the Chief of Staff to find out General MacArthur's views before presenting the matter to General MacArthur in person. This particularly applied to the Chief of the G-2 section of the Staff during the Pacific War, and . . . .

CPT FERGUSSON: The G-2, sir?

LTG ALMOND: The G-2 of the Headquarters staff and during the Korean War later on. General Willoughby had volumes of proposals but he first had to discuss it with General Miller and then they both would go in to visit General MacArthur and many times take long hours of discussion to expose the proposals and

and to secure the approval thereof. This is just an example of how other staff officers worked in preparing plans, which had been requested by the Commander-in-Chief.

CPT FERGUSSON: In a general way, was General MacArthur difficult to deal with for staff officers? Did he usually have his mind made up on issues and not really want their advice, but only want their agreement, or did he really look for constructive criticism for recommendations from his staff?

LTG ALMOND: General MacArthur was a man of high intelligence. In many cases, he was way ahead of the staff in developing new ideas. He would, through his Chief of Staff, expose his ideas to the staff for further development. The Inchon Landing and the place selected as Inchon is a good example which we will come to later. But General MacArthur was very willing to listen to the sound proposals although they might oppose his plan, but he wanted a good reason for any opposition and was quick to detect falacious or shallow ones. He was very attentive as a listener up to the point that he decided that the discussion was bogging down on minor points.

CPT FERGUSSON: At the time you became Chief of Staff in 1949, General Almond, how was General MacArthur divising his time or what was his emphasis at that point? Was he still much involved with SCAP and the administration of occupation of Japan, or was he concentrating more on getting American forces in shape and strengthening our strategic position in the Far East?

LTG ALMOND: No, I think he was principally occupied in the occupation

requirements and observing how they worked out. For example, in 1948, General MacArthur had gotten through the Japanese Diet the bill which would divide up the large estates of the Japanese nation. Japan, with a population of nearly 100 million people, was situated on the various islands, the four main islands and many little islands in the area, only 16% of the land occupation was arable. General MacArthur realized that every Japanese citizen was entitled to a homestead if he worked hard at producing on that area. The biggest estates of Japan were divided up to the degree that no individual in Japan could own more than 60 acres of tillable land, which would produce either fish or rice or a combination of living requirements, in a food way or a textile way. This law had been passed by the Japanese Diet in 1946, or 1947. General MacArthur inquired as to the application of this law and whether it was being enforced or not. He found that not a single Japanese had actually received his land by transfer of deed. He then notified the Diet of the Japanese government that unless these deeds were consummated and recorded in court, that the person responsible for the failure would be jailed. This had an electrifying effect on the application of this law. It was for this reason that it became a law, much to the embarrassment and dismay of the big land owners. General MacArthur watched this carefully, during the days when he was supposed to be thinking of strategic development.

CPT FERGUSSON: So, you found yourself as a Chief of Staff involved quite a bit with the problem of having to do with this Japanese aspect or the problems of Japanese occupation.

LTG ALMOND : Yes, I found myself involved in the many aspects of Chief of

Staff for FEC and for SCAP that I had no approach to when I was Deputy Chief of Staff prior to this.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, about the time you became Chief of Staff, the struggle of the Communists and the Nationalists in China was reaching its climax. What was your reaction and General MacArthur's reaction to events in China at that time?

LTG ALMOND : Well, the United States had a mission at the capital of the Chinese Republic.

CPT FERGUSSON: At Nanking?

LTG ALMOND: At Nanking. And Chiang Kai-shek and General MacArthur had the communications through this mission. General MacArthur felt that Chiang Kai-shek while weak in some regards and not exactly a developer of a democratic attitude, at least was anti-communist. General MacArthur thought it was best to support him in the Far East to obtain opposition to the Soviet's domination and the Communist attitude of Mao Tse Tung.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did he ever indicate any feeling that the United States should be more involved in helping the Nationalist Chinese at that point?

LTG ALMOND : Yes, he realized that the supplies that were being sent from the United States to support Chiang Kai-shek were not only inadequate, but not being distributed properly and getting to the right places, for instance, wire and piping and other items that the Chinese Nationalists could not produce themselves were being diverted when they arrived in China, by the war lords for their own purposes and not for the Nationalists good. He also realized that the Communist Chinese under Mao Tse Tung were getting

stronger and more dominating. He wanted support for Chiang Kai-shek to reduce this tendency. He didn't succeed of course, and that's why Chiang Kai-shek was expelled from the China mainland and ended up on Formosa.

CPT FERGUSSON: Was he recommending at this time, the actual intervention with US military forces in China, on the side of the Nationalists?

LTG ALMOND: No, but he was recommending that the air supplies and other military equipment be sent to China so that the Chinese Nationalist Army under Chiang Kai-shek could be more effective against the Chinese Communist Army which was building up as the Chinese People's Republic as it now exists.

CPT FERGUSSON: In other words, he thought the Nationalists were capable of winning the war if they were just given the proper amount of supplies by the United States.

LTG ALMOND: Well, he was hopeful of it.

CPT FERGUSSON: But he didn't want us to get involved directly?

LTG ALMOND: No, as a matter of fact, he made a statement that our Congress should never get bogged down in a land warfare on the Asiatic mainland.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you recall his reaction, sir, when the Communists finally were totally victorious in China? What did he think this would mean?

LTG ALMOND: Well, he was afraid that it would mean what it turned out to be. For that reason, he always had the idea even before the Korean war started, of making a trip to Formosa to see how Chiang Kai-shek would be supported in the development of a government of free Chinese on the island of Formosa with the problem of getting back to the mainland as soon as possible.

CPT FERGUSSON: You accompanied him on that trip to visit Chiang Kai-shek did you not?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, I did.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you describe that, sir?

LTG ALMOND: Well, General MacArthur for the past year or at least ever since the Chiang Kai-shek government had been established on the Formosan Islands had been desirous of going down for this talkfest with Chiang Kai-shek. The Korean war, or the prospect of it, had prevented this visit until finally, after the Korean war was well underway, General MacArthur took the bit in his teeth and decided to go to Formosa and see Chiang Kai-shek. This happened in the latter part of July 1950, some two months before the Inchon Landing. We arrived in Taipei with a number of staff officers in two airplanes, the C-54 type, the Bataan, General MacArthur's plane, and another supporting plane and with us, I as Chief of Staff; General Willoughby as the Intelligence member of the party; General Marquette as the Scientific and Manufacturing representative, Admiral Joy, the Chief of Naval Forces Operation, General Stratemeyer, Chief of the Air Force, Japan; and a number of secretaries; a total of about 20 people, arrived in Taipei and spent two nights there the day between the two nights devoted to conferences between Chiang Kai-shek and General MacArthur and the Chief of Staff of government individuals of the Chinese government. I forgot to say that General Fox who was the Deputy Chief of Staff for FEC also accompanied us. We found that the many supplies that had been sent by the United States to Chiang Kai-shek's area, had not arrived as intended. This one particular case will illustrate what I'm trying to convey. Barbed wire which was to be used in the offshore

obstruction to prevent the Chinese Communist army under Mao Tse Tung from coming across and landing on the island of Formosa, had been shipped by the U.S. When we got to Taipei, we found that the barbed wire intended for those obstructions was surrounding tomato patches and sweet potato farms on the east side of Formosa island where they'd been diverted from the military purpose to agriculture. That caused us to reach a decision and we told Chiang Kai-shek that in the future, no supplies for the military support of Formosa would be distributed for arrival in Formosa without being under the supervision of an American officer detailed from the United States to see that they got to the right places. Chiang Kai-shek agreed that this was a wise provision that he would agree to. Then he finally said, "General MacArthur, if I could have done in China what you did in Japan, I would be there today." And General MacArthur asked him what he meant. Chiang said, "If I could impose the land reform law that you've imposed in Japan in distributing the tillable land in China, I would have still been there." General MacArthur's question was, "Well, why didn't you do that?" He explained that the opposition of his war lords, who diverted the land to their own purposes, as they always had for centuries made it impossible for him to make that kind of a distribution effective.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you recall meeting Chiang Kai-shek yourself?

LTG ALMOND : Oh, yes. I attended the conference which General MacArthur held with Chiang Kai-shek and incidentally, Madame Chiang, who was a very intelligent woman and educated in the United States. We attended not only the staff briefings, the private conferences with Chiang Kai-shek and

Madame Chiang, but she gave a very elaborate dinner for our party the night after we got there. It was a very formal occasion and a very striking one. I had the honor and distinction of sitting on her left while General MacArthur sat on her right. Several Admirals were ranked out of their seats, much to their chagrin, but it was rather humorous that a Major General should be sitting where an Admiral might sit next to Madame Chiang. However, we joked it off, and had a successful trip down there and the most important part of it was the fact that we had arranged to have supervision of distribution of our supplies to Chiang Kai-shek's government.

CPT FERGUSSON: What did you think of Chiang Kai-shek at that point?

LTC ALMOND: Well, I'm not a very capable critic of Asiatic personalities. But Chiang Kai-shek gave the impression of being a little too conservative in his enforcement of his desires. He gave instructions and then didn't personally see that they were carried out and he didn't remove the people who were responsible for failure to carry out his orders. He accepted excuses rather than deliverance of the product.

CPT FERGUSSON: Getting back to your duties as Chief of Staff in Tokyo. Could you describe a typical working day at GHQ? You worked in the Daichi Building, didn't you sir?

LTC ALMOND: Yes. I worked in the Chief of Staff's office on the 5th floor which was adjacent to a room which we used as a map room and a conference room and just beyond that was General MacArthur's office. We were all on the same floor, quickly available by either General MacArthur walking into my office and discussing things or pressing a button and I would report to his office. His office was very imposing. Large and completely

stripped of any evidence of records and communications. His desk was absolutely clean and when he finished one subject, he'd clean up for the next one. The Chief of Staff was always available to him and as I say, many times he came from his office to my office and we held long discussions on the subject at hand. He had no telephone in his office but his aide had one.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you always feel a need to be very formal with him?

LTG ALMOND: No, not at all. As a matter of fact, when I reported as Chief of Staff, although I had seen General MacArthur many other times, he came into my desk the first day and very smilingly said, "You understand that I have unusual hours; don't let that bother you. Just leave a staff officer in each section and go home at any time you desire in the evening." He knew, I think, by his association with me, that I would never do anything like that, but he gave me the opportunity. When he said, "Don't be disturbed by my unusual hours in the office, " I said, very frankly and in a friendly manner, which he recognized and smiled at, "General MacArthur nothing you could do would disturb me emotionally." He said, "Why is that?" I said, "Because once I commanded the 92nd Infantry Division." He smiled and walked away.

CPT FERGUSSON: He did not usually come to work until about 10:30 in the morning, is that right sir?

LTG ALMOND : That's correct. And he worked even through lunch until he finished the jobs to be decided that day or could get a progress report on what was being developed in our planning operations and what the progress of it was, and if he could facilitate it in any way he did. He would return home at about 2:00 or 2:30 each day, have his lunch, and have a short nap

and be back at the office at 4:30 or 5:00 in the afternoon. He would stay at the office each day, Sundays included, until the work for that day, as far as he was concerned as Commander and decision maker, was completed. I've known him to stay as late as midnight until his work was finished. I, of course, as Chief of Staff, remained at my desk all the time and every time that General MacArthur was in his office. I never left my office until he left his.

CPT FERGUSSON: What time did you usually come to work in the morning?

LTG ALMOND: 9:00.

CPT FERGUSSON: So you were there for an hour and a half before he arrived. Did you prepare a briefing for him to be given upon his arrival? Was there any sort of formal staff briefing every morning?

LTG ALMOND: No. But I had meetings of the staff on my own responsibility, or a meeting with a particular staff officer who was engaged in any project that had to be reported or the progress was being reported on when General MacArthur arrived. When this occurred, as soon as he was settled in his office, I would go in with my notes or my documents and stay there until he was satisfied with the products or made changes. Whereupon, these were made, and I would go back at the first opportunity and finish the subject. He was very demanding, and we all understood when we started a project, he wanted it produced in a minimum reasonable time so that we could get on to future activities.

CPT FERGUSSON : Did you review all incoming messages and correspondence before General MacArthur saw them or did some things go directly to him for his eyes only?

LTG ALMOND: No communication ever came in from higher headquarters, or from important headquarters in the occupation area that wasn't produced in enough copies for the Chief of Staff and the unit concerned on the staff and General MacArthur. I knew that when General MacArthur arrived in his office the first thing he would do was to read the incoming messages of the previous 12 hours. Then when I said that we had a message from the Department of the Army or any other source, he had invariably seen that message before I had. He always was prepared to discuss it with me. He once explained why he did this; it was because he said, during the war in the Pacific, that many messages had come in that weren't presented to him by the staff, in some cases, never; and in many cases, delayed too long. Therefore, he had his own way of being alerted to important messages even before the staff officer concerned or the Chief of Staff could get to him.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you ever recall getting into trouble with General MacArthur as Chief of Staff? Did he ever lecture you or ever chew you out in any way?

LTG ALMOND: Never.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Fox and others who worked under you, had various memories of the staff when you were Chief of Staff have said that you were a very tough task master. How did you feel that you ran the staff? Were you very demanding of them?

LTG ALMOND : I suppose I was. My thought was that I could estimate about the time it would take them to do a job, and I gave them adequate time to do that job. But I was impatient, I'm sure, with those who didn't

deliver what I wanted in a time that I thought it was necessary and adequate to complete the task.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you describe the staff at that time, briefly. The G-1, the G-2, G-3 and G-4.

LTG ALMOND : While I was Chief of Staff, there were a few changes made on that staff, but the Chiefs as I name them were there mainly for the entire period that I was Chief of Staff, (actually operating until I went to Korea). The G-1 was Brigadier General Biederlinden, Field Artillery, a good officer; the G-2 was General Willoughby, who had been with General MacArthur since the days of the Philippines and accompanied him when MacArthur's small group was taken out on the PT boats when the Japanese invaded in 1942; the G-3 was General Wright.

CPT FERGUSSON : Brigadier General Wright?

LTG ALMOND: Brigadier General Wright who had been the tank advisor to General Bradley in the 12th Army Group in France during the war. The G-4 was General Eastwood, who had been with General MacArthur in the Pacific war for a number of years, prior to coming to the occupation and one of his staunch and capable staff members during the war; in anti-aircraft matters was Brigadier General Bill Marquette, a Coast Artilleryman, who became on General MacArthur's Tokyo staff the Scientific and Manufacturing Section Chief which dealt with the Japanese and the rehabilitation of all their industry. Getting up higher to the Deputy Chief of Staff, General Fox, who went to Japan about the same time that I did, in 1946, and had various staff positions, ended up in the period I am discussing just before

the Korean War and through the Korean war, period, as Deputy Chief of Staff for Supreme Commander, Allied Powers. General Fox was a very capable and well known officer of the Army for many years, and did a marvelous job as Deputy Chief of Staff job in the occupation area.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about your Deputy Chief of Staff for the Far East Command?

LTG ALMOND: When I became Chief of Staff, the Deputy Chief of Staff, FEC (the opposite of General Fox's staff) was Major General Doyle Hickey. Doyle Hickey had a fine war record as an artilleryman. And had been in the Far East command some six months before he became Deputy Chief of Staff, FEC. When I went to Korea in the Inchon Landing, Doyle Hickey moved up to my desk as acting Chief of Staff in lieu of the fact and in a s much as I could only be in Korea and not in Korea and Japan at the same time. This will be explained later.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Courtney Whitney was in a separate element. He was directly under General MacArthur in SCAP, is that correct, sir?

LTG ALMOND: General Courtney Whitney had been with General MacArthur in the Philippines when General MacArthur served as Chief Military Advisor for the United States in 1937-38 and on into the Japanese invasion. Whitney at first, had been a lawyer, legal advisor to General MacArthur when he was over there the first time after World War I. He practiced law in Manila and when General MacArthur came to establish his advisory group, he returned to active duty and became his Judge Advocate Advisor during the time of this Military Mission and until the Japs invaded. When the Japs invaded, General MacArthur was taken up out of the Philippines in

a PT boat as will be remembered, and as he went out he chose to take with him, General Whitney, then a Colonel, and General Willoughby, then his G-2 and then several others. Whitney stayed with General MacArthur throughout this Pacific War and when the occupation began, General MacArthur, knowing his legal talents, appointed General Whitney as Chief of the Government Section in the SCAP Staff, which was headed by the Deputy Chief of Staff of SCAP. General Whitney was also retained as Secretarial Advisor to General MacArthur on legal matters as he had for the past 10 or 15 years.

CPT FERGUSSON: So, he had a rather unusual relationship, or direct relationship with General MacArthur?

LTG ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: Not through you?

LTG ALMOND: General Whitney would go to see General MacArthur, the only member of the GHQ staff who had an office with a direct inter-communications, which was a little bit unusual and not especially desired by other staff members.

CPT FERGUSSON: General MacArthur must have had a great deal of confidence in General Willoughby, as G-2, since he had had him with him all during the Pacific War and retained him in Tokyo. What was your own feeling, did you share General MacArthur's confidence in General Willoughby as a capable G-2?

LTG ALMOND: Yes, I thought General Willoughby was a capable G-2, but many of his decisions and activities were over-emphasized and elaborated on to a degree not necessary on a particular occasion. Willoughby was a dependable intelligence officer and advisor.

CPT FERGUSSON: THIS COMPLETES SIDE TWO.

INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL ALMOND

THIS IS SIDE 1 OF TAPE 4 OF AN INTERVIEW WITH LT GENERAL ALMOND. THE DATE IS MARCH 28, 1975. INTERVIEWER, CAPTAIN THOMAS G. FERGUSSON, CGSC STUDENT. INTERVIEW IS BEING CONDUCTED IN THE HOME OF GENERAL ALMOND IN ANNISTON, ALABAMA.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, would you continue your comments on General Willoughby as G-2 under General MacArthur.

GEN ALMOND: As I was saying, General Willoughby had the confidence of General MacArthur in matters of intelligence: collection, assimilation, interpretation, and reporting of the matters of concern to the staff and command. General Willoughby, with the aid of Japanese interpreters, developed information throughout the occupied areas and reported this to General MacArthur. The Chief of Staff knew very little about the details of this information and for that reason General Willoughby had more access than any other staff member in order to interpret the concepts of Japanese thoughts during the occupation period. Sometimes General Willoughby would be very loquacious on the subject and had to be curbed by those capable of doing so. As Chief of Staff, I avoided any conflict with this attitude and General MacArthur handled it very diplomatically.

INTERVIEWER: So General Willoughby's function was not merely to warn General MacArthur of potential threats to the American presence in the Far East, but to monitor Japanese public opinion or goings on within the Japanese populace.

GEN ALMOND: Yes, that's correct.



INTERVIEWER: Do you ever recall any threats of dissident groups in Japan to try and disrupt the occupation or to . . . What about the Communists?

GEN ALMOND: Occasionally that occurred. One example is . . . the Japanese prisoners of war who had been in Siberia and other places in China as the war was terminating. We learned that these prisoners would not be declared available for repatriation until they received indoctrination in the Communists view and philosophy of life. The first few train loads of Japanese expatriates to arrive in Japan from the ships that brought them from Vladivostok were very unruly. And the Japanese that lived in Eastern Japan would, instead of staying on the troop train until they got to their destination, get off at the first opportunity or after the train stopped and create disorder on the station platform in Communist style and would preach Communist views and agitate the public. And this would happen at the next station and each station stop and all of these repatriated prisoners would demonstrate in favor of Communist views and activity. And this, of course, was contrary to General MacArthur's philosophy of democratic development for the Japanese. And it resulted in our having Japanese police guards keep the trains closed and not allow crowds of Japanese to gather at every stop. This did not set well with the Soviet Missions then headed by General Derevenko in Tokyo, but it was enforced anyhow and broke up the activity of the repatriated prisoners. We found that the prisoners who got off to demonstrate in a Communist manner, when they arrived home were quickly subdued by their own people.

INTERVIEWER: General MacArthur's method then when he received intelligence of Communist disturbances or other dissident groups in



Japan and was not to use U. S. military forces to quell them, but instead, to work through Japanese police, Japanese authorities?

GEN ALMOND: Decidedly so.

INTERVIEWER: What then did you see the function to be of the American troops who were stretched through Japan at this time? Were they there primarily to give us a presence in Asia and to be there as part of our overall strength or were they there to remind the Japanese that we could, if necessary, take our own measures?

GEN ALMOND: That's right. The American group there demonstrated to the Japanese that as long as they could control their civil activity and relationship with each other and with the occupation, that the American troops would not interfere. But if interference was necessary, it could be quickly invoked and they soon learned this and acted accordingly. Our main effort in this direction was to establish a sound National Police Force rather than a national military force that the Japanese had been prohibited from organizing.

INTERVIEWER: Getting back to the staff, sir. Would you . . . did you feel that anyone of the primary members of the staff were particularly unsuited for their job or were all of them functioning well under you when you were Chief of Staff?

GEN ALMOND: Well, the staff was very satisfactory to me and to General MacArthur. The capability of each staff officer was thoroughly investigated before he was appointed to the staff and we felt that they performed as anticipated.

INTERVIEWER: Did you see anyone of the four primary staff officers as the key man on the staff (the G-3, for example) as the most important

member other than the chief of staff at this time or were they all very important?

GEN ALMOND: We considered them all important in their field. And in the planning matter, General Wright appeared simply a G-3 operational functionary and did the job in a fine manner. For example; when a plan was conceived such as the Inchon landing plan, General Wright and his staff would work the details out and present the advantages and disadvantages of the plan and I would consult with him on what they were and how they should be modified if any and then we would take the plan to General MacArthur in the map room between General MacArthur's office and my office. If there was anything to be done or elaborated on, General Wright would take the plan back to his own G-3 section and come back with it when it was modified as desired. This applied to all staff sections, particularly the G-4 as well as G-2 and G-1.

INTERVIEWER: As Chief of Staff, did you make inspection trips on your own to various U. S. units within Japan or even within the Far East?

GEN ALMOND: No, I allowed the Deputy Chief of Staff to do just as I had done when I was Deputy Chief of Staff. He made the visits to the places that I had knowledge of and would come back with his recommendations.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, therefore, you were always with General MacArthur and would accompany him on his trips?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, you mentioned several times the Russian delegation in Tokyo and the problems you and General MacArthur had in dealing with them. How they were always obstructing what he was trying

to do? Would you also describe the relations with some of the other primary representatives there, including the British, the Australians, the French and so on?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, I would like to precede that by just one allusion to the Soviet Mission. As I recall, there were seventeen nations that had diplomatic missions in the occupation area. And many of these nations; the British, for example, and the French and the Chinese and the Filipinos had started out with military personnel as their only representatives, but they developed embassies and . . . ministers.

INTERVIEWER: Ambassadors?

GEN ALMOND: Ambassadors, eventually. All except the Soviet. The Soviet Military Missions to Japan never changed. They never changed as designated during the entire occupation. It was the only nation to follow this recourse. However, the Russian Mission attempted to secure diplomatic immunity for all of its personnel entering Japan, either from Vladivostok or from Moscow. They repeatedly replied to General MacArthur's headquarters and he made a decision as to whether or not their military people could have diplomatic immunity. General MacArthur always refused to allow such immunity until they had changed to a diplomatic mission rather than a military mission. This irked the Russian in command, particularly General Derevenko, considerably, but it didn't change General MacArthur's attitude. In other words, he didn't mix military and diplomatic immunities at all. As far as the British are concerned, when the Occupation first began and Churchill was the Prime Minister of the British Empire, he sent a personal representative in the name of Lieutenant General Charles Gardiner. Not only did the

British have this private representative of the Prime Minister, but they had a regular diplomatic mission with an Ambassador, Sir Alvary Gascoigne. In addition to the British Million in the Occupation, there was a British Empire occupation force called BCOF which was composed of some British troops and some Australian troops and a few Canadians.

INTERVIEWER: The Australians were the major part of that, were they not, sir?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, the Australians were a major part and the commander was an Australian.

INTERVIEWER: Who was that, sir?

GEN ALMOND: General Robertson, who had been a lieutenant at the Dardenelles in the First World War.

INTERVIEWER: Were the Australians useful partners in the occupation?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. They were more like the Americans than even the Canadians were. The French Mission was headed, most of the time I was in Tokyo, by a very famous French officer (famous in the First World War as well as the Second World War) and his name was Pechkoff. And he was the son of a man in the encyclopedia named Pechkoff, but in the Historical and Diplomatic circles as Maxim Gorky.

INTERVIEWER: He was the illegitimate son of Maxim Gorky?

GEN ALMOND: The illegitimate son of Maxim Gorky. His mother was an Italian Countess. General Pechkoff prior to World War I had served in the French Foreign Legion and lost his arm in World War I and became aide to General Joffre. He had served in the latter part of World War II, first in Africa and then when the United States troops had invaded North Africa and the British were running the Germans out of the Suez Canal area and

on to Morocco. General Pechkoff headed a military force during the move from Lake Chad across Africa and joined the Allies in North Africa in a very commendable manner. General Pechkoff was a fine diplomatic agent in Tokyo and served the French well.

INTERVIEWER: How did he get along with General MacArthur? What was their relationship?

GENERAL ALMOND: Very well. He was a fine diplomat who had many friends in the United States and mutual friends of General MacArthur.

INTERVIEWER: The relationship between General MacArthur and the British ambassador was not as good. Is that correct?

GEN ALMOND: Well, it was more formal and austere if you want to use the term.

INTERVIEWER: General MacArthur's unusual office hours in which he returned late in the afternoon and often worked late into the night, must have interfered somewhat with his participation in the many social activities in Japan at that time. How would you characterize the social life among your headquarters and the other embassies at that time?

GEN ALMOND: As a matter of fact, General MacArthur took part in none of the social life in Tokyo. When important visitors would come to Tokyo he would greet them in a very friendly manner in his office. He would establish then, if they needed quarters, in the Imperial Hotel and he would invite them to lunch at his home (The American Embassy in Tokyo) the first day of their arrival. They would come to lunch at which time we would have both men and women, the staff officers and the functionaries and their wives, to this lunch and after a convivial greeting at the embassy where he lived, we would all pass into lunch and he would be the last man to take his seat with the

important personage on his right or left or both and everyone else picked their own seats. That would be the only social functions that General MacArthur participated in, regardless of the length of time that the personage who was visiting us remained in Tokyo. The social function pertaining to various entertainment would be handled by the Chief of Staff and his wife. Before my becoming Chief of Staff, General and Mrs. Mueller would always give an evening dinner and everything else that was appropriate. When I became Chief of Staff, my wife, Margaret Almond, and I functioned as representatives of the Commanding General at all dinner functions.

INTERVIEWER: So the full burden of the social responsibilities fell on you and your wife then?

GEN ALMOND: Correct.

INTERVIEWER: Why did General MacArthur have this policy? Why didn't he participate in the evening social activities? Was he too busy or was this part of his attempt to maintain distance from everyone?

GEN ALMOND: No. It was his philosophy that he couldn't browse around with everybody concerned and still maintain the prestige of the command that he represented the United Nations.

INTERVIEWER: How did you feel about this? Did you fully sympathize with his attitude in this regard or did you feel sometimes put upon by having to take on so much additional social responsibility?

GEN ALMOND: No. I never felt put upon. I felt that it was General MacArthur's desire and I was glad to proceed with it.

INTERVIEWER: To finally wrap up your assignment as Chief of Staff, one minor question. That is, you said that you came into the office about nine a.m. an hour and a half before General MacArthur. Did you

remain there through the day even in the period when he was home; were you there working when he went home for lunch and stayed until four?

GEN ALMOND: No. When General MacArthur left the office, I immediately left and would go home to my own quarters for lunch and return to the office within a very short time thereafter. I didn't absent myself from my own office just because MacArthur wasn't there. I felt that it was my duty to be available in my office whenever any member of the staff would like to visit me for any purpose.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have an aide or an administrative assistant at that time, sir?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. I had an aide all of the time.

INTERVIEWER: Who was your aide at this time?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I had several. I had a number of aides during my tour in Tokyo from the time I was in the G-1 office up through the deputy chief of staff's office, including the chief of staff, of course. One I took over from General Mueller, because he was familiar with conditions as a staff officer for the chief of staff. This was Tom Campbell, who later came back to the States and was replaced by an officer named Lamour, whom I had known before in the Second Division days. Following that, Alexander M. Haig, now the Commander position in the NATO command and an ex-advisor to Kissinger under the Nixon Administration, and a very fine officer, was my aide as a captain and lieutenant before that and on many occasions was with me in the important operations in Korea. The other one was a Jones and later a very fine individual who is now in the Pentagon in the joint chiefs of staff office named "Red" Barrett. Others I could mention but it would be too long a list.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, you served in Japan from June 1946 until the time you left for Korea in 1950. Did you ever return to the United States during that time? You did for the meeting in Washington, didn't you?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. I returned to the United States twice. Once to deliver General MacArthur's message to Mr. Forrestal, the Secretary of Defense and another time to be present at the burial of my son and son-in-law. My son, Edward M. Almond, Jr., killed in the fighting in France in the latter days of the War, March 19, 1945, to be exact and the other who had returned at the same time, was my son-in-law, Major Thomas Galloway, the flyer who was downed in the fighting just after they had completed the cross Channel operations in 1944.

INTERVIEWER: So, you returned?

GEN ALMOND: So, I returned to be present at the funeral of these two young officers in Arlington. Also present were many of my friends who were then on duty in Washington. These responses to my personal matters were very satisfying to me, of course, but the occasion was a sad one. However, it gave me an opportunity to visit for several days my son-in-law, Major Charles Fergusson, who had served in the Occupation and had returned to the States as a student at Princeton University prior to going to West Point as an instructor.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, the Republic of Korea was invaded by the Soviet sponsored government of North Korea on the 25th of June 1950, while you were still serving as General MacArthur's chief of staff. The United States came to the aid of the South Koreans in cooperation with the United Nations. Would you comment on the period prior to the hostilities opening up in Korea? Didn't you have something to do with the withdrawal of the XXIV Corps from Korea while you were chief of staff?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, as a staff officer, I represented General MacArthur. Yes. I had something to do with the deteriorating circumstances in Korea, but only in accordance to General MacArthur's instructions. The occupation chief then was Lieutenant General John Hodge. This was in the mid 1949 and the outbreak of the Korean War was on the 25th of June 1950, the crowning point, of course. By mid 1948 the XXIV Corps had been reduced to an ineffective combat strength. General MacArthur sent me to Washington (as deputy chief of staff) to deliver a staff study that he had approved to the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Forrestal and to the Chief of Staff of the Army and for the benefit of the State Department. Secretary of the Army at that time was Kenneth Royal. And he gave me every facility for discussing the matter with the joint committees of the Army and State Department and the Department of Defense. General MacArthur had indicated that it was his considered opinion and estimate that, "We must increase the strength of the XXIV Corps decidedly or turn the U. S. interest in the Korean Occupation over to the Diplomatic Corps and the State Department for handling." I had a conference with Mr. Forrestal and with Mr. Draper, Assistant Secretary of the Army, and with the joint committee of the State, War, and Navy Department, Mr. Butterworth, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, represented the State Department. I returned to Tokyo with little promise of receiving any more troops. By the end of 1948, we had a decision from the War Department that we were to turn Korea over to the State Department for diplomatic control. Our troops were pulled out by May of 1949 and things in Korea worsened to the point where the North Korean forces with Soviet guns and assistance crossed the 38th parallel at daylight on 25 June 1950.

INTERVIEWER: So you think that the fact that we pulled all of our troops out of Korea was very much a part of the North Korean decision, backed by the Soviets, to attack in June of 1950?

GEN ALMOND: Decidedly so.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, would you describe the reaction of General MacArthur and your own role during the days following the Korean invasion of South Korea?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, prior to this actual invasion when the conditions seemed to be worsening, General MacArthur had sent to Korea to operate with an ambassador over there, a detachment of officers, about fourteen in number under General Church who was the member of our staff in Tokyo. In the three days following the attack of the 25th of June, the enemy was threatening Seoul from the North which was a threat to the Capital, of course. And the South Korean Army was so disorganized by this attack it began to disperse and disintegrate along the entire line which was generally the 38th parallel. Soviet tanks were moving all around the Soel area and President Syngman Rhee had flown to Pusan for a temporary Korean government set-up. Our ambassador, Mr. Muccio, was living 30 miles away from the city of Seoul at Suwon Airport, where he set up a temporary operational base. Things were in a state of desperation. General MacArthur, at my urging, had decided to fly to Suwon in order to get as close to Seoul as possible. So on the 29th of June, four days after the attack, we took off from Tokyo at daylight that morning and flew over for a conference with President Syngman Rhee and our Ambassador Muccio and General Church, who had been observing the South Korean troops, with the fourteen officers detachment that he had taken there. General Church had been with

his group among the Korean scattered forces during these three days. He had them scattered among the five divisions that the Koreans had in hand when the North Koreans attacked. When we arrived at Suwon on the 29th of June to meet Mr. Muccio and Syngman Rhee, General Church was the first to speak at our conference which lasted from 11:00 to 2:00 P.M. He made a very fine report and a very factual and up to date one, stating that of the one hundred thousand men in the South Korean Army only eight thousand men could be accounted for that morning throughout the battle areas. And he said that the commanders had told him that they hoped to have enough forces in hand by that night to make the number twenty thousand instead of eight thousand. As the matter of fact, they never did so. The Koreans were more desperate than ever. General MacArthur said at the end of the conference, "Can I have a car so I can ride north to the Seoul area and see the conditions for myself?" That was agreed upon and the conference broke up. Colonel Barsanti, who had been with our group coming from Seoul had secured two civilian cars, very small ones and very dilapidated ones. I accompanied General MacArthur in the leading car towards the Seoul area. We reached Yondgongpo, just south of the Han River and opposite Seoul. The long railway and highway bridges had been blown up by the retreating South Koreans soldiers. We looked at smoking Seoul, then in North Korean hands. And that was enough for General MacArthur, during this entire trip of some twenty five miles north from Suwon and back, made but one remark. He said, "I've seen many retreating Korean soldiers during this trip, all with guns and ammunition at their side and all smiling and I've not seen

a single wounded man. Nobody is fighting." That night we returned to Tokyo and by seven P.M., General MacArthur with his principal staff officers were in the telecon room and in contact with the Department of the Army and General Collins, the Chief of Staff. We were alternating messages by telecon with the Washington office. General Collins was accompanied by his operations officer, General Charles L. Bolte, who described the Washington end of this important telcon to me a year or two later. My memory of it is, General MacArthur wrote a statement that the whole Korean Army is in retreat and roughly south of Suwon on the way to Pusan, the tip end of the Korean Peninsula. General Collins, the Chief of Staff at that other end of the line, asked a question, "What do you recommend?" General MacArthur said, "That we send some of our forces of Occupation to Korea to protect the Americas and to stabilize the situation for the benefit of Syngman Rhee and his government." Collins said, "You are authorized to send one regiment." MacArthur replied, "That is not enough." General Collins then asked the question, "How many troops do you recommend?" General MacArthur said, "Four divisions or the engagement in Pusan will be terminated within ten days." General Collins said, "That is impossible." MacArthur said, "Please tell the President that." General Collins said, "Do you realize that it is 2:00 A.M. here in Washington and he is asleep?" And then General MacArthur replied, "Then wake him up and tell him so." By noon the next day President Truman had authorized General MacArthur to move as many as four divisions to Korea in the name of the United Nations and he secured the approval of this from the United

Nations Security Council in session then in New York. I related this before going on to show the action of a great commander in making the right decision under pressure. It was a rare opportunity for me to be there and it gave me the confidence to do likewise in certain decisions during the Korean operations. The difficulties of getting the five division force into Korea along the Naktong River was tremendous and it was a drastic situation that we faced along that area, sixty miles north of Pusan, the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula beyond which, of course, we would have a Dunkirk operation.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, you had talked about the approval for the four divisions of American troops to go into Korea as part of the United Nations force. To back up a bit, however, you had, I believe, quite a bit of warning that the North Koreans would take advantage of the lack of military forces in South Korea, lack of U. S. forces after the withdrawal of the XXIV Corps. And yet, after the commitment of American troops in the area of the Pusan perimeter, there was much criticism that the troops sent in did not perform very well. They appeared not to be well trained and they were green and so on. Didn't General MacArthur and his staff take action in the months before June of 1950 to get the American troops in the Pacific ready for all necessary eventualities?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. All the commanders of the Far Eastern Command Forces from the Philippines, north of Japan, understood the deficiencies of our forces there. We made repeated effort to get enough replacements

to make the four divisions all battle capable. This we were unable to do inspite of our protest of the combat deficiencies of our troops. General Walker at one time, close to this period, made an estimate that the Eighth Army was only forty percent combat ready or capable. Furthermore, many of our soldiers had been volunteers that had come from the States as replacements and their main reason for coming was that they were interested in seeing what they could in the Far East rather than becoming well trained, disciplined soldiers. We had many difficulties with the discipline during this period due to this tendency on the part of the individual soldier in Japan.

INTERVIEWER: Would you say that the major problem within the Eighth Army at the time of the invasion by the North Koreans was the lack of trained soldiers? That the commanders were not able to get their men properly trained or was it a morale problem of what?

GEN ALMOND: It was a disinterest problem.

INTERVIEWER: But why was it so? Could you not place some of the blame on the commanders of those units in Japan for not better preparing their units? Or did you place the blame on the lack of trained replacements that were coming into Japan?

GEN ALMOND: We did not blame the commanders for these deficiencies, because the commanders repeatedly reported that deficiency to us. And that is how we got the information that they were only forty percent combat effective. We made these statements to the Department of the Army, to the Chief of Staff, and had received visits from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to verify our gloomy reports. We had done everything, including sending factual statements of this condition to the Chief of Staff of the Army.

INTERVIEWER: In other words, you as the Chief of Staff were satisfied that your corps commanders within the Far East Command were trying as hard as they could to get their troops ready within their means?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. For example, when the North Koreans crossed the boundary and we knew that we were at war, a representative from the Ordnance Department, General Tansey, who had been in the Far East Command and Army of Occupation two years before and had returned to Washington to the Pentagon for duty, came to inquire of our ammunition supply capabilities. My action was to determine the number of artillery pieces in the four divisions of the Eighth Army in terms of 105 and 155 guns and to multiply that by the number of days we thought it would take to repel the invader. From this, we could calculate roughly the number of ammunition rounds that we needed. When I made this request of General Tansey for ammunition necessary to sustain the artillery in battle, General Tansey was completely alarmed. And he asked the question, "Do you know that what you are requesting for this operation would take half of the ammunition in the United States Army that we have in storage?" And my answer was "That means little to me from the tactical standpoint. If we took it all, I couldn't help the fact that we need it. It is up to you and the Department of the Army to go back home and resupply yourself and your depots as soon as possible. We need what we asked for."

INTERVIEWER: At what point, sir, was this conversation with General Tansey?

GEN ALMOND: It was about ten days after the initial attack by North

Korea in early July.

INTERVIEWER: Were you directly involved with the deployment of the small American units that arrived from the 24th Division into the Pusan perimeter in the first days of the fighting?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. I was involved in air transporting to Korea the first troop elements that were sent there. Immediately after the telecon that I had just described, I went back to my office and General MacArthur to his and in ten minutes I was standing before his desk and I said, "General MacArthur, the enemy is moving at a slow pace, but constantly towards Pusan. If we don't send some force to stabilize the Korean defense, they will be in Pusan in four or five days." "What do you recommend?" General MacArthur asked me. I said, "I recommend an initial battalion stripped as much as possible and a battery of artillery to be sent by air to Kyong Ju or further forward if possible to stop the enemy's advance and give the South Korean armed forces a spirit of confidence." General MacArthur approved that immediately and in the next morning after our working most of the night with the Eighth Army we had set up air transportation to move a stripped down battalion of two companies of riflemen, one battery of artillery and a few trucks and jeeps to the area south of Suwon.

INTERVIEWER: So it was your recommendation that led to the piecemeal commitment of elements of the 24th Division. You felt that to get one battalion into the country quickly would be worthwhile in trying to stem the tide of the North Koreans?

GEN ALMOND: I did indeed. I thought that any stable elements and

reliable element that could open fire on the enemy which was moving tanks and trucks down the road from Seoul towards Suwon would be at least delay the force. It may be said that the movement of the force, the first two divisions, then another division, a fourth division, and then finally a fifth division went there in a piece meal manner, but it was the only way we could do it. The 24th Division and the rest of the force that this initial force had been taken to Korea. It was done as soon as we could get the boats and the planes necessary for the movement of the tremendous amount of baggage and equipment that was needed in the form of ammunition and guns and trucks to supply them from the Port of Pusan. These were moved in some cases across the Tsushima Straits by ship. The troops stripped of everything except their side arms moved by airplane and as soon as we could get them assembled at Pusan they were moved in the direction of Seoul to the degree that the enemy would permit. This happened to be very fortunate for us that we could get as far forward as we did, north of the Naktong River. And from this so called piece meal deployment, limited by the amount of transportation available to us, we assembled north of the Naktong, with the 24th Division forward and the 25th Division closely following, and as soon as possible the 1st Cavalry Division. Later, of course, we were able to get a brigade of Marines called Combat Team #5, about 5,000 combat troops. This all happened prior to the Inchon Invasion in September. These American troops were the 15th Infantry Regiment separate combat team from Okinawa and the 2nd Infantry Division moved over from the States. This gave us roughly five divisions plus, in addition to the three Korean Divisions that had joined us in an orderly, organized state, to occupy the eastern end of

this line along the Naktong by the 1st of August, or perhaps by the 15th of August. Additional troops were in place, before the 15th of September when the Inchon Landing was made.

INTERVIEWER: In getting back to the original deployment of a battalion stripped down from the 24th Division, were you not concerned that that battalion might have been completely annihilated before additional American troops could arrive there to support them?

GEN ALMOND: No. I wasn't concerned about that. I thought that it was necessary to get a small detachment to open fire against the enemy which had been completely unopposed for the last week. And they were moving as fast as their tanks could travel and the gasoline supply would permit. I felt that this battalion could occupy a suitable piece of terrain on the likely avenue of advance and withdraw towards the troops that were coming over, at least they could be reinforced at Taejon about twenty five miles north of Taegu and not suffer undue casualties. The truth of the matter was, when they opened their engagement at Osan which is just south of Suwon Airport, they were on high ground. And they did, because of their lack of experience and poor physical condition, suffer undue casualties in my opinion.

INTERVIEWER:: So you were disappointed in their performance in that early period?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, we were but we were somewhat pleased by the fact that they had served to delay the enemy until the assembly of the rest of the 24th Division at Taejon. However, it should also be noted that in the fighting at Taejon a division commander was captured and one of the regiments of the 24th Division, the 31st Infantry, collapsed.

INTERVIEWER: Did you know General Dean at all personally?

GEN ALMOND: Very well. I had known General Dean for years since he was a lieutenant. He was a capable soldier and a real fighter. And as a matter of fact, he ditched his aid (who was wounded) in order to use his jeep to go back and try to command personally, where these irresponsible soldiers who had first gone to Korea, were operating. That is how he happened to be captured.

INTERVIEWER: Did you make repeated trips to Korea during the period of late June or rather early July and on into August during the build-up of the five divisions that you mentioned?

GEN ALMOND: No, I did not. Neither did General MacArthur. General Walker by that time had established his Eighth Army Command Post at Taegu and was so involved in the defense of the Naktong River line and getting his troops coordinated and getting the South Koreans to get a better state of battlefield performance that it was unnecessary for us to go over there. However, we did go two or three times when it looked as if the defensive perimeter was in danger of breaking. On one occasion about the 1st of August, General MacArthur went to see General Walker at his CP at Taegu when it had been indicated that Walker was in the process of deciding to retire to the Pusan area. General MacArthur would not listen to such a decision and told General Walker so. He said, "Walker, you can make all of the reconnaissance you want. You can put your engineer to work if you desire in preparing intermediate trenches, but I will give you the order to retire from this position and there will be no . . . Dunkirk in this command. To retire to Pusan will be unacceptable." General Walker was told that in private and I

was the only person that heard the statement made. He went back before his staff with General MacArthur and Walker said with a very commanding attitude, "This army fights where it stands. There will be no retirement." Most of his staff looked surprised because, evidently prior to that time, they had been hoping and recommending that a withdrawal be made. In the meantime, two other divisions in Japan were preparing to go take their place with the troops in line. At this time the 1st Cavalry Division had not left Japan, so that division was being re-supplied with replacements now coming in from the States. Also, the 7th Division was being stripped of communications and artillery specialists badly needed in the 24th and 25th Divisions already in Korea. We in the last resort decided to bring the 7th Division to its authorized troop strength by augmenting it with some nine thousand Korean inductees, who knew little or nothing about warfare. Most of the division troops left in the 7th Division were used as instructors to train these Koreans in infantry squad duties and in the rendering of tactical assistance to all communication units and artillery units. This was not desirable, but was the best that we could do. And we finally got the 7th Division in conduction so it could be handled fairly well for the Inchon Landing a month later.

INTERVIEWER: Did those nine thousand Koreans for the 7th Division -- arrive as a group in Japan for training or did they come in driblets.

GEN ALMOND: No. They arrived in small groups, but for over a period of ten days.

INTERVIEWER: Were you inspecting the 7th Division at this time?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, as Chief of Staff of the CHQ, I spent the morning hours in my office and the afternoon hours flying in a small plane to wherever these troops were training and I would discuss with the American officers, particularly the regimental commanders, the efficiency that they thought they were developing. I learned that the men had been put originally in recruit groups for a period of a week while they received training in close order drill response to command. As soon as that had occurred, they were distributed throughout the regiment so they would be exposed to experienced soldiers who knew something about tactical operations. In a month's time these same units were maneuvering in the field and firing on the ranges, demonstrating that they understood what was required in basic battle operations.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, during this period of the first two months, the idea of an amphibious landing behind the North Korean Army at Inchon began to take shape. Can you explain how this idea first came into the CHQ planning and how it then developed? (How the plans were made in detail?)

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I can. In the first two weeks of the war, we had difficulties in getting troops to Korea. We had problems first with the 24th Division, then the 25th Division, the Marine brigade, and the 24th Infantry Regiment (Negro). We felt that the situation was going to continue to be very tenuous and doubtful along the line that we were trying to hold and protect along the Naktong River. It was General MacArthur's idea that the only solution to this tricky situation was a landing in the rear somewhere which would endanger the supplies of the North Korean division that had invaded South Korea. As a matter of fact, the 9th Division of the North Korean Army was moving into the

western part of Southern Korea for the purpose of taking by flank action the position along the Naktong. This is described in history as the Battle of Masan-ni. And the Battle of Masan-ni was the last effort that the North Koreans made so close to Pusan. It is only about thirty miles west of Pusan and almost as far south. The 25th Division, under General Kean, and the Marines were responsible for stopping this flank attack, but had great difficulty. It was there that the separate regiment of the 24th Infantry, had some discouraging combat operations which were similar of the performance of Negro troops in Italy during the War where we had just finished several years before. General MacArthur, having developed his idea of strategic movement, asked the War Department for additional troops to constitute a proper invading force of a division or larger. In the meantime, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had sent their members to Japan and to Korea to inspect the situation. The first visit of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was very brief and the only thing that we had learned definitely was that there were no troops available suitable for transporting from the United States at the time. General MacArthur continued to plan, however, and with the rest of his staff to select a place which was a road center north of where the enemy was engaging our troops. He indicated that Wonsan being the best harbor on the eastern coast of Korea and some hundred and thirty five miles northeast of Seoul would be a suitable place to start. Also Inchon, Korea would be a closer point, but a difficult area in which to launch an amphibious effort.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, about when did Inchon first drop up as a possible site for an amphibious operation?

GEN ALMOND: About the 20th of July.

INTERVIEWER: And this was General MacArthur's suggestion?

GEN ALMOND: Prior to this time it was made more possible by the visit of Lieutenant General Lemuel Shepherd, fleet Marine officer under Admiral Radford in Honolulu. Shepherd used to come to our headquarters and then go to Korea to observe the performance of the 5th Marine Brigade that I have mentioned before. At the time of one of these visits (about the 2nd of July), General MacArthur's request for more troops had just been turned down by the War Department. Shepherd came to my desk and asked me why we didn't ask for Marines. He didn't know of these communications of General MacArthur with the War Department. I said, "We have done so repeatedly. We have asked for any kind of troops that will fight, and we were told that there were none available." He said, "Well, we could get enough Marines together throughout the world to provide a division." And I said, "Well, if you believe that, go in and tell General MacArthur so." He did and came out half an hour later and said to me as he passed out of my office, "General MacArthur said that he was going to try again tonight." Within half an hour of that talk, General MacArthur was standing before my desk and with a telegram that he had written in his own hand to the War Department in which he said, "I understand that a force of division strength can be assembled by the Marines in a matter of six weeks and be in Japan. I hereby make that request at the present time." This cable was received by General Collins, who was the spokesman for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the President in the Korean Operations. General Collins read this cablegram and request from General MacArthur and responded in his own words, "Of course, this

is impossible, because there are no Marines available." Whereupon Admiral Sherman, the Chief of Operations . . .

INTERVIEWER: Chief of Naval Operations?

GEN ALMOND: The Joint Staff Chief of Naval Operations interrupted and said, "That is not impossible at all. I think we can do it." And General Collins looked very disturbed and alarmed and surprised. The proposition had been that within three weeks at Camp Pendleton, the Marines could have the division together and then in three or four weeks they could be in Japan where we could dispose of them as we chose. This decision on the part of the Chief of Naval Operations was a rare episode of informing the right people at the right time, because when Shepherd learned that we had asked for this division that he said could be assembled, he came back to my office to discuss it. And I had the happy thought of having him transmit from his own communications in Honolulu a message to the Chief of Naval Operations. So when General Collins indicated that this was impossible to do, Admiral Sherman was prepared to state that it was indeed possible and so stated. As a matter of fact this was a decision that was taken that morning and enabled General MacArthur to continue the Inchon planning with some hope of deliverance.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, on August 15th a special planning staff under your direction was set up by General MacArthur to work on the Inchon plan under the code name of Operation Chromite. It consisted initially of only five officers including yourself and twelve enlisted men. At first they were all intelligence officers except for you, but within a few days others began to join in in the areas of personnel, operations, and

logistics. On the 16th of August you assembled this staff in an old airplane hanger known as Building AP-1 in the motor pool in downtown Tokyo in order to address them. You had as your own chief of staff, Major General Clark L. Ruffner, who assisted you in directing this planning effort. Would you describe the planning effort of this little staff?

GEN ALMOND: Well, about the time that this initial small group was formed as a result of our being assured of getting at least a division to make a landing and before Inchon had been selected, I had expanded my efforts to try and get the 7th Division, which was training the Koreans inductees as we have mentioned before, any other supporting troops available, remembering that what we were doing was providing a force of any size that we could assemble as soon as possible for the area to be selected as the landing place for the strategic operation. And in addition to that, I was confronted with the problem of assembling a staff to work this plan up in detail and to coordinate it with the troop availability that I had just mentioned. General Ruffner arrived in the theater at that time for assignment to duty and General MacArthur brought to my attention that he knew Ruffner and asked me if I did. I said, "No, I just know that he went to the same school that I did and he has a good reputation in the Army." And he said, "Well, why don't you have him take charge of your planning group over in the motor pool and use him as your chief of staff." I said, "Well, I would like to select my chief of staff because I have personal knowledge of him. I don't. Do you recommend it?" And he said, "Yes,

I do. He is an intelligent and resourceful officer and one of long experience." I said, "Well, that is good enough for me." And that is how Ruffner became my chief of staff initially. Then I had to get a suitable G-2 and G-3. I selected Colonel Quinn from the G-2 section with Willoughby's concurrence and I selected as G-3 my own secretary of the general staff, Jack Chiles, then a Lieutenant Colonel. I knew that Chiles had been a World War II commander in the 23rd Infantry of the 2nd Division and that he had been a regimental commander in that division at Camp Swift in 1945 and 1946, when I was in command. So knowing my chief of staff was a good man according to General MacArthur and the G-2 and G-3 were capable, I asked G-4 to recommend a good man to put in G-4 and he recommended a Colonel Smith, who was one of his section chiefs. This group of staff officers making the study were called "Force X" and their full-time duty was planning for the Inchon landing.

INTERVIEWER: Initially, General Almond, General MacArthur had appointed you as chief of the planning staff and, of course, at the same time you were still chief of staff for him and had to carry out the normal duties there. However, several days after your planning staff had begun their work in the old airplane hanger, you reported to General MacArthur on the progress of the planning and at that time he did appoint you as commander for the corps that would be making the landing. Would you describe that episode?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. I had no idea that I would have anything to do with the execution of the plan that might be devised. But the planning was clouded and delayed by the surprise that they got from the War Department which was going by the tables of organization and equipment.

(TOE it is called, as you know.) The reply that had come back had demanded to know for what units supplies were being requested and why they were authorized, etc. So I went into General MacArthur and said, "That this force was larger than a division and, therefore, it should be designated as a corps. What shall we name it?" He said, "You make the recommendation." I hadn't thought very much about the name of it and so, since the staff operating in the motor pool was called "Force X", the first thing that I thought of was ten. So I said, "Why not call it the X Corps." Whereupon he said, "That's a good idea. The X Corps fought in the Pacific Campaign and I will approve of that." Then I said, "General MacArthur, to have a corps you have to have a commander. And the thing that you have to do is to ask the War Department or use one of your officers here for such purposes. Who will it be? If he could be put in charge of this plan and this development, he would be more familiar with the situation that would be demanded of him." It didn't cross my mind that he had me in mind in anyway. He said, "I will let you know this afternoon." So that afternoon I went in to get the person whom he designated as corps commander and I said, "I came in for the name of the person that you selected to command this force for the Inchon Landing." And he said, "It's you." And I said, "But I can't execute two jobs. I'm the chief of staff." He said, "Well, we'll all be home by Christmas and, therefore, it is only a short operation and the Eighth Army will become the controlling factor as soon as we capture the point of entry." I said, "This surprises me greatly and changes the position of the chief of staff." And he said, "You'll continue to be the chief of staff and you can

get any assistance you want." So that is how I became commander of the X Corps.

INTERVIEWER: And who at that point helped you out in the normal chief of staff duties?

GEN ALMOND: The deputy chief of staff for the Far East Command was General Doyle Hickey. He had been in the staff operational section for some time and we had great confidence in him, because he had a fine World War II record. He was an artilleryman basically, but a commander as well. So I asked Hickey to take over part of my duties as chief of staff, because in all probability if I went with the troops in the landing operation in Korea, he would have to act in my place. Hickey got along fine. Hickey then became the Deputy and Acting Chief of Staff for the Far East Command as well as GHQ and the United Nations -- SCAP forces in occupied Japan.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, would you continue from the point at which General MacArthur selected you as X Corps commander? Would you continue your description of the planning? One question before you get into this general planning. Didn't you have a problem of getting a proper map, sufficient maps, for the area of Inchon at the time of this planning, the initial planning?

GEN ALMOND: Well, we did with respect to getting detailed maps from which we could interpret the terrain properly. But I thought our Engineers did an excellent job in taking all maps available; there were some as a result of XXIV Corps having occupied the area for the last five years. They had certain maps, but they weren't particularly detailed. However, our engineers produced a map that we used considerably in my

experience in Korea. It was a rubberized material relief map which showed the different terrain elevations to a very accurate degree and we used it in our planning, both Inchon and later on.

INTERVIEWER: Was security a major concern of yours during the planning period? I mean, did you attempt at all cost to keep any knowledge of this plan from leaking out?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, absolutely. There was no department or ever any soldier or officer concerned with the planning in that hanger who had not been sworn to secrecy. Top secret classification was put on the matter and no press involvement of the operation was allowed. So tight was security that my own wife, when I left for the Inchon Landing, didn't know where I was going. The Corps troops were isolated in their training area. All were told that they were going to sea and their destination would be released later. The commanders themselves of small units didn't have any idea just where we were going. And it was not until the 23rd of August as I recall the date, that the joint chiefs of staff approved the plan for the Inchon Landing. As a matter of fact, since the Inchon Landing, some historians and senior military officers have said that the Landing should have been made at Wonsan which was a better harbor than Inchon, which was very tricky. We chose the Inchon because it was eighteen miles from Seoul, although there was a river to cross before we got to Seoul. If we had come in at Wonsan instead of Inchon, we would have a mountainous advance fraught with danger and a small group of enemy troops, could have halted and delayed our advance by mountainous road one hundred and thirty-five miles from Wonsan to Seoul sufficiently wooded to allow North Korean troops that

were opposite our force along the Naktong to overwhelm us and capture Pusan anyhow. Our urgency was directed both by distance and by the weather. The time selected for Inchon had to be mid-September because of the tides. We had to accept the period of mid-month of any month, but could not delay until October. The mid-month of October would have found the whole of Seoul, and the Inchon area in snow and ice. We discovered this in working out the plan. And the area was in snow and ice on the 15th of October, but we accomplished our mission and were elsewhere in the Inchon area at that late date.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, although you say security was very closely adhered to during the planning stage, wouldn't you agree that it was evident in Tokyo at that time that something big was brewing. In other words, the enemy intelligence, the Communist Intelligence, whether it be Russian, Chinese or North Korean in Japan at that time, probably knew of some sort of special force being assembled, but what they did not know, was the exact location of where this force would strike. In other words, do you agree that by the activity going on in Tokyo at that time, this was the case?

GEN ALMOND: Well, there was no way of preventing anyone from knowing, including the press and the correspondence and the radio announcers, that the Marines were sending additional troops into Japan and that the 7th Division had Koreans in its organization. What nobody knew was whether these troops were intended for the Eighth Army along the Naktong River or were going elsewhere. They didn't know that they were going to be used elsewhere and even on the 23rd of August, General Collins himself as the member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

recommended that the landing not be at Inchon . . . but opposite Taegu. General MacArthur replied to this recommendation by saying, "To land there from the China Sea where only one LST could come in at a time would be hard to execute and furthermore, it would be merely an extension of the Eighth Army's present line rather than the strategic operation by which we have planned to capture the roadcenter of Seoul. If we captured that area around Seoul it would be a real blow to the invading force. That won the rest of the Joint Chiefs of Staff over and General Collins admitted that the Inchon place, inspite of its difficulty of high range of tide (30 to 31 feet).

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, the commanding general of the 7th Division, the army division that was to be one of the two division of the X Corps was Major General David Barr. What was your opinion of Barr prior to the Inchon landing? What had you known of him?

GEN ALMOND: Well, he is the man that I mentioned earlier who invited me to go as military attachè to Moscow which I turned down and went to Japan instead. General Barr I had known ever since he was a captain and he was not too much junior to me. During the war in Europe, he had been chief of staff to General Devers. He was a capable staff officer and had not had much command. However, he had been in China when Chiang Kai-shek was expelled and was in charge of the China Mission. From there he came to Japan and became chief of staff of the Eighth Army for a period of six months and then at his request was ordered to command the 7th Division. That is how he got command of the 7th Division. And he had the confidence of General MacArthur and General Walker and myself.

INTERVIEWER: The commanding general of your division, the First Marine Division, was Major General Oliver P. Smith, who arrived in Tokyo on the afternoon of August 22, 1950. Smith was quickly brought to General MacArthur's headquarters where he met you and then General MacArthur. What do you recall of your initial meeting with General Smith?

GEN ALMOND: Well, my initial question of General Smith, was that we proposed an operation that would involve his division's participation as a principal landing unit and that this operation would occur, we thought, about the 15th of September. He, as a matter of fact, had his first meeting with General MacArthur the next morning when the Joint Chiefs of Staff went over the Inchon plan to approve it or modify it. General Smith was one of the speakers at the time, but when I talked to him the previous evening, the 22nd of August, his initial reaction to the date of the launch of the attack was that it was too early and that the Marines would require more time. That was not our idea of responsiveness and I had other occasions, during and after the landing, to have that opinion verified.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, some historians in the light of your later problems with General Smith have said that from the very first you and General Smith did not get along; that you instinctively distrusted or disliked each other from the start. Did you get that sort of feeling from the first time that you met General Smith?

GEN ALMOND: Not at all. I got the impression initially (and it was fortified constantly later) that General Smith always had excuses for not performing at the required time the tasks he was requested to do.

This is the real disagreement between General Smith and myself.

INTERVIEWER: Now, during the initial planning of the Inchon landing before the final decision was made to go ahead with it, did you have Naval officers on your planning staff? What sort of coordination were you effecting with the Navy at the time?

GEN ALMOND: We had a representative of Air Force, a representative from General Stratmeyer headquarters in Tokyo, and a representative of the Navy from Admiral Joy's headquarters in Tokyo. They were in constant collaboration with our staff planning and would report daily of any changes of development in this plan to their chiefs. And if the chief had any disagreement with it, he would call on me or go see General MacArthur about what they wanted settled or straightened out.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, what was Admiral Joy's initial reaction to the Inchon plan as you knew it?

GEN ALMOND: Well, Admiral Joy in the beginning was conscious of the desirability of the strategic rear area attack and was very cooperative in every way, except when General Smith conveyed to Admiral Joy his fears, which were exaggerated. The nature of the Inchon tidal conditions as well as the possibility of bad weather to include the occasional typhoon appearances along the China coast and in Japan, made him skeptical at first of the speed in which we desired to operate and second with the danger of troop movements in the typhoon area. And as a matter of fact, three days before the meeting that I referred to which was to approve or disapprove of the Inchon plan (Operation Chromite), Admiral Joy had asked to see General MacArthur and he realized that he should indicate to me what the nature of his meeting would be so I could explain it to General MacArthur. General MacArthur agreed to that, but before the committee arrived, I went into

General MacArthur and personally told him the reason for Admiral Joy's committee visiting him. I said, "General MacArthur, prepare to meet this opposition by the Navy to the time selected (September 15th) for the Inchon plan. I have prepared a study of the typhoons in the past striking Japan in the Yellow Sea or the Japanese Sea. And in the past twenty-five years all of the typhoons, four or five a year, have turned east and gone into the Sea of Japan. Only one has turned west when it struck the Straits of Tsushima. Therefore, that is the ratio of interference that we might have. So when the Navy comes over here to oppose this plan, if they do on the standpoint of tide & typhoon.

INTERVIEWER: The tides?

GEN ALMOND: The tides and the typhoon interference, it is my advice to you to pay no attention to any of it and take the responsibility yourself. And he said, "Thank you very much for making the study and I will utilize it." So when the critical 23rd of August meeting was held (with the Joint Chiefs of Staff sitting in our headquarters in Tokyo), that sure enough was the opposition the Navy offered. General MacArthur followed my advice and said very courteously, "The Navy and the Marine Corps as well as the Army have always been most cooperative in every experience that I have had with any of them in the Pacific War. I recognize and appreciate that attitude. In this case, I must disagree with the position that they take and state that for anything that happens of any untold nature-either weather, tide or typhoon conditions. I will take the responsibility and the responsibility will not be yours." When he stopped talking, Admiral Sherman got up and applauded General MacArthur first and recognized the delivery of his statement and

said, "We appreciate it very much as far as the Navy is concerned and will go along with your views." When that happened, the tide of opposition was turned and finally, General Collins agreed that the plan could be approved.

End of Side 1, of Tape 4

THIS IS SIDE #2 of TAPE 4 OF THE INTERVIEW WITH LIEUTENANT GENERAL EDWARD M. ALMOND. THE DATE IS MARCH 28, 1975. INTERVIEWER: CAPTAIN THOMAS FERGUSSON, CGSC STUDENT. INTERVIEW IS BEING CONDUCTED IN THE HOME OF GENERAL ALMOND IN ANNISTON, ALABAMA.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, the climatic decision meeting for the go or no-go on the Inchon Landing, Operation Chromite, was held in GHQ Headquarters on August 23, 1950, at five-thirty P.M. Besides yourself and General MacArthur, General Collins was there; Admiral Sherman of the Navy; Lieutenant General Edwards of the Air Force, all three representing the Joint Chiefs of Staff or who were the Joint Chiefs of Staff? Admirals Joy, Struble and Doyle of the Navy in the Far East and the Far East Air Force Commander . . .

GEN ALMOND: General Smith.

INTERVIEWER: General Smith of the Marines and Major General George Stratemyer, the Far East Air Force Commander. The briefing was opened by General Wright, the G-3 of General MacArthur's Headquarters, who outlined the basic plan and then turned the meeting over to Naval experts. They went through a series of briefings on nine different subjects, including such things as navigation, hydrography, intelligence, weather, military aspects, beach study, the pontoons and cause ways, ship to shore plans, gunfire and air support. Each one allotted about ten minutes of his presentation. Now all this time General MacArthur sat quietly puffing on his pipe. The briefers seemed to present, taken in sum total, a very formidable picture of the problems of conducting the landing at Inchon. They stressed the problems of the tide, the hazardous approach up through the Flying Fish Channel, the fact that the fire support ships would have to anchor in the channel to keep from being swept away by the current and then would be sitting

ducks for the shore batteries, the fact that the stand-by ships out in the Yellow Sea would be thirty miles away which would interfere with communications and perhaps even make them impossible, and additional problems. After all of these oppositions were expressed and the briefing done, Admiral Doyle rose and turned to General MacArthur and he then said that "The best I can say about Inchon is that it is not impossible." General MacArthur nodded and added that if the landing force got to Inchon and was unable to get ashore, then it could be withdrawn. And at this point there was a pause and then General MacArthur took over. What do you recall of this particular point of the meeting?

GEN ALMOND: When it came to General MacArthur's time to speak as you said, there was a pause and a stir. General MacArthur had then refilled his pipe before he began to speak. And he then turned towards the map with his back to the group and began to talk in a low, deep voice. Those present will always remember certain phrases he used. "Seoul is the target," said General MacArthur. "Seoul, the Capital of Korea, had been captured by the Communists when they began the war not quite two months ago. The landing at Inchon would make the recapture of Seoul possible only ninety days or so after it had been taken. That was important. So the time element was one of the fundamentals of the plan. It would seize the imagination of all Asia and win physiological report for the United Nation cause in Korea." "The enemy," General MacArthur pointed out, "has now concentrated ninety percent of his forces around the Pusan perimeter and along the Naktong

River, of course. And they were still trying to drive Walker of the Eighth Army command back into the sea. To take the troops earmarked for Inchon and to give them to Walker to fight his way northward out of the perimeter would cause us a hundred thousand casualties."

General MacArthur emphasized the importance of the Inchon location strategically on the map. A force that took Seoul would control all of the territory in the rear of the main North Korean Army. "It will be the anvil" he said, "upon which General Walker will smash the Reds from the South!" Then he went on to a discussion of alternatives. For instance, the landing of Kunsan which I had mentioned before and a hundred miles below Inchon and favored by General Collins, would be merely an extension of the Eighth Army line and not an envelopment at all. From the strategic standpoint, taking Kusan would not be decisive. "The amphibious landing was a powerful military device," said General MacArthur, "and I have used it ten times before this but never with such a large force as available now. Two divisions plus the Koreans' troops. To use Inchon as a landing point would be to strike deep into enemy territory. To land elsewhere would be open to possibility of a long and bitter winter campaign in Korea. Further, an Inchon landing offered a chance of strategic surprise and a crippling effect on enemy logistics more quickly than landing anywhere else north of Inchon on either coast of Korea." "Something like this has happened before," said General MacArthur. Strangely enough, in mid September at Quebec in 1759 when the British General Wolfe had sailed from England to take Quebec from the French, he put a flanking force ashore at the base of a steep cliff; the last place the French expected to face it, and took the city swiftly. "The Navy has never let me

down." said General MacArthur during this talk. And he ended up by saying that he would take the blame for any mishaps that occurred and it would be his fault and not theirs. He ended by saying, "We shall land at Inchon and I shall crush them."

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, after the completion of the Tokyo conference of August 23rd, what were your actions as commander of the X Corps between that point and the time that you actually sailed from Japan towards Inchon?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I was very deeply engaged in turning over my duties as chief of staff to acting chief of staff General Hickey, knowing that I would soon depart for the Inchon Landing. I did this in the morning hours of the day as I said before, in the afternoon I traveled among the various units inspecting their readiness for embarkation. I went over to see the Marines and I went to the location of the three regiments of the 7th Division to see their fitness and to confirm their attitude towards the movement. I went to the various artillery units in the corps. I conducted a three-day exercise in headquarters field operations in which I assumed the enemy situation and directed the corps headquarters to move forward in its command functions and then develop a situation in all its aspects. The headquarters would then be required to pull up from the present location and retire some ten miles to the rear. That gave them the feeling that if they had to go forward with the CP, that they must continue to operate effectively and control the units if they had to go to the rear, they should go to the rear in this order. This called for prior planning on the part of the chief of staff and all members of the staff to move their sections,

whether backwards and forwards and function at the same time. This served us well in Korea on a number of occasions. That, of course, consumed time. But while I was operating the chief of staff office, my chief of staff with the X Corps was organizing his staff and augmenting it the best he could with the best officers he could secure and there were some very fine ones. I recall that I robbed the . . . the G-3 operation section of GHQ of two of its best men; Rowney who became my corps engineer and now is a Lieutenant General in the SALT talks operating in Switzerland; Chiles who came from my own section and Mildren coming from the G-3 section of GHQ. That is Frank Mildren who later became a full general after being G-1 of the Army in the Pentagon and his last command was NATO's South Eastern Forces and he was stationed in Turkey. Bill Quinn, I took from one of his G-2 sections and Smith came from the G-4 section. My artillery chief was an old friend of mine, Brigadier General Bill Ennis, who had been in the II Corps or the IV Corps Artillery Staff and fought with the group of artillery support, and whom I had when I was in the 92nd Division after World War II. All of these people were staff members of known capabilities and they proved themselves in the operation of the X Corps staff. One of my problems was to gain additional staff members to support my principal staff. This was difficult because I ran out of suitable selections in the occupation force and most of them were already in Korea. General Collins' last visit before the Inchon landing included the discussion of the plan with me and he finished by saying, "Is there any other thing that I could do to aid you in the operation of this plan?" At which point I drew from my desk drawer a

list of thirty names that I had served with in Europe and in the 2nd Division after the WWII and some from other units. I made this list with the hope that the Chief of Staff could supply some of these people. And on this occasion I felt that I had an opportunity to fulfill this hope. When I presented this to General Collins he almost had heart failure and he said, "These people are important generals; some of them are in the Pentagon and at the Infantry School and the other institutions that the Army is operating." "For example," he said, "I see the name of Colonel William McCaffrey. McCaffrey had just been ordered from his present assignment to the Infantry School." My reply to that was, although I was aware of the need of the Infantry School, that I felt the need of this capable staff officer and the X Corps just being formed in Korea was equally important or more so. And I particularly wanted McCaffrey because he was one of the best young officers that I have ever served with. I want to make him assistant to the chief of staff of the X Corps. With this kind of persuasion imposed on General Collins, I got about a third of this staff list which helped me considerably in enhancing the capability of the staff to operate on the battlefield.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, during this last few weeks before you departed from Japan, was the list of units that you had including the artillery units and all of the corps troops complete or did you keep on getting additional units during this period?

GEN ALMOND: No. This was complete and we got these units by the super-human efforts of many individuals in Tokyo and elsewhere. We considered this X Corps Staff and its corps troops adequate and sufficient at the time, although we knew we would need replacements as time went on.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, when did you actually depart from Japan?

GEN ALMOND: Both General MacArthur and myself remained at GHQ as long as we thought possible to do so, but on the 13th of September, I accompanied General MacArthur by plane from Tokyo to Sasebo, Japan, which is a well-known port in southern Honshu. We flew to Sasebo and about dark of the night of September 13th, we went board the Mt. McKinley for association with Admiral Doyle who was commander of the amphibious operation which our troops embarked for the mission of Inchon. Thus we were two days ahead of the opening of the landing operations on September 15th which began with one battalion of Marines assaulting the first objective, Wolmi-Do, an island just off Inchon Harbor, at six o'clock in the morning.

INTERVIEWER: Would you describe what happened during the short trip from Japan to the vicinity of Inchon? Did you continue to have modifications to the plan at this point or was the plan for the landing firm?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, the plan was all set for the landing. And it was merely the matter of getting into the area of the landing operations and the discharge of our landing force the first ashore being the 1st battalion of the 5th Marines. Lieutenant Colonel Murray was the battalion commander of this unit which had come to us from the Eighth Army area where it had been engaged until about August 15th under General Walker. General Walker very much hated to lose the service of the Marines and we compensated his complaint by saying that one regiment of the 7th Division would remain available in the vicinity of Japan until the other troops had landed, in case that he needed them. The trip to the Inchon area was nothing spectacular anyway. Everyday, both morning and afternoon, I visited General MacArthur and inquired of any advice that he had. He had none and said, "No," on every occasion. He usually had enough to take care of and said, "I will see you on the

15th." This happened each day.

INTERVIEWER: Did your entire staff, your primary staff, accompany you on the Mt. McKinley?

GEN ALMOND: No, only my aides were on the McKinley itself. My chief of staff, General Ruffner, and the balance of the staff were on another transport whose name I forget. One important incident in connection with the staff was that the staff's equipment in a communication way and transportation way of jeeps, and so forth was swept away by high winds. The edge of the typhoon had struck us two days before the landing took place. This was unfortunate but by the time that we had landed ashore by the 25th, we had been able to replace the lost equipment by transportation from Japan.

INTERVIEWER: At the time that the Marines began landing at Wolmi-Do and at Inchon, what had your G-2 told you of the enemy situation? What was your own estimate of the enemy capabilities to oppose your landing?

GEN ALMOND: The estimate that had been given to the conference on the 23rd of August in which was decided that Inchon would be the point of invasion and landing, had been that the best enemy capabilities by that time were some six to eight thousand troops in all categories in a back area assignment. There were no combat units because the North Korean forces in terms of nine divisions were along the Naktong River front trying to break through General Walker's Eighth Army and get to Pusan ; and thus capture our supply sources. This was another reason why the Inchon operation was considered a very vital one. In fact, the enemy had little capability of opposing our landing either with weapons, particularly artillery, and with mobile forces. It turned out, of course,

the enemy had a few tanks that they had in the rear area and the secondary landing succeeded in knocking out four of these tanks by direct air action before they had arrived at the battle front between the areas of Seoul and Inchon.

INTERVIEWER: Was there any change in the estimate of the enemy situation between the 23rd of August and the meeting and the time that your troops actually began to land at Inchon? In other words, had you had any indication of the North Koreans getting any wind of the Inchon landing and was beginning to react prior to the landing?

GEN ALMOND: No, we did not. The estimates were very nearly correct and the opposition received was about as expected. As a matter of fact, the second day of the landing the 16th of September, the Marines made a rapid and distant advance and by the 17th, two days after the landing, the 5th Marines had captured Ascom City and six enemy tanks had been destroyed on the Inchon - Seoul highway. General MacArthur came ashore on the second or third day and made contact with the Marines that were advancing towards Seoul.

INTERVIEWER: Had you been ashore prior to General MacArthur going to shore at that time?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, on the first day of landing in the evening when the 5th Marines were on the left at Red Beach, the 1st Marines were on the right and landed about dusk on Blue Beach. So I felt that it was sufficiently safe for me and anybody who had desired to accompany me to take a small admiral's gig and go ashore and see the situation for myself. I invited Admiral Struble, the 7th Fleet Commander and in charge of the whole operation as far as the element still on ships were concerned, and

also Admiral Doyle, the amphibious commander, if they would like to accompany me. I asked General Shepherd the same thing. We four landed after the third wave had reached the beach and about twilight time. We walked in both directions, right and left, for the matter of an hour and watched the succeeding waves come ashore and the spirit in which the Marines entered into the landing operation. And at that time there was no enemy reaction whatever, which incidentally didn't occur until the next morning, the morning of the 16th. We really had a very illuminating time and returned to the Mt. McKinley for dinner that night with Admiral Doyle and General MacArthur in a highly elated state. We could already see the landing had been successful the first day which was really the critical point. Once ashore, we had no fear of being able to take care of any enemy that might meet us eventually.

INTERVIEWER: Did you then return to the shore the next day on the 16th?

GEN ALMOND: Oh, yes. Admiral Struble sometimes accompanied Général Shepherd and myself the next five days as we went ashore everyday moving as far forward as we could and watching the operation of the 1st Marine Division. It must be remembered that the 7th Division was waiting for an opportunity to land following the Marine Division as soon as its elements could get out of the way and on towards the objective Seoul. As a matter of fact, the 7th Division advanced inland beginning on September the 21st. This was five days after the initial landing by the Marines. The Marines had gotten ashore from the 15th on and pushed far enough in to clear the rear areas for the movement of the 7th Division on the same ground that they had landed and then to proceed both eastward toward the south of Seoul areas and as far south as Suwon

Airfield, the same Suwon that General MacArthur landed on thirty miles south of Seoul on the 29th of June after the North Korean attack on the 25th of June.

INTERVIEWER: Did you accompany General MacArthur on the first visit to the shore on the 27th?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I did. And we had quite an interesting experience. We had moved from the beach line by jeep and followed in the rear of the 1st Regiment commanded by the well known Marine, Colonel Chesty Puller. Puller was known as a courageous combat commander of small combat operations of the Marine Corps for the last fifteen years. We, therefore, had an interesting conversation with the regimental commander of the right flank of the landing force and General MacArthur got a battlefield reaction to the operations ongoing as they were getting closer to Seoul. We got a similar reaction from Colonel Murray, Commanding Officer of the 5th Marine Regiment. Our impression could be summed up by saying that we were happy with the initial several days' operation and General MacArthur began thinking about returning to Tokyo, which he did on the 20th, five days after the attack was launched.

INTERVIEWER: You had not yet taken command of the forces ashore, because this would not happen until one half of your total force was ashore. Is that correct?

GEN ALMOND: That's correct. And when an amphibious operation is initiated the moment that the troops are embarked on a transport, it would come under the command of what you call the amphibious commander. That was Admiral Doyle. Admiral Doyle took his instructions from the fleet commander who was Admiral Struble. The ground commander on the

land force had nothing to do with the manipulation of the ships. He next assumed command when his men were put ashore safely and at any rate in such shape that he can exercise command and control. This doesn't occur as long as the troops are water borne or until they leave shore of the area that they are landing and proceed inland. The 1st Marine Division was completely ashore on the third day. That included its initial supply and particularly its ammunition. Then it was the question of landing the 7th Division which began to land on the 19th. The first unit to come ashore was the 32nd Regiment under Colonel Beauchamps. The other elements of the division followed in due course as rapidly as possible. It should be recalled that the 7th Marine Regiment had not joined from its various assembly points prior to the initiation of the transport advance of the combat troops towards Inchon. It was on the 21st of September that the 7th began to land but that was following the complete landing of the 1st Marine Division. The 7th Division proceeded on the Marine right flank, both forward and towards the airport of Suwon, 30 miles to the South of Seoul, as it has been mentioned before.

INTERVIEWER: At what point then did you . . . ?

GEN ALMOND: On the 20th of September, General MacArthur decided to return to Tokyo, but he had seen the X Corps Headquarters move to its first command post earlier that day and had been present when the amphibious commander turned over the control of the 1st Marine Division, which had landed three days earlier and was proceeding inland, and the 7th Division, the 2nd major unit of the X Corps to me. Admiral Doyle released the control of the amphibious component of the X Corps to the commander, the ground commander, myself, at a newly established CP about two miles east in the direction of Seoul from the village of Inchon.

INTERVIEWER: What day was that? the 20th?

GEN ALMOND: The 22nd.

INTERVIEWER: The 22nd. Were your units at that point moving according to schedule or were you ahead of schedule?

GEN ALMOND: Well, we were as optimistic about this success as we could be. We thought that we were ahead of schedule, because the 5th Marines took Ascom City, on the 17th and secured Kimpo Airfield and the 7th Division had moved on down towards Suwon. And really, the 1st Marine Division was almost in the Seoul area itself and pushing as hard as ever. As a matter of fact, Puller's 1st Marines had crossed the Han River and were up against Weoul on the 24th of September. That was nine days after the landing started.

INTERVIEWER: Didn't the North Koreans' resistance stiffen as you got close to Seoul?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, very much so. By that time when we had gotten the Marines up against Seoul and the 5th Marines had crossed the Han River, the enemy was well entrenched. They were outside Seoul and also were holding street by street the western part of Seoul and were able to delay the Marines' advance very definitely. It was this condition that will be explained later that caused the readjustment of the boundaries in the fighting sectors and that involved the participation of the 7th Division in the capture of Seoul. Really, Seoul was captured by the utilization of both divisions along with the corps coordination.

INTERVIEWER: Had the original . . . had you envisioned in the original planning that only the 1st Marine Division would be necessary to capture Seoul?

GEN ALMOND: What we envisioned was that the 1st Division or any other force that was ashore would be supported as necessary. That is why we had a second divisional unit, the 7th Division, for that purpose. And when the going got hard and difficult, well, it was decided to utilize the 7th Division for just the purpose that it had been brought to the Inchon landing, to protect either flank or furnish reserves to accomplish the mission. The purpose of the whole operation was the capture of the city of Seoul and its communications there in the supply center as rapidly as possible in order to make these front line troops and the nine divisions fighting the Eighth Army on the Naktong collapse. That is exactly what happened and it happened as rapidly as I could wheel the troops to make it to Seoul.

INTERVIEWER: Wasn't this the point at which you had some problems with the Marine Division commander, General Smith? For one thing you were making frequent visits to his two regiments and he was concerned that you were interfering with his command of his divisions. Could you explain your actions in that period?

GENERAL ALMOND: My action in that direction was that of a commander who wants to succeed by coordinating his troops as much as possible. I always announced in advance, in both World War II and Korea, my intention to visit such and such units and I usually expected the CO to be present. What I found out, especially in the case of General Smith, was I could go to the front line and find out for myself the condition that existed more rapidly than I could get them through division headquarters. Any commander who is concerned about the current situation in any of his major units should go to those units,

find out conditions as they exist as rapidly as possible. If they come through channels, that's fine and if they don't, he can seek it for himself. And by his rapid and frequent visits to the front line fighting units without disturbing the intermediate commanders concerned the more his troops learn of the commander's own feeling about the danger and the objectives.

INTERVIEWER: Well, did General Smith feel that his division alone was capable of taking Seoul or did he object to the addition of the 7th Division troops into the area.

GEN ALMOND: Yes. I think that General Smith thought that it would be a great accomplishment for the Marine Division single-handed to capture Seoul and he wasn't in the speed of mind that I was. I had told General MacArthur when he asked me the question of how long I thought that it would take from the landing operation to the capture of Seoul that in my best judgment it would be a matter of two weeks. When I found that the Marines were being held up by a frontal movement, I decided to maneuver other elements of the corps around the flanks of the defensive position in Seoul which were being maintained by the enemy. And for that reason I used the 32nd Regiment which had landed and was following the two Marine regiments.

INTERVIEWER: Isn't it also true that at this point that you had to . . . you were able to obtain use of Marine AMTRAKS to assist the crossing of the 32nd across the Han River?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. I visited General Smith's two regiments, the 5th and 1st on the 23rd of September as I recall it. I found that Colonel Murray of the 5th Regiment had been held up on open ground northwest

of Seoul and General Puller had distinct opposition in his front in the western edge of Seoul itself. I suggested to General Smith at his command post having determined this delay in advance by the stiff enemy opposition that he utilized his 7th Regiment and maneuver around the south flank of Seoul towards South Mountain which would by maneuver dislodge the enemy. General Smith took the position that this maneuver would scatter his division on too broad of a front. My response to that was that we would watch it for twenty-four hours, but twenty-four hours from now (which was noon the following day), if there was no advance on any part of any unit in the front line, I would narrow his section and utilize one regiment of the 7th Division to maneuver and capture South Mountain which will assist your advance. General Smith liked this not at all, which concerned me very little inasmuch as I was trying to serve General MacArthur's preference of capturing Seoul as soon as possible, for maximum effect on the enemy and for the opportunity that this would give him to return the government of the South Korean Republic and Syngman Rhee to the original capital city. Sure enough the next day there was no advance on the part of the 1st Regiment of the Marines or the 5th Regiment of the Marines, and I had directed General Smith and his staff to meet me in Yongdongpo. I directed General Barr, the 7th Division Commander, to do likewise with the CO of the regiment, Beauchamps, who was to make the crossing on the 25th if required. In the presence of all I made the decision and gave the order. I took the map and redirected the front of the 1st Marine Division moving the right boundary left so it would give the 32nd Regiment the opportunity to move into the major tactical obstruction,

that was being offered to the Marines advance namely South Mountain. I issued an order there and directed General Barr to proceed with me and his regimental commanders to the crossing point which had already been selected in that area and reconnoitered by General Barr. In connection with this operation, having to cross the Han River which was some hundred and fifty to two hundred yards wide and over head deep and making it impossible for troops to cross without the construction of bridges, I decided to use AMTRAKS from the Marines. In the initial landing, the AMTRAK is very useful because it really is a floating semi-tank, armed and amphibious. General Smith, the Marine commander objected to this very strenuously by stating that, "Those AMTRAKS are Marine property." My reply to that was, "They are the property of the United States Government and I propose to use them." Whereupon General Smith said, "The 7th Division doesn't know how to use AMTRAKS." One of General Smith's staff officers, in fact the commander of the AMTRAK Battalion, spoke up and said, "All that General Barr would have to do would be to divide his men into groups of sixteen and have them situated on the part of the river that he wants to cross. These men can board the AMTRAKS and we can transfer them over and they could reassemble in any formation that they desire on the other side." This was the climax and made it possible for me to utilize AMTRAKS as I had directed and sure enough the next morning the 7th Division Unit, the 32nd Infantry under Colonel Beauchamps crossed the river at daylight under my observation (and not only mine, but Admiral Struble who had been brought from the command ship, the cruiser Rochester at three o'clock in the morning and accompanied me) from the observation site on the Han River where we arrived at four o'clock. This to me was a

great accomplishment to get an admiral sixteen miles inland at four o'clock in the morning. However, the 7th Division attack on South Mountain was successful. The 7th Division, the 32nd Regiment, made the enveloping attack. They captured South Mountain in twenty-five or thirty hours from the time they launched this attack and the opposition in the city of Seoul disappeared. In the next three days Seoul was cleared of the enemy, both by the Marines and the 7th Division and sure enough on the 29th, fourteen days after the initiation of the Inchon landing, General MacArthur proceeded by car from Ascom City Airport across the Han River on the pontoon bridge built by my engineer, Colonel Edward Rowney. General MacArthur, Syngman Rhee and their staff associates, who arrived at Ascom City that morning at ten o'clock, rode over the bridge at eleven o'clock and by proper ceremony, MacArthur, as Commander of the U. N. Forces in Korea, returned the capital city to Syngman Rhee, the President of Korea, by noon of that day. We also were able to provide all present at the conference which included the staff of the Eighth Army and the Commander, General Walker, as well as my X Corps staff and myself and other dignitaries that Syngman Rhee and General MacArthur had brought ashore, with a first-class lunch before they departed. This to me was quite an accomplishment and so was it considered by General MacArthur I learned later.

INTERVIEWER: Didn't General MacArthur present you and also General Walker with Distinguish Service Crosses at that point?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, he did. And I'm very grateful for his recognition.

INTERVIEWER: So General MacArthur and his party departed Seoul that same day after the ceremonies?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. General MacArthur had to get back to Tokyo. He felt that the operation had gone in good style and the landing was complete and he could serve no purpose by remaining in our midst. General Walker returned to his Eighth Army Command which was now north of Taegu but considerably south of Seoul and the various other commanders returned to their respective command posts.

INTERVIEWER: Where was your command post now located? In Seoul itself, sir?

GEN ALMOND: No. My command post was at that time at Ascom City which is about five or eight miles northwest of Seoul, but the most suitable area to communicate certainly by air with any part of the line. I had helicopters and light planes and got them from the Marines and from the artillery supporting the corps troops.

INTERVIEWER: Sir, would you describe the type of close air support that you received during the Inchon landing in the drive to capture Seoul? Was this all off Navy air carriers or did you get close air support from the Air Force as well?

GEN ALMOND: We had support from both the Marine aviation, the Naval aviation and Air Force aviation as well as, believe it or not, gunfire from the heavy guns of the Missouri battleship which had joined us three days after the operation. Being a land lubber myself, when asked what the targets of the Missouri battleship would be in the support of the operations, I looked at the map and picked a good crossroads site south of Seoul and designated it as a target.

INTERVIEWER: Were you generally satisfied with the cooperation of the air units in supporting forces moving on Seoul?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, and we handled that in what we thought was a very effective way. Close in air support for the Marines to the degree in which we could supply it was given by the Marine Air Wing which accompanied the operation. The close-in support between the final objective, Seoul, and to wherever the front was generally were given to the Navy and distance support usually was allowed to Air Force.

INTERVIEWER: Was all of the corps artillery brought ashore before you reached Seoul and was it all deployed during the final . . . .

GEN ALMOND: Yes. All of the X Corps units were in operation by the time that Seoul was captured virtually on the 26th to the 28th of September.

INTERVIEWER: How much longer then did you remain in the Seoul area with your headquarters there before your corps was pulled out?

GEN ALMOND: Until the 7th of October.

INTERVIEWER: Were there any . . . on this particular note, was there any attempt to . . . was there any reaction by the North Koreans to move against your forces at that time?

GEN ALMOND: No. The North Koreans forces were collapsing because of lack of supplies and the fact that they had been attacked from the rear which made the Inchon landing one of the great strategic successes of all modern warfare.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, do you have a final general statement to make on the Inchon landing?

GEN ALMOND: In summation, the Inchon landing on the 15th of September, 1950, was the result of careful planning and a hastily assembled U. S. force of eighty thousand men from all over the world.

(One regiment of Marines joined the X Corps two days after the landing began.) The crux of the Inchon plan was the assembly of an adequate force and the preparation of a reasonable and proper plan in the time available.

INTERVIEWER: And about the time that the X Corps was completing the successful capture of Seoul following the Inchon landing, General MacArthur and the Joint Chiefs of Staff back in Washington were engaged in high level decision making in over the issue of whether or not the United Nation forces would cross the 38th parallel for the objective of destroying the North Korean Army. The successful capture of Seoul and the defeat suffered by the North Koreans following the Inchon landing created great opportunity. Although a number of President Truman's advisors opposed the crossing of the parallel and felt that such action was not necessary to gain U. S. objectives in Korea and there was considerable opposition within the United Nations as well, General MacArthur did receive a directive from the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the 27th of September 1950, a written directive giving him the authority to cross the 38th parallel and destroy the North Koreans Armed Forces. General MacArthur then developed a plan in which included the X Corps as a major element in the upcoming operation. General Almond, would you comment on this phase of your corps operations in Korea? When did you first learn of the new plan?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. Before I do, let me explain the understanding of the Eighth Army Commander, General Walker, and my staff. The understanding came from General MacArthur himself that when the objective

of Seoul was gained that the Eighth Army would receive the X Corps as part of its organization and it was indicated that I would come back to Tokyo and return as Chief of Staff. However, for the reasons that you have stated, the authorization to General MacArthur had been given by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to extend the operations which, in his own opinion, were suitable and adequate to the destruction of the North Korean Army. We might say that the grand strategy of the operation in Korea changed when General MacArthur decided that the North Korean Army had already been defeated and he doubted that the Chinese Army, the Reds, would intervene and come to the rescue of the North Korean Government. This was because we could strongly resist such support from Manchuria across the Yalu River and from any other source with the use of our Naval and Air Force strength, that is, if we were allowed to use them (which it later developed that we were not). The new plan, which was announced to us on the 1st of October, would involve operations into northeast Korea. This required that the X Corps be re-embarked on its transport and sail around from Inchon by the way of Pusan to the Wonsan Harbor and land on the Korea's east coast by the 20th of October, and directed to occupy northeast Korea. We learned this as I said on the 1st of October which was two days after the ceremonies that I explained on the 29th of September in Seoul.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, before we discuss any further the movement of the X Corps to Wonsan and the landings there, I would like to ask one more question in the area of the Inchon landing. Would you comment on the logistical support for the X Corps troops once they were

ashore and moving against Seoul? How was the X Corps supported? Was it all "over the beach" or were there any number of supplies coming in via the airfield there at Seoul, the Kimpo Airfield?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. Our supplies were mainly over the beach. However, as soon as the Kimpo Airfield was captured and our corps headquarters and our command post was moved there, we began to receive air supplies promptly from Japan in all categories.

INTERVIEWER: Do you recall any particular critical logistical problems that hampered the movement of the X Corps or the operations of the X Corps in the final days before the capture of Seoul?

GEN ALMOND: No. As I indicated before, the bridging of the Han River allowed General MacArthur a chance to get into the city of Seoul from Kimpo Airport on the 29th of September and this had all been planned before the operation began and before the troops had even been loaded in Japan. The typhoon sweeping supplies over the decks in the movement towards the Inchon area has been referred to. This not only included some of the equipment of the X Corps headquarters, which was promptly supplied by air once we landed in Korea, but it also included part of the bridging material, that my corps engineer, Colonel Rowney, had planned to use for bridging across the Han. When this loss was discovered, Colonel Rowney came to me with the request that I authorize a change in the logistical priorities from the amount of ammunition being transported by air to the restoration of the portion of the bridge material that he needed. I asked him if he knew what he needed and could list it and give it a tonnage. He returned shortly and explained this to me. I told him to go to the chief of staff, General Ruffner, and if this could be done without undue stoppage of ammunition supply to authorize

it and have it transported in time to be used on the 29th of September. Rowney did this and Washington approved it and, therefore, the switch was made. So that all of the materials needed for the pontonn bridge across the Han River General MacArthur used as soon as Seoul was captured were provided.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever worry that North Korean forces might get across your line of communication between the Inchon beach and your forces nearing Seoul or was there no threat at all to your line of communications?

GEN ALMOND: No. I never feared that in any degree.

INTERVIEWER: Now, once you received your new orders to move your corps from Seoul to the Wonsan Landing, what were your actions at that time? Did you return to Tokyo at all at this time or did you move with the corps around by ship?

GEN ALMOND: Not at all. About the time that the X Corps was loading our Marine Division on the transportation that had brought it to the Inchon landing, we also loaded the transportation equipment requirements of the 7th Division, the other division of our X Corps, on available cargo vessels, but the 7th Division moved overland from Seoul down through South Korea to Pusan where they were to be picked up when the Marines were landing at Wonsan and brought from Pusan to Wonsan. About the time that plan to move the X Corps overland to the Wonsan area was being completed, we discovered that the North Korean forces defeated along the Naktong River line had fled through the country overland where the road system and the ground was very rough.

They holed up in some area but this was uncoordinated by the time that our forces got to the Wonsan area (the Marines first). About the 15th of October, the information that I had indicated that South Korean forces, at least three divisions, had arrived in the Wonsan area and were proceeding on towards Hamhung and Hungnam. When I discovered this, I secured permission from General MacArthur to move a small staff group by air over to the Wonsan Airport and sit up a temporary advance CP for the X Corps prior to the landing of our first troop elements on the 20th of October. I also suggested that X Corps assume command of the Korean troops that were in the area. The North Korean forces had already fled in disorder. This command post would assume command of the area and inject the X Corps troops as they arrived. This was approved by GHQ in Tokyo. As soon as the Marines landed about the 22nd of October the ships emptied could proceed back to Pusan and pick up the 7th Division. In the meantime, however, I had a conference with Admiral Doyle, the amphibious commander again and Admiral Struble as to the landing of the 7th Division behind the Marines at Wonsan. Since the Marines were prepared to advance immediately following to the left of the South Korean forces moving along the coast, it seemed useless to me to land the 7th Division at Wonsan when we were going to deploy it a hundred miles north of there as soon as we could move in that direction. So I questioned both admirals as to the possibility of changing the landing place for the 7th Division when it arrived from Pusan. At first they were totally against such a change in plans because it required a good deal of adjustment in the already issued orders. However, I picked a place on the coastline called Iwon and asked if they

couldn't be landed there, which was eighty miles north of Wonsan area. They indicated that might be a mined area. My response to that was that the whole coast line couldn't be mined since we found no mines that amounted to anything in the Wonsan Harbor. If the enemy was going to mine the coast anywhere between Vladivostok and North Korea or South of the Korean borderline and between it and Manchuria, they certainly would have mined Wonsan Harbor first and maybe have mined Iwon area. It was agreed after that discussion to move some minesweepers to the Iwon area and if no mines were found there that the 7th Division could be landed over the beaches on a broad front and proceed from there northward to the Yalu River and to the north border which was the Manchurian border. This was done while the 7th Division was moving by the sea. It developed that there were no mines at all along the Iwon coast, therefore, it was decided to land the 7th Division in that area which would be saving them from moving eighty miles or more overland. And then march them through an area that would at least aid their advance to the north of the occupation of the northeast Korean area. This was an agreement between myself and Admiral Struble and Admiral Doyle and it worked out perfectly. I moved from Seoul on the 18th of October by air. We had moved as I said before the element of the CP under Colonel McCaffrey, who was the dependable staff officer whom I had asked General Collins for in Tokyo. I had known him for a long time. He moved jeeps, telephone and radio equipment and enough food and supplies to establish an advance X Corps CP. This he did in Wonsan City and by the time that I flew there it was all prepared to operate and we did operate in control of the Korean forces, which by this time, had reached Hamhung and Hungnam, about thirty miles to the north of Wonsan. This

was a forceful move and a very practical one, and when the 7th Division disembarked at Iwon, permitted the advance of the Marine division on the left of the corps front, the 7th Division on its right and the South Koreans proceeded up the coast line towards the Manchurian border.

INTERVIEWER: Exactly what was your relationship with the commander of those five Korean Divisions at that time? The corps commander, the Korean Corps Commander?

GEN ALMOND: Very fine. The Korean Corps Commander had, by a directive by the Korean Army Headquarters under Syngman Rhee to comply with General MacArthur's desire that they serve as part of the X Corps. My relations with him continued to be most amiable during the operation.

INTERVIEWER: What was your assessment of their fighting capabilities at that time?

GENERAL ALMOND: My assessment was that they were good deal better than the people they were chasing, the disorganized, disabled North Korean force. They adequately performed when confronted by varying resistance. The disorganized and independent North Korean element, when surrounded or outflanked, would retire after a certain amount of initial opposition.

INTERVIEWER: Would you say that the Korean Corps was operating semi-independently of your control or were you maintaining a tight watch over their movement?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I exercised a direct supervision and a very detailed supervision. I had the Korean commanders come into my corps

headquarters when necessary for the corps commander and his staff officer. And I frequently visited the Korean troops in their area. We operated the Korean troops which we called ROK, of course, in the same manner of control that I exercised over the 7th Division or the Marine Division. There was no difficulty in that respect whatsoever.

INTERVIEWER: Many of those high officials, particularly in Washington, who opposed crossing the 38th parallel had fears that the crossing the 38th parallel would provoke a reaction on the part of the Chinese Communist Armies. General MacArthur was not himself unaware of this danger. And, in fact, he realized that there was a good chance that the Chinese would intervene at least to some degree if the United Nations Armies moved closer to the Manchurian border. At the time that your Marine and Army divisions, as well as your Korean divisions, landed on the east coast of Korea and began to move north, what was your own understanding of the Chinese Army posture?

GEN ALMOND: Up to that time we had been aware of the possibility of the North Koreans being supported by the Chinese Communist or the CCF as it was known. We were all of the opinion that this would not be done in an organized matter, but be done by individual troops moving to the support of the North Korean brethren. We figured and General MacArthur was convinced that any movement at all by large forces across the Yalu River at the Manchurian border in the extension there up to the east would be subject to our air operations as I said before, both by Navy air and U. S. Air Force. And while individuals and small groups might get south of the Yalu River and the border, it

would be impossible for a force to assemble in the Mukden area and move south without being strangled by the air attacks from our side. What we did not know and did not learn until later, was that the United Nations through its various members, particularly the British and other members, did not approve of the use of air power against the Chinese Communist forces. We thought then and learned later that the British would try to get diplomatic recognition in Peking and, therefore, they had no desire to oppose the CCF forces coming across the Yalu River.

INTERVIEWER: General MacArthur met with President Truman at Wake Island on the 15th of October and just prior to the landings of your troops at Wonsan and Iwon. At that time the possibility of Chinese intervention was brought up in a casual sort of way. General MacArthur was asked for his assessment of the Chinese intention at this time. The Central Intelligence Agency and other Washington level intelligence had no firm indication that the Chinese intended to cross the Yalu River in force. However, General MacArthur reported that his own local intelligence which he regarded as quite reliable had reported heavy concentrations of Chinese Communist forces near the Yalu border in Manchuria whose movements were indeterminate. His own estimate was with our largely unopposed air forces with their potential of destroying bases of attack and lines of supply north and south of the Yalu, no Chinese military commander would hazard the commitment of large forces upon the devastated Korean Peninsula. General Almond, were you aware at this time of the massing of the Chinese forces north of the Yalu River? Regular Chinese forces? Were you yourself aware or was this strictly something that General MacArthur knew about?

GEN ALMOND: Well, what you say was the general intelligence estimate at the time that we landed in northeast Korea with the X Corps. I sent a personal radio message to General MacArthur about the 29th of October which indicated a different estimate was in order. What had happened was that the 26th ROC Regiment which had moved ahead of the Marine landing of the 7th Division landing in the northeast Korea had reached Hamhung and in the process of contact with the scattered North Korean troops towards the Chosin reservoir had captured sixteen fully equipped and well uniformed Chinese soldiers and reported them to our headquarters. Well, I immediately by small plane and jeep took off from Wonsan, my CP, to Hamhung and my purpose was to interview the soldiers captured and to find out what units they were from and what their mission was. This was the first indication of organized Chinese Communist forces south of the Yalu. This was as I say in the last days of October. My interview with these sixteen prisoners was very thorough through an interpreter, each prisoner being interviewed at a distance out of hearing from the others. They were separated when the interview was over so they could not communicate as to what questions were asked and what the answers would have been. My first question was, "What is your organization?" They gave me large Chinese division numbers. I said, "Whose forces do you belong to?" The answer was, "Lin Piao"; Lin Piao was a top commander of the Chinese Communist forces in the Mukden area and northeast China Proper. I said, "What is your mission?" And they said, "Our mission is to drive south of the Yalu River." And I said, "How far?" And he said, "To Pusan." I said, "Well, what is your incentive and purpose of going to Pusan?" And he said,

"To kill the enemy, the Americans and any South Koreans to gain food and supply and all the other benefits that we can derive from the defeat of the enemy." I then asked him, "What organization was it?" Eight of these sixteen men turned out to be a mortar squad with a mortar and mule transportation transport for more ammunition. So to my conclusion that these were regular troops of Chinese units that had crossed the Yalu River and were advancing in an area towards the objective of the Chosin Reservoir at least, and probably others would follow. This was the first information that organized Chinese troops from the mainland from the Mukden Area had been discovered. All other reports had indicated that such Chinese had come to the support of the North Korean forces and had come on an individual basis. So I felt that the importance of this discovery was significant and I sent a radio message to General MacArthur to that effect. As far as I know and I think other history accounts will indicate that the first prisoners captured of an organized CCF force was done by the Korean 26th Regiment of our force and promptly reported to SCAP Headquarters and the U. N. Headquarters of General MacArthur in Tokyo.

INTERVIEWER: Now, General Almond, you earlier commented on the fact that prior to the time that you departed from Seoul with the X Corps, would be under the Eighth Army, General Walker's control, for the subsequent operation. However, as you said, when you went around to the east coast you were operating as an independent corps. The Eighth Army was at this time continuing its drive towards the North Korean capital on the western side. Would you comment on the continuation of this independent corps and exactly what your relationship was with General Walker during this period?

GEN ALMOND: During this period while I realized that the X Corps was operating independently and in an area that was separated from the Eighth Army proper by a considerable amount of range (this was at least fifty or seventy-five miles which would have taken several more corps outside of mine to form a continuous line), I realized that I should maintain contact between the Eighth Army right flank and my left flank which the Marines occupied in the advance to the Chosin Reservoir as best we could. We arranged with General Walker's headquarters, the Eighth Army, for a patrol system that would move in the anticipation of meeting in some intermediate point as far as possible by jeep and the rest of the distance by foot and manpower alone to the extent to make contact as often as possible. We agreed to report these contacts and any discovery of enemy infiltration in that gap promptly and to render periodic reports of the success of our operation. This we did to the best of our advantage and many times found that the road had been blown out between the two forces at a previous time, but found very little enemy indication, except that after my interview with the prisoners as I had described before on the 29th or 30th of October, we found that small groups of enemy were infiltrating towards this gap and they all came from the same Chinese Division. That led us to the conclusion that only one Chinese Division was operating in the area. It was not disturbing to either General Walker's headquarters or to my own. The relations in other respects of supply and communications was by the liaison officers between the two forces and we felt that this was very adequate.

INTERVIEWER: General MacArthur, writing later about this relationship between the X Corps and the Eighth Army and explaining why the X Corps

continued to operate independently, wrote that the terrain was such that there was little prospect that an enemy might drive an effective wedge between the two forces and initiate flanking operations against either or both. And no such attempt was ever made. He also cited the fact that it would have been difficult to supply both forces from the same logistical base, namely through Inchon on the west coast until the -- quoting General MacArthur again -- "Until these two forces could unite, it would have been impossible for Walker in the west area to attempt command responsibility in coordination of the east coastal area. The logistical maintenance of an entirely separate and different supply line from Japan and to the east coast would have been beyond him." Does that pretty well sum up - - - do you agree with that right now?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, entirely. And I have already said that the gap between the two forces was interrupted by a difficult mountain range or series of mountain ranges and no road system between. It would have been impossible for any force to break the gap and supply itself except by air which the Chinese didn't possess.

INTERVIEWER: Actually, prior to the landing of the X Corps on the east coast of Korea, General MacArthur had considered a plan to use the X Corps to drive westward . . . however, the fact that the Eighth Army was able to move quickly to secure the North Korean Capital on its own allowed him to change the X Corps mission. And on the 19th of October you received final definite instructions that the X Corps mission would be to attack northward towards the Manchurian border. General Almond, what were your . . . what was your general plan of deployment at the time that the corps landed, including the ROK Corps on the right flank?

GEN ALMOND: Well, as it has been stated before, the ROK groups were advancing up the coast rapidly and by the time we had gotten the 1st Marine Division to the Wonsan area, the ROK groups were up to the Hamhung - Hungnam line and were continuing to advance. At the time when the X Corps was being redeployed to northeast Korea, it was to assist the Eighth Army advance towards Seoul. And as you have stated, the Eighth Army found it practical to initiate an advance towards the Yalu River by making its main effort in this area. However, as the X Corps continued its deployment to the northeast, General MacArthur's concept, which had been initially that there was no enemy in the northeast, began to be modified by the fact that the 26th ROK Regiment had captured some well uniformed and well trained Chinese soldiers. So the General plan of the problem in this mountainous area of northeast Korea was for the ROK Corps to continue its advance to the northeast and to the border along the coastal and adjacent road. The U. S. 7th Division was to be utilized southwest of the ROK's advance to the northern border over the Iwon - Pukch'ong - Hyesangin Corridor and southwest of the 7th Division the 1st Marine Division was to advance northward from Hamhung to the Chosin Reservoir area with a specific route beyond that point dependent on tactical elements on its front. And the U. S. 3rd Division when it arrived was to secure the Hamhung or Wonsan area on the left flank to keep open the corps line of communication and to protect the corps rear area, and, as I say, the left flank area from guerilla interference. Until the 3rd Division arrived, the 1st Marine Division would have the responsibility of securing the Wonsan - Hamhung area. And at this time -- that is, the time that the 3rd Division was arriving -- I realized that

we were scattered all over the landscape, but the general deployment was controlled by the terrain of the area in which the corps was to operate.

INTERVIEWER: General Almond, how did the X Corps progress in accordance with your general plans after its arrival in northeast Korea. This question would include the progress of the Korean Corps which was attached to you.

GEN ALMOND: Well, while we were widely scattered over very difficult terrain area, we had our main mission to advance to the Manchurian border. The ROK's proceeded in good order and successfully along the coast line with the 7th Division on its left and to the west of the 7th Infantry Division there was a Marine Division. And the 3rd U. S. Division was coming into the Wonsan area for the purpose of any use that would be appropriate at the time. This was about the 1st of November and the progress was satisfactory to all concerned on all fronts, except that the Marines were meeting some resistance in the area north of Hamhung or northwest of Hamhung which had been initially brought to light by the 26th ROK Regiment. The 26th ROK Regt. had turned over its responsibilities around the 1st of November to the Marines. It was at this time that we were approaching (with the 17th Infantry in the lead of the 7th Division elements) the Yalu River. And on the 21st of November the leading battalion of the 17th Infantry reached the Yalu River and I was present when they did so.

END OF SIDE 2, TAPE NO. 4

INTERVIEW WITH  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL ALMOND (RETIRED)

by

CAPTAIN FERGUSSON

This is side #1 of tape #5 of the interviews with Lieutenant General Almond. Interviewer Captain Thomas Fergusson CGSC student. The date is March 29, 1975. The interview is taking place at the home of General Almond in Anniston, Alabama.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, would you continue your description of your visit to the Yalu River in the 17th Infantry on the 21st of November 1950?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, it was a very pleasant experience for me to be able to fly to the Command Post which was following close to the leading elements of the regiment and in the proximity of the Yalu River and I arrived there the night before the leading battalion of the regiment marched down the hill two miles from the crest, two miles south of the Yalu River and moved freely through the town of Hyesangin located on the south bank of the Yalu River. The Yalu River was frozen over, the ground was covered over with snow and at this point, the river was very little of an obstacle to the possibility of an enemy advance across the river from the north side in raiding operations. We had to watch for this but otherwise there was no serious concern. I accompanied General Barr, the division commander, General Hodes, the assistant division commander and General Kieffer, the artilleryman, with the Regimental Commander, Colonel Powell. We all walked behind the lead company down the road to the river bank. This was the first element of the American forces to reach the Korean-Manchurian border, although earlier

elements of the 6th ROK Division with the I American Corps on the west flank, Eighth Army front, attempted to get to the river but did not succeed in remaining there.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the 1st Marine Division, General Almond? What sort of progress did they make after their deployment northward from Wonsan? Would you also describe their initial encounter with the Chinese Communists Division, the 124th, in early November?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, the 1st Marine Division having landed at Wonsan, moved northward with one regiment, the 7th leaning towards the Hamhung area where the 1st ROK Corps had advanced some days earlier. On 2 November, the 7th Marine Regiment relieved the ROK 26th Regiment in an area north of Hamhung and in the direction of the Chosin Reservoir. At the time that the 7th Marines relieved the 26th ROK Regiment, the latter was engaged with a number of detachments of what turned out to be later the 124th CCF Division which was secretly across the Yalu River at a point a good deal to the west of this Chosin Reservoir area. And the Marines from then on in their advance towards the Chosin Reservoir were engaged sporadically with Chinese elements. Following the 7th Marine Regiment to the Chosin Reservoir area was the 5th Marine Regiment. While these two regiments and the balance of the division with its artillery and other detachments advanced towards the Chosin Reservoir, the 1st Marine Regiment was occupied in an area about 20 miles south of Wonsan in clearing up guerilla activities. This task was later taken over by the 3rd Division when it arrived for service with the X Corps in the combat area. From this time on, the Marine Division, in moving to and beyond the Reservoir area engaged in numerous and

sporadic fights with Chinese organized elements. While some of these attacks by the Chinese were quite fierce, they appeared to be separate and not coordinated attacks and eventually, the Marines were able to advance to the position that they occupied when the Eighth Army attacked later on the 27th of November.

CPT FERGUSSON: But, sir, in the official U.S. Army history of the Korean War in the volume entitled Policy and Direction: The First Year by James F. Schanbel on page 236 after discussing the clash of the 1st Marine Division elements with the Chinese Communists 124th Division in early November, Schnabel says quote: "It was now quite clear that the eventuality so long discussed by American planners, Communist China's entry on the side of North Korea, was no longer hypothetical. Yet there was great reluctance at Eighth Army and X Corps headquarters, at GHQ in Tokyo, and in Washington to accept this intervention at face value." Would you disagree with Schnabel's statement? What, at this point, what did you think Chinese intentions to be? Did you become more cautious at this point in deploying your forces farther north?

GENERAL ALMOND: At this point, the estimate of how many Chinese and if they were organized Chinese forces rather than volunteer forces was difficult to determine and nobody had a definite answer to the question. That made everyone more conscious and more desirous of determining just what force we were confronted with and for that reason our operations zone was of an offensive nature because to determine the exact power of the enemy confronted required offensive action rather than surmises. For that reason, the Marines as well as the 7th Division were directed to continue efforts towards the

front. We realized that the guerilla and North Korean opposition on the right of the X Corps front was minor compared to the Chinese regular units that were being run in through the front, left front or the Marine front of the X Corps and the entire front of the Eighth Army.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were you concerned at this point sir about being able to support particularly the Marine Division logistically as they got further and further north, away from their base at Wonsan?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, I realized the danger of a large number of troops flowing around the Marine front as it was established from point to point and effecting our line of communication from the Chosin Reservoir and Hagaru-Ri southeast to Hungnam and Hamhung. For that reason, the 31st Regiment of the 7th Division was ordered to be transplanted from the 7th Division zone into the Chosin Reservoir area to protect the line south of Hagaru-Ri, the logistics line I mean.

CPT FERGUSSON: Back at GHQ in Tokyo on the 10th of November, the G-2, General Willoughby, made an intelligence report to the Department of the Army which stated that the Chinese Communists offensive potential had been greatly strengthened in the past week and he particularly cited a Chinese build-up posed a serious threat to your forces not only in the immediate area but also in the coastal area along the northeast shoreline of Korea. Were you aware of General Willoughby's opinion at this point and if so, did you disagree with him?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I didn't disagree with him because in general, what he said had to be true. We were making contacts along the X Corps left front or western portion of this line that the Marines occupied. The Eighth Army was making contact with the organized units of the CCF and we had to

be alert to the possibility of a build-up. But we had to continue operations in the area because if you think the enemy's in an area, you don't withdraw. My orders were to move to protect the right flank of the Eighth Army and to protect my own front and to use my judgment as the build-up was confirmed that Willoughby had been fearful of. To surmise a military situation and to accept it completely are two different things.

CPT FERGUSON: After that clash in early November between the CCF 124th Division and the Marines, the actual contacts greatly diminished and apparently, this had something. . .this had some effect on General MacArthur and on yourself as well in the decision to renew the advance northward. On 11 November, you having received new orders from General MacArthur, again directed the Marines to advance to the north. At about this same time you had some fairly serious disagreements with the Marine Division Commander, General Smith, about the orders to move his elements farther to the north. He apparently had greater fear than you of the danger of the Chinese Communists forces cutting his lines of communication and attacking him on his own left flank. In fact, during a visit by Rear Admiral Albert K. Morehouse on the 15th of November, Smith, feeling that he was talking "within the family," expressed frank concern over what he considered your unrealistic planning and tendency to ignore enemy capabilities when you wanted a rapid advance and then he further backed this up with a personal letter to the Marine Corps Commandant, General Cates, on the same day. He felt that your orders were wrong and that he, as Marine Commander in Korea, was not going to press his own troops forward to their possible destruction. What are your comments on General Smith's opinions at this point and your own feelings?

GENERAL ALMOND: My general comment is that General Smith, ever since the beginning of the Inchon landing and the preparation phase, was overly cautious of executing any order that he ever received. While he never refused to obey an order in the final analysis, he many times was over cautious and in that way, delayed the execution of some orders. The case that you mentioned, the Chosin Reservoir, is one of them. My orders from GHQ were to press forward and determine what if any, and how much Chinese force there was in my front that might threaten the Eighth Army's right flank. This I was doing and my instructions to the 7th Division and the Marine Division were based on my opinion that offensive action was the best way to determine the threat that existed in that situation.

CPT FERGUSSON: But did not events prove General Smith right in that a part of his division was cut off and practically annihilated at the Chosin Reservoir?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, now that is not exactly right. We had determined the strength of the enemy in front of us by moving into the area that the enemy was supposed to be in. When we learned this, that fact alone determined General MacArthur's action in withdrawing the Marine Division. Our position would be to protect our line of communication and to engage the enemy in contact with us in every possible manner. General Smith had objected to the advance against the enemy in the vicinity of the Chosin Reservoir area when the effort of the X Corps was to comply with orders from General MacArthur to determine the enemy on our front which would threaten either the front of the X Corps or the front and right flank of the Eighth Army. General Smith met the enemy and it was determined that it was too strong to

withstand. General MacArthur had the good judgment to order a change in the orders of the operations of the X Corps and the Eighth Army accordingly. As a matter of fact, the full determination of the threat to the Marines was not forthcoming until the day of the Eighth Army's intended advance, the 27th of November. On that day, I was in the midst of the Marine's operation and was at the command post of the 7th Marine Regiment before General Smith was. I was personally present and when I learned the extent of the threat that eventually plagued the Marines in their withdrawal, I could report to General MacArthur that the possibility of further advance and the possibility of retaining the position of the Chosin Reservoir area was rather grim. As a matter of fact, on the other side of the Chosin Reservoir area, two battalions of the 7th Division were engaged with the enemy which was trying to move around to the northeast of our line of communication from Hamhung to the Chosin area. There, the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry had a serious engagement with the enemy which is well recorded in history and about which I have written. (In my opinion, it is most unwise to accept General Smith's statements on these matters without regard to the opinions of other combat commanders who were intimately involved in the Chosin situation.) Returning to the particular objections of General Smith to push his division north of Hamhung and towards the Chosin Reservoir where the enemy was, it is abundantly clear to me and it was to my staff in Korea, that what General Smith was really complaining about was the fact that his division happened to be the division used to push into the forward area and meet an unknown force that would determine the strength of that force. On the very day that General Smith was doubting the X Corps Commander's

judgment and leadership by exposing his division to the enemy unduly and pushing forward the flank to protect the flank of the Eighth Army, the 3rd U.S. Infantry Division was beginning to arrive in Wonsan for the purpose of supporting the X Corps and protecting the left flank where the gap was, and where General Smith feared the worst, that he would be out on a limb. The 3rd Division was the force that was to be in echelon on the left flank or west side of the Corps Zone, an echelon to the rear of the open flank side of the Marine Division where General Smith claimed that he had no protection. And as a matter of fact, he had the protection of three regiments, echeloned in depth on his left rear. He had to protect his own left flank. Unfortunately the enemy was in such great numbers that in his withdrawal they flowed in all directions as they flowed around the Eighth Army at Kunu-ri.

CPT FERGUSSON: General MacArthur later wrote that at the time. . .that about the time the full potential of the Chinese Communists forces crossing the Yalu was recognized at his headquarters he saw three possible courses of action for the United Nations forces. They could go forward, remain immobile, or withdraw. In discussing the course of action of going forward, his thinking was that if he went forward and found the Chinese in force, his strategy would be to immediately break contact and withdraw rapidly so as to lengthen and expose the enemy supply line. "This would result in a pyramiding of logistical difficulties of the Reds and an almost astronomical increase in the destructiveness of our air power. Every step forward his strength would decrease as compared with mine until the degree of parity would be reached between the opposing forces. I would then rely upon maneuver with my objective -- his supply line." General Almond, did you in the days before the Chinese struck in force in the very last part of November,

understand this to be the overall strategy? Did you realize that General MacArthur expected to fight this type of an action to withdraw in the face of Chinese forces, overwhelming Chinese forces and attempt to take advantage of our air power to destroy them?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I didn't because I didn't attempt to interpret the various aspects of planning at GHQ when I had my own problems in controlling the activities of the X Corps. I would carry out the orders as they stood at the time and continued to do so and I've always done as as a leader on any occasion. My ideas were that there were several courses of action open but I didn't attempt to influence General MacArthur's planning except to the degree where my opinion was asked. These plans that you have just cited or possible plans had not been presented to me in the form that you have stated. As I say, I was concerned with the immediate operations and operated under the orders that were at hand.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, would you describe a visit you made, the last visit you made to the forward Marine elements just prior to the late November Communists-Chinese offensive?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. I left my Command Post at Hamhung on the morning of the 27th of November at 10 o'clock by jeep, accompanied by an aide and G-3 representative of my own headquarters. I drove to the 7th Marine Regimental CP fifteen miles northwest of Hagaru-Ri. Hagaru-Ri, it will be recalled, was a southern portion of the Chosin Reservoir. The road that I travelled was jammed with convoys of the 1st Marine Division moving troops and supplies to the Hagaru-Ri rear area and delayed my arrival to the 7th Marine headquarters somewhat. At the CP of the 7th Regiment of Marines, I found the executive officer; the commander was out inspecting some of his units in action. He explained the disposition of the regiment and the enemy situation.

The 7th Infantry Regiment had made strong contact with the enemy to the north, to the west and to the south. I, as Corps Commander, presented some dispatches and several medals to officers and several enlisted men and departed 7th Marine CP at 1650, returning to Hamburg. The trip required some four hours and forty minutes due to the traffic congested along the road. The situation along the MSR was aggravated by inadequate control stations and convoys disregarding to some extent normal convoy discipline. The weather was bitterly cold throughout the day but particularly in the mountains and on the plateau surrounding the Chosin Lake. This reconnaissance of the front lines convinced me that the strength of the enemy (by my personal inspection and the front line reports) was considerable and a re-examination was needed of the disposition of the Marines. This I reported probably to GHQ and I'm sure it had some influence in the changing of the situation which was in fact, worse on the Eighth Army front. The Eighth Army's attack that had been expected to be launched on the 27th of November and the offensive plans for X Corps had to be changed drastically and rapidly, which resulted in a withdrawal of the X Corps units in the Chosin Reservoir area, both Marine elements and the 7th Division elements that I referred to before.

CPT FERGUSSON: You mean you made the decision to begin withdrawal at that point, sir? Or was that from higher headquarters (G.H.Q.)?

GENERAL ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: Or was that a few days later?

GENERAL ALMOND: I made a report on the situation to the GHQ and General MacArthur made the decision to withdraw.

CPT FERGUSSON: You've described your own visit to the Marines on the 27th of November. What then happened on the 28th of November, General Almond?

GENERAL ALMOND: On the 28th of November early in the day, I departed by helicopter to go towards the front again and visit the units that I thought most needed an inspection. I had a conference on the east bank of the Hagaru-Ri area in the Chosin Reservoir position with Colonel MacLean, the CO of the 31st Regiment, who later that day was killed by an enemy patrol. I then proceeded to visit the BCOF Commander who had gotten to our headquarters and was leaving. This BCOF Commander was General Robertson who was a part of the occupation force visiting Korea and I wanted to see him in a general way because of his interest in our operations there. I departed for Yong-Po to see General Robertson and after that was accomplished I returned to my own CP in Hamhung. When I arrived there at 1700 I found that General MacArthur had requested my return to Tokyo for a conference at GHQ and that General Walker would be present. I knew that this was a very important conference for the commanders of both forces, the X Corps and the Eighth Army, to have been called back to discuss the situation with General MacArthur. He felt that it was urgent and we responded accordingly. I, therefore, at 1700 departed the airfield in a C-54 plane for Tokyo, accompanied by Colonel McCaffrey, Colonel Glass, both of the G-2 and G-3 sections and Major Ladd, my aide. Arriving in Haneda at 2130, I was informed that I should proceed directly to General MacArthur's home the American Embassy in Tokyo. Arriving there at 2150, we conferred with the Commander-in-Chief for the next two hours on the situation that was confronting the Eighth Army and the X Corps in Korea. Present at this conference was General Walker, Commander of the Eighth Army; General Hickey acting Chief of Staff of GHQ; General Willoughby, G-2 of GHQ; General Whitney, government

section of the Occupation; and General Wright, the G-3 of GHQ force and myself. This was a very important conference and would be a historical story in itself. This conference confirmed General MacArthur's decision to readjust his front by withdrawing from the contact with the enemy until it was clearer to all concerned the extent of the invasion. This developed in the next successive days and was the beginning of the withdrawal of the X Corps from its then existing front lines to the evacuation that occurred later on.

CPT FERGUSSON: Following the conference in Tokyo on the 28th and the decision of General MacArthur to begin withdrawal of American or United Nations forces, what were your actions as the Corps Commander? What sort of plan for withdrawal did you develop at that time and how soon did units begin to withdraw?

GEN ALMOND: I immediately returned to my post in Korea following this conference, leaving Tokyo the next morning at daylight and arriving in the next two hours at my command station. There I directed the G-3 and the other staff officers to begin planning for the discontinuance of the X Corps attack to the northwest and the withdrawal of the Corps forces as a whole to allow for our redeployment in action against the enemy to be decided later by General MacArthur. At 8 o'clock the next morning, with the order practically ready for issue, I assembled the entire staff and explained the new concept of operation based on the Corps being supplied from Hamhung and Hungnam with operations against the enemy whenever possible, consistent with the concentration of the Corps. That afternoon at 1400 I had a conference with the commanders of the main units, namely, General Smith, General Barr, General Hodes, both of the 7th Division, General Smith of the Marines

of course, Colonel Williams who had to do with the port operations, and Colonel Forney, who was a Marine staff officer on my staff for advice in the use of the Marines or the Navy in any operation that concerned them. I stressed the urgency of withdrawing the 5th and 7th Marines from their present position at Hagaru-Ri, and ordered General Barr and General Smith, the two division commanders concerned, to submit a plan for the withdrawal of the elements of the 31st and the 32nd Regiments from the position east of the lake into Hagaru-Ri and the evacuation of the wounded, both from the Marine and Army units, which we could do from the temporary emergency air strip that we had already established days before at Hagaru-Ri. I, by telephone, ordered the Chief of Staff of the X Corps to send an immediate message to Colonel Reedy, commanding a battalion of 7th Division enroute to Koto-ri, to join Colonel Fuller in anticipation of supporting the advance of the Marines on the attack of the 27th (which had been called off.). Colonel Carlton, one of my staff assistants, was ordered to proceed to Hagaru-Ri for the purpose of providing airlift supplies and plans for it as desired by Marine division and arrangement for proper packing and delivering. This included the operations for the day and the commanders that I have mentioned began to function for the purpose of withdrawal of both the 7th Division and the Marine Division as rapidly as possible. In this withdrawal, the 3rd Division, which was on the left flank, in echelon towards the gap with the Eighth Army, provided magnificent support, to the extent even of a task force cutting across enemy trickling towards the direction of our withdrawal along the road system from the Chosin Reservoir to Hamhung.

CPT FERGUSSON: What were your other actions; were you still in control of

the ROK Corps at that point and what were your orders to them?

GENERAL ALMOND: Oh, yes. The ROK Corps was ordered to withdraw from the coastal sector so that they could take the right flank where there was no threat from the north Korean forces, or from guerillas. They would occupy the right flank of our line until future operations were fixed upon.

CPT FERGUSSON: In the conduct of the Corps withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir and other areas to the north, did you establish a Corps covering force and also, did you establish successive lines to which the Marine Division and the 7th Infantry Division would withdraw to or did you merely order them to withdraw all the way back to the Hungnam area?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, first they were ordered to withdraw from their present position to the Hungnam area bringing with them all equipment with which they were supplied rather than destroying it or leaving it for the enemy's use. In connection with this withdrawal, the front line forces had to protect themselves. There was no protection needed on the right flank of the Corps, along the coast in other words, because the Korean divisions were not pressed by any opponent and they could take care of themselves. However, on the left flank of the Corps, the Marine flank were under great pressure by constantly increasing forces. Realizing the need for a covering force of some size, I had a conference at once, on the 5th of December with General Soule, the Commanding General of the 3rd Division. General Soule was very cooperative in all the demands that I made on his forces, namely to form this covering force under a general officer and to have it include not only infantry but engineers and artillery to use against the enemy if needed or to prepare the route of withdrawal if obstructed by explosives or whatnot, especially at the bridge site. This task force was formed in short

order, I would say within 24 hours it was moving to its position. The position to which it was moved was just short of where the rear elements of the Marine Division were located at Koto-ri, which was some 10 miles south of Hagaru-Ri. This covering force was moved and took position where it could actually cover the withdrawal of the Marines. Also, the 31st Regiment withdrawing with them would come under its protection at a point halfway between Hamhung and Hagaru-Ri. The commander of this covering force was Brigadier General "Red" Meade who was a fine Infantry officer and a graduate of Fort Benning and the Infantry School and a resident of Columbus, Georgia. We had known him long before and he did a fine job in this mission.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did the Marines withdraw then through that covering force?

GENERAL ALMOND: The Marines then moved as rapidly as possible bringing their equipment with them to the Hamhung area and as I say, when they got halfway to Hamhung from Hagaru-Ri they no longer had to furnish their own patrolling but this was taken over by the task force under General Meade. And the Marines completed their movement into the Hungnam area by the 12th of December.

CPT FERGUSSON: Wasn't there a conversation between you and General Smith at the time you initially ordered the Marines to withdraw from the Chosin Reservoir area in which you offered him the option to leave behind all of his equipment and he said he would bring it out instead? Did you order him to destroy his equipment at one point and then change your mind?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, not at all. I ordered him to withdraw his division and bring out such equipment as he could but not to sacrifice manpower for the sake of equipment. I ordered him to withdraw such equipment as the enemy

would permit but if necessary to destroy it rather than trying to protect it at the cost of further casualties.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you get adequate close air support during this withdrawal operation?

GENERAL ALMOND: I think so. We got all that was available and that we asked for, but this was no answer to the seething, struggling Chinese rifleman who could slip under a bush and avoid much of the air support that our withdrawal was demanding.

CPT FERGUSSON: So to sum up the withdrawal operation, there was no attempt to withdraw to successive lines on the part of the Marines and the 7th Division but instead it was one continuous movement for them to withdraw all the way back to the Hungnam area?

GENERAL ALMOND: That's correct. And while that was happening, my staff was fixing upon a plan of total defense of the Hungnam area, the port area which was 8 miles distant on the waterfront, (8 miles distant from Hamhung). We had in our minds in this respect that the Corps CP would be moved down to the Hungnam area, the port area, and that a line of defense would be established by our 3rd Division, Marine Division, and 7th Division to protect the dock area and the withdrawal area by ship if and when it was so ordered.

CPT FERGUSSON: How would you characterize the enemy forces pursuit or movement? Did they maintain pressure constantly throughout the entire withdrawal down to Hungnam?

GENERAL ALMOND: They maintained constant pressure but not in a large enough sense to threaten the penetration of our covering force and the coagulation and intense effort of both the 7th Division and the Marine Division to get

in hand in sufficient numbers to form a defense line. Our defense line excluded Yong-po airport which was regrettable but was the safest and wisest military procedure to take. We felt no particular threat on our right flank but we did on our left flank and in that area, the 3rd Division and the Marine Division took their place. The 3rd Division engaged in a number of fire fights of company and battalion size which relieved the other units, the 7th Division and the Marines from battle participation. The Marines were a reserve of the X Corps in order to let them rehabilitate themselves from the strenuous efforts of the Chosin Reservoir area.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you judge the Marine Division at that point to be greatly reduced as an effective fighting force?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, more mentally were they reduced than they were physically. While there were a number of casualties and disorder during the Chosin Reservoir operation, when the Marines got back in hand in the Hungnam area, and re-adjusted themselves to the conditions, they were considered combat effective.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the withdrawal of the 7th Infantry Division?

GENERAL ALMOND: Very well, because they had no pressure particularly. The pressure was on the Marines of the Chosin Reservoir area where two battalions of the 7th Division were also engaged and suffered greatly from Chinese attacks before we could get them out. The rest of the Division was in hand and in good condition for our combat operations.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the ROK Corps on the coast, on the east flank of the Corps?

GENERAL ALMOND: There were no problems with that, they were just waiting for future action which developed as soon as they were assigned to evacuate

with -- the X Corps from the Hungnam area.

CPT FERGUSSON: But the ROK Corps was moving back into the Hungnam area at the same time as the 7th Division?

GENERAL ALMOND: That's correct.

CPT FERGUSSON: What were your own personal actions during this withdrawal period? Did you visit the units that actually were withdrawing? Did you ever visit the covering force of the 3rd Division during that time?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, repeatedly. My personal diary shows that every day that I moved either by plane, jeep or helicopter to some vital part of the withdrawal operations to observe for myself the effect of the orders and the way they were executed and how the troops were getting along with the idea that should there be a very critical situation on any part of the front, we could first gain air strikes to delay it and second, to move troops to block it. For example; I will read from my diary at this point -- "On the 7th of December I drove at 1530 from Hungnam in a jeep to 3rd Division CP in Hamhung. Had a conference with General Soule. General Soule reported the pressure in the Majon-Dong area had let up and stated he felt that this situation was well in hand along the MSR. I then explained to General Smith concerning the control of the artillery in the valley and General Soule stated that he fully understood the Marine Division was to control the firing in support of their movement. This was the action that the covering force was taking to cooperate and coordinate with the withdrawal of the Marines who until they got within the covering forces lines, wanted to control the artillery support that the covering force could render. So that was the logical thing to do and General Soule was entirely correct in his decision." I added this extract from my diary to show the nature of the

operations that were taking place. In addition, when I returned to my CP I found that during the day of the 7th of December that we are talking about, General MacArthur had advised the CG of the Eighth Army and the CG of the X Corps. This was by radio of course, and was directed to all commands, dated the 7th of December. It was essentially as follows: "Current planning provides for withdrawal, in successive positions if necessary, to the Pusan area. Eighth Army will hold the Seoul area for the maximum time possible, short of such delay as would enable an envelopment by the enemy and would prevent the Eighth Army withdrawal further to the south. Planning further envisages the early withdrawal of the X Corps from the Hungnam area and in juncture with the Eighth Army as practical. As such time the X Corps will pass to the command of the Eighth Army." And I have noted also that in view of the above message, the staff conference was held the next morning at 10:30 at my headquarters. At the conference the next morning, the staff was directed to prepare only one plan for the evacuation of Hungnam, by all troops concerned. That was mainly the troop force of the three divisions, the 3rd, the 7th Army Divisions and the Marine Division. While this was going on the 1st ROK Corps which had been on the right flank and not engaged during the past two weeks with any combat operation, began to move by their own boats to the south in an effort to clear the area of needed ship transportation for the Army and Marine's evacuation.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you were visited by General MacArthur on the 11th of December, 1950 and at that time you discussed further plans for the X Corps with him as well as your own personal assignment. You had a decision to make at that point. Would you discuss this?

GENERAL ALMOND: General MacArthur came to X Corps area on 11 December 1950 when we were establishing the defense lines in Hungnam preparatory to the departure from the area by sea and with the support of the Navy. The Department of the Army decided to assign General Ridgway to fill the space left by the death of General Walker as Eighth Army Commander. General MacArthur explained that I could come back to Tokyo as Chief of Staff in an active capacity because I was still Chief of Staff in name at the time. Here I made a major personal decision. I chose to remain as Commanding General of the X Corps in its assignment to the Eighth Army. I chose command in the field instead of the easier staff job back in Tokyo and I never regretted the decision.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, in your opinion was the effort of the 1st Marine Division in throwing back the Chinese-Communist offensive and fighting as hard as they could while withdrawing, a critical element in the success of the retrograde movement to the Hungnam area and the subsequent Hungnam evacuation?

GENERAL ALMOND: Decidedly so. When a commander meets the enemy and cannot overcome him and has decided to withdraw from the engagement, the withdrawal should contain as much offensive combat operation in extricating the troops as possible, thus delaying the enemy more than if a rout resulted in which they would be at the enemy's mercy for practical extinction.

CPT FERGUSSON: You had by this time, by the time that you called on the 1st Marine Division to perform this mission, already firmly decided that this was a very capable division, had you not?

GENERAL ALMOND: Indeed I had. I had nothing to criticize in the fighting qualities of the 1st Marine Division.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you have any general comments of the fighting qualities of the U.S. Marines up to that time?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, except to say that I'd always known the Marines as staunch fighters and they did not disappoint me at the Inchon Landing or since that time.

CPT FERGUSSON: Between the 1st and the 7th of December, the elements of the 1st Marine Division, the 7th Infantry Division and the 3rd Division were all moving into the Hungnam perimeter, the Hungnam area. After the orders that you received from General MacArthur to evacuate from Hungnam on the 7th of December and your subsequent orders on the 8th of December, did you establish any priorities for which units would be moved out first and how did you come to that decision?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, as I recall, the first unit to be moved out would be the Marines who when they passed through the perimeter defense would be detached from active combat participation because of the rigorous trials that they had been through. The 3rd Division provided the principal perimeter material as well as the two regiments of the 7th Division. The 31st Infantry of the 7th Division, we must recall, had been through a trying series of assaults and defenses around the Chosin Reservoir from the 27th of November until the present time. However, the 17th and the 32nd Regiments, except for one battalion in the 32nd, were in excellent shape, therefore, they were given second priority following the Marines withdrawal. The last units to withdraw were elements of the 3rd Division. All Corps troops and special detachments had been integrated into the withdrawal plan. Here I should state the method of making the plan and who made the decision.

When a troop unit was declared available for withdrawal and embarkation for movement to the south, that fact was recorded by my chief of withdrawal plans who was none other than the Marine Colonel Ed Forney, who had been on my staff since the Inchon Landing. He was titled the Deputy Chief of Staff for ship movements. The port commander would inform Colonel Forney of the units which had indicated their readiness (when approved by the Chief of Staff and no longer needed in the defense of the Hungnam area). Discussions had been held on shipping required to transport the X Corps units and the available landing ports of South Korea. Colonel Forney was instructed to make a detailed study and present an analysis of tonnage and shipping requirements in line with the requirements of X Corps operations at Inchon. (This was the second time Forney had coordinated the use of shipping for the purpose of operating the troops of the Corps.) Colonel Forney stated that he felt that turn-around shipping would be necessary despite statements made to the contrary at a previous conference.

CPT FERGUSSON: Wasn't there a problem all through the evacuation about the ratio of combat troops to service troops? Didn't you have to be constantly concerned about maintaining a balance so that you had enough service troops to support the remaining combat troops, but that at the same time you needed sufficient combat troops to defend the perimeter?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, the balance between service troops and combat troops was always maintained and it was done by the unit that was ready to go to report as I said; to the port commander, Colonel Twitty and then to Colonel Forney who integrated this readiness in his plan and he got permission to finalize it from the Chief of Staff. All of this planning and coordination

was discussed daily and constantly and approved by me in the last analysis.

CPT FERGUSSON: I would assume that there was very close coordination here between the G-3 and the G-4 as to operational requirements versus logistical requirements?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, there was. And this was maintained and it was done to my complete satisfaction. And as a matter of fact, I decorated Colonel Forney with the Medal of Merit for his efficient action which involved Inchon first and Hungnam second.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, in addition to the approximately 105,000 troops of the X Corps (including the ROK Corps) and about 350,000 tons of bulk cargo that had to be moved, you were also confronted with a huge number of refugees coming down who you were able to move as well. How did you work the movement of the refugees into the overall evacuation from Hungnam?

GENERAL ALMOND: The presence of refugees was a constant threat to the coordinated movement of our forces from the 1st of December on to the time that we withdrew entirely from the Hungnam area. The regulation of traffic along the entire route of the line of communication from Koto-ri to the port of Hungnam was a matter controlled by the provost marshal. That provost marshal was Colonel Bill Campbell who had been with me in Italy as my provost marshal and with me in Korea for the entire time from Inchon Landing to the present. I directed Colonel Campbell to keep the line of withdrawal of our troops free of civilian individuals regardless of the purpose. They were forced out of the zone. This caused a congestion on the flanks of this route of withdrawal and these refugees continued to infiltrate and trickle toward Hungnam where they knew the operation of evacuation was in progress. As Commanding General, my policy was to evacuate all civil government officials and their families together with as many other loyal and non-Communist

citizens as shipping space would allow. This was extremely successful because as we loaded our ships with equipment and materiel, particularly the LST's in loading tanks out, there was a lot of vacant space between tanks and on deck. I authorized the provost marshal to move the refugees to fill the blank spaces on ships and by that method we actually evacuated during the three weeks period of movement of supplies and then troops to the south, nearly 100,000 refugees. This in itself, was a notable attitude of the North Korean citizens from Hungnam, Hamhung and adjacent areas. They had decided on their own to leave the Communist's domination which was projected by the withdrawal of our forces. I had decided that this humanitarian attitude towards the evacuation of the refugees would in no way interfere with the operations plans of X Corps troops movements. For that reason, I thought we should take a kind and humanitarian attitude toward the refugees in return for the staunch support we would get from these people in the future war operations.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, had you had any guidance from higher headquarters, from General MacArthur on this issue of the refugees?

GENERAL ALMOND: None whatever. I figured that I was capable of making that decision as long as it didn't interfere with my operations as a Corps Commander under orders from higher headquarters. As a matter of course, this attitude became known very shortly and was never interfered with or disagreed with by anybody in General MacArthur's headquarters. I think he was glad to find that I had made such a decision. And this is elaborately discussed in a paper that I wrote recently in which we have a list of more than 98,000 refugees, to include the number transported by each ship. For example, the

the Lane Victory carried 7000 refugees; the Virginia Victory carried 14,000; the Meredith Victory carried 14,000 and to make an illustration of what one LST with one platoon of tanks and a capacity load of equipment could carry, it was reported to me that 10,000 refugees on the LST 668 were evacuated from Hungnam.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, do you mean to say that refugees were loaded aboard ships that already had considerable amounts of American troops or equipment?

GENERAL ALMOND: That's exactly what I mean. The refugees, as they assembled around the port operation at Hungnam were kept in a great body. They were anxious to move on any ship available. When the ship was loaded with our troops and the equipment therewith to its limit, the captain of the ship would report to Colonel Forney who was Director of the plan of evacuation, the number that could be handled either sitting or lying or sitting on equipment on his ship. If this was 5000 or 8000 he would indicate that and the refugee leader in charge of the camp would indicate how many refugees would proceed from the camp site to the shore site where small craft would pick them up and move them to the ship.

CPT FERGUSSON: During the past week we have learned or we have seen that in the evacuation of refugees from Da Nang in Vietnam, there has been a tremendous problem controlling the desperate refugees who have struggled at the airfield and struggled to get aboard ships. Did you have a serious problem maintaining control of the refugees or did the Koreans pretty well handle it themselves?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not at all. The Koreans obeyed our instructions and we indicated to them that if they didn't obey them, they would suffer by it. We placed a line guard in front of their camp and when they saw that we were

releasing so many each day and that they were boarding ships, they could tell that we intended to continue that operation and that sign of humanity towards them. They acquiesced very firmly and I commended them for it at the time.

CPT FERGUSSON: The United Nations forces in Northeast Korea were completely evacuated from Songjin, Wonsan, and Hungnam by 1400 hours on 24 December 1950. A great majority of units and supplies passed through the port of Hungnam. In this operation what sort of doctrine had you relied upon to conduct the massive evacuation or was there any doctrine for this sort of an evacuation by a Corps at the time?

GENERAL ALMOND: To be perfectly frank, this operation, practically in its entirety, was entirely new to me and to my staff. I would say that the success of it was due 98% to common sense and judgment and that this common sense and judgment being practiced by all concerned was turned over to General Forney who organized the activities in fine form. I mean Colonel Forney, he should have been a General! It might be worthwhile to extend these considerations as to how the evacuation was planned and operated. There was no time for research or experimentation and I've said that we relied on common sense in organization and the plans taken to prevent the refugees from interfering with the perimeter of defense should the enemy attack. While it was known that the time available for evacuation would depend largely on the tactical consideration and how hard the enemy pressed his attack against the perimeter, the estimate to clear the ports from dates that loading out began in Hungnam was approximately 10 days. This was accomplished. All serious threats to the defense were badly mauled by air strikes and Naval artillery fire. The logistics consideration finally governed

the rate of evacuation. It became a matter of how rapidly the ships could be loaded.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, when you left. . .when the X Corps under your Command was evacuated from Hungnam, you then went under control of Eighth U.S. Army, and the United Nations command in Korea, so this marked the end of your command of an independent Corps. In general terms, what would you say about the operations of an independent Corps? What were the special problems that confront this sort of force as compared to a field Army?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, we can analyze this concept by going back to the basic and fundamental concept of organization. Some organizations are designed purely for tactical operations, others are both administrative and tactical. For example, the rifle company is tactical and administrative while the battalion is not. The infantry regiment is a tactical and an administrative unit while a brigade is not. A division is a tactical and an administrative unit and on up to the corps. The corps ordinarily functioning with a field army is a tactical unit pure and simple and not designed for administrative purposes. Now, when you operate independently as a corps or with a corps regardless of the number of troops, we find that many administrative units such as medical, ordnance, signal, and others recording the history and records for the unit all have to be administered by the corps itself. It has no other source to refer its administrative problems to. Therefore, when corps operate independently, they not only have tactical functions and responsibilities but administrative functions.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, do you mean, when you use the term administrative, do you mean . . .do you include within that logistical functions as a whole?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, a base. For example, a corps operating under an Army can depend upon the Army administrative function areas to supply its base operations. If it operates independently it must provide its own base operations. The same applies to hospitalization. The same applies to the assembly of ammunition and if there is an airfield to be established, if it is an independent corps, the engineering know-how has to be present in the corps organization in order to insure the commander that bridging equipment, engineering equipment of all kinds is available under his own control.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, in the X Corps operations in Northeast Korea, did you have a logistical command or did you set up some sort of ad hoc headquarters to control all of these supporting units or did they merely. . . or were they merely coordinated by the G-4 of the Corps?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I had a special unit called the 2nd Engineers Special Brigade. It was commanded by Colonel Twitty, a coast artillery officer in whom I had great confidence. He later became a General, but when we left Japan for the Inchon Landing, the 2nd Engineer Special Brigade was our port capacity for handling anything that came in that port to supply the X Corps. As I said before, it was considered essential to be self-sustaining in every respect, both in evacuation of wounded and other things used in the operation and in the intake of supplies of every character. They all came through the port commander wherever it was. We carried Colonel Twitty and his engineers special brigade when we left the Inchon area and moved to the Northeast Korean area. We used him to the fullest extent under the planning of Colonel Forney, as I've explained, in the evacuation. When we reached South Korea after the Hungnam evacuation

we found that all the things that Colonel Twitty had been doing with his engineers special brigade could be done by the Eighth Army from the port of Pusan and stations north of that.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you mean that in this brigade, you gave Colonel Twitty additional authority to command medical, transportation, ordnance and all logistical supporting units or was he merely a coordinator?

GENERAL ALMOND: He was a coordinator for these services but he was the port commander or the base commander in all the operations of the X Corps.

CPT FERGUSSON: So there really was no one big logistical commander who had command authority over all these supporting units?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, but if I had it to do over again and was responsible for the organization, I would create such a command to coordinate the efforts of all concerned.

CPT FERGUSSON: Genral Almond, were the refugees of any use during the evacuation period to you?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, indeed they were. For an example, when we loaded a ship with ammunition or tanks or any other commodity necessary to combat, the question would arise how soon can this equipment, particularly in petroleum supplies, be gotten aboard ship? The answer would come from the port commander that we had no labor to assure that accomplishment. My reply to that was, what would we do with the refugees? Why can't the refugees who are in camp and go aboard our ships be utilized for this? All agreed that this could be done. And when the great number of barrels of fifty gallon drums of petroleum products which we were evacuating instead of destroying were put aboard ship, two refugees would roll the fifty gallon drum of petroleum or gasoline to the water's edge and place it aboard

the small Naval vessels available, really row-boats and from there they would be moved to the shipside and brought up by a derrick. This was a wonderful way to salvage material that we would have otherwise had left to the enemy or blown up.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, when did you personally depart Hungnam? When did you move your CP on board ship and depart the area?

GENERAL ALMOND: My departure from Hungnam was at 4 P.M. on the 24th of December 1950. I had moved my command post and the basic requirements for a command group, that is my Chief of Staff and my senior G operators, G-1, G-2, G-3 and G-4 and my Chief surgeon, aboard the Mt. McKinley which was the flagship of the amphibious commander, Admiral Doyle. That is, when the troops reached the ship to be evacuated, they came under the command of the amphibious commander, and this was Doyle. We have many photographs of the demolition of the docks at Hungnam which was the last act of one battalion of the 3rd Division. About 2 P.M. in the afternoon, Admiral Doyle, Admiral Strubel, the 7th Fleet Commander, myself and my Chief of Staff, observed this demolition. It was necessary to blow up the docks to prevent the enemy from using it in a practical way in their future operations. We hated to do this but it was a common sense practice of war to leave nothing to the enemy's advantage and we blew the docks up. Following that action, we departed from the Hungnam area and the next morning were well on our way to South Korea.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, how was the final supporting heavy artillery fire provided for these. . .that last battalion of the 3rd Division as they destroyed the docks and evacuated Hungnam?

GENERAL ALMOND: It was provided by the Navy, mostly from the guns on the destroyers and cruisers that Admiral Struble and the Naval commanders of the 7th Fleet supplied. Admiral Doyle commanded the administration of the movement. Admiral Struble, the Fleet commander, provided the necessary overhead fire and subduing fire against the enemy who could otherwise have attacked the lone remaining demolition battalion of the 3rd Division that I've mentioned before.

CPT FERGUSSON: After successfully evacuating your Corps and the 100,000 refugees from Hungnam on Christmas Eve you must have enjoyed a very pleasant Christmas of 1950? Can you describe your activities and what sort of celebration you had on Christmas Day?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. The fact that we had successfully made an evacuation and had an experience like Dunkirk in some respects, was a great relief to my mental and physical well-being that I well remember. As I remember, the night of Christmas Eve, instead of waiting up for Santa Claus, I went into a dead sleep right after dinner and woke up about mid morning the next morning, several hours, however, before the ship arrived at Ulsan. My notes show that I had breakfast with the Admiral on the 25th of December at 8 A.M. I hope I made the breakfast but I don't remember in any detail what happened. As far as Christmas Day after proceeding ashore with Admiral Doyle about 1500. . . .

CPT FERGUSSON: At Ulsan?

GENERAL ALMOND: . . .at Ulsan and we were accompanied by my Chief of Staff, General Ruffner, we inspected the unloading areas and how it would be done at an unloading conference at the new destination. We returned to the Mt. McKinley at 1900 and at 2000 departed in the Admiral's gig for Christmas

dinner ashore. They called this operation "Visiting Jacob's Roost." I asked what "Jacob's Roost" was and it was explained that you couldn't have a drink aboard ship but you could go ashore any time you had the opportunity and the means to have the refreshment. We had a fine dinner on Christmas Day in the evening as a guest of Admiral Doyle, the commander of Amphibious Group 1 that brought us out of Hungnam.

CPT FERGUSSON: On the 27th of December you reported to the Eighth Army Commander, (by this time, General Ridgway) that your Corps was ready for deployment as part of the Eighth Army. Would you describe your meeting with General Ridgway and how you then moved your Corps into southeast Korea?

GENERAL ALMOND: We arrived as we have said in Ulsan on Christmas Day. By the 27th of December the Corps staff section aboard the Mt. McKinley, Admiral Doyle's flagship and debarked. And I reported that day to General Ridgway by flying to his headquarters in Seoul that the X Corps in accordance with orders from General MacArthur's headquarters was reporting and assembling for duty with the Eighth Army. General Ridgway greeted me very pleasantly and whole heartedly and when I reported to him, he outlined to me his intentions to "Fight cohesively and to kill as many CCF as possible." Those words were my guidelines and I flew that night to Taegu to spend that night there with the Eighth Army staff. I spent the whole evening talking to the Eighth Army staff members, many of whom I had known in former times. They were all pessimistic and each asked me quote: "Should we stay here or retire in the direction of Pusan?" And I replied, "I have just arrived from Hungnam as you know and early today I met General Ridgway who told me that he planned to, "Fight cohesively and to kill as many CCF as

possible. That's what I'm going to do and tomorrow I shall be back at my own Corps headquarters, moving my divisions to our sector which had been indicated as the central part of the U.N. front." This I did. And I cite the above to demonstrate my concept and intention to follow the plan given to me by my commander, General Ridgway, that night.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, what divisions at this time were assigned to the X Corps. I believe you have lost control of the 1st Marine Division and of the ROK Corps, is that correct?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. It will be recalled that I evacuated from Hungnam five Korean Divisions; three American Divisions and a number of my own Corps headquarters and the units of the Corps as well, other than the divisions and nearly 100,000 refugees. The X Corps debarked from the Mt. McKinley as the staff and various units -- artillery, communication and medical units -- and went to various locations in the Eighth Army area. That left the X Corps virtually alone for the time being but as the Corps received its sector assignments from Wonju (inclusive) to the east as far as the ROK west boundary line, other units were attached to the X Corps and became its combat units. For example, the 2nd Division, being relieved from the area north of Pyongyang, was moved rapidly as possible to the Wonju area. The 7th Division, which had been in the middle sector of the X Corps up in northeast Korea, was moved to an area in south east Korea. The five ROK Divisions were moved to the ROK coastal sector northwest of Taegu and Ulsan where we landed. The Marine Division was put in Army Reserve. Therefore, when the X Corps established it's CP at Kyong-Ju it was in the midst of a transition from its independent area of northeast Korea to a sector in the front area of the Eighth Army. This was the condition for the next month

or six weeks. And my main job was to receive and adjust the units as would compose the new X Corps combat elements and as I've said, these were roughly the 2nd and 7th Divisions; at least two ROK Divisions; later the Marine Division and later than that; the 3rd Division which I had had with me in the Wonsan/Hungnam area.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, after you had received the 2nd Division as part of the X Corps on the 27th of December, your headquarters was at this time in southeast Korea, Kyong Ju, with the 7th Infantry Division, northwest of there and moving northward at Yongch'on. The 2nd Infantry Division was moving to join the X Corps and was in the vicinity of Kyong Ju which was far to the north and northwest from your Corps headquarters and the 7th Division. What actions did you take at that time to, in regard to the 2nd Division, and what were the events of the next two weeks leading up to your relief of the commander of the 2nd Division?

GEN ALMOND: Well, from the 27th of December on, my sector having been assigned Wonju to the eastward and the I ROK Corps boundary on my right, a distance of about 20 miles front and sector width of some 20 miles. I was concerned with the morale, the condition, the fighting efficiency of the Divisions then allotted to the X Corps. That meant the 2nd Division in the vicinity of Wonju and the 7th Division, which had been well to the southeast of my allotted front and was moving by regimental and even battalion segments north and onto the right of the 2nd Division, whose units were south and southeast of Wonju. We were all moving to get forward and gain contact with the enemy as soon as possible. I moved from unit to unit of battalion size to determine for myself the condition of the troops then

coming under my command. For example, on the 13th of January starting at 8:30 in the morning I departed from my mobile CP with Captain Barrett and Captain Haig, my aides. We moved during that day and ended the inspection operation at about 4:30 in the afternoon. I visited that day the French Battalion, the Netherlands Battalion; three battalions of the 23rd Infantry and two battalions of the 38th Infantry. I found the men in good spirits with exception of the fact that all commanders indicated more or less the need of certain items of equipment. I had my staff alerted at once and furnished this equipment within 24 hours by air drop at a designated place. General Ridgway, in his initial orders to me stating that he expected to fight and kill as many CCF as possible had indicated that Wonju on the left on my Corps front near my left flank was an important road center, the second most important in Korea. The most important was Seoul, which had been the objective of the Inchon Landing. General Ridgway indicated that he was determined to hold Wonju and ordered me to do so. I ordered the 2nd Division to dispose its forces so that this might be done. I found on the 12th of January that Major General McClure was failing to carry out this order, and that he had ordered a withdrawal from the area controlling the Wonju roads center. For this direct disobedience of my orders (which were in compliance with the Army commander's orders) I ordered General McClure relieved from duty and the next in line to take his command until I could communicate with the Eighth Army Commander who agreed that my Chief of Staff, General Ruffner should become the Commander of the 2nd Division.

CPT FERGUSSON: You relieved him on the 14th, sir?

GENERAL ALMOND: I relieved him on the 13th as I recall it. As I recall

it, General McClure was relieved by the Eighth Army on . . . well, perhaps it was the 14th because at a conference at my headquarters on the 14th, it is my recollection that General Ruffner was still the Chief of Staff. However, at my conference on the 15th, I introduced General Guthrie as Chief of Staff. Colonel Guthrie had been the commander of the 7th Regiment of the 3rd Division in the Wonsan area before we retired from Hungnam. General Ruffner turned out to be an able Division Commander and I never made a stronger move and a more appropriate one than in switching commanders when the 2nd Division needed rehabilitation, re-inspiration as a combat unit and the preparation to meet the strenuous combat operations that it was called on to perform during the next five months.

CPT FERGUSSON: This completes side one of tape number five of the interviews with General Almond.

This is side #2 of tape #5 of the interviews with General Almond. The date is March 29, 1975. Interviewer is Captain Thomas Fergusson, CSGC student.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, was the 2nd Division in contact with the Chinese-Communist forces at the time that you relieved the division commander?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. It was in the process of gaining contact because we had observation of Chinese movement north and northwest of Wonju and a conversation with General Ruffner after he assumed command, concerning that very point. I had a telephone call with General Ruffner on the 16th, two days after General McClure was relieved, in which General Ruffner assured me that the 2nd Division was conducting vigorous patrolling north and northeast to re-establish contact with the enemy. I had given orders that each battalion organize a tactical air control party and make maximum use of tactical air force support for ground patrols conducting reconnaissance.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, at the time the 2nd Division was consolidating its positions under its new Commander, General Ruffner, the 7th Division continued to move northward to take its position east of the 2nd Division within the X Corps line. When did the 7th Division reach a position along the front lines?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, it was a matter of progressive advance north and when small groups of the CCF or the North Korean forces were encountered, an engagement would occur which would delay their advance. So I would say the 7th Division was in the vicinity of Yongwol (an objective of the 7th Division) by the 17th of January.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, did you maintain your CP at the original location, down in southeast Korea near Ulsan during the month of January or did you move it on up to the north?

GENERAL ALMOND: Oh, no. By the time the 2nd Division was organized in the area around Wonju I had about the 5th or 6th of January moved the Corps CP from Ulsan to Churŕ Ju, had established an advance CP in Wonju and was in close contact with the 2nd Division CP in the same area. We continued this operation of pushing our elements forward to get as far to the north and in the Wonju area in order to hold it as General Ridgway had directed through the next two weeks. By the 1st of February, we were fairly well collected along our front lines and in contact with the enemy. However, we found that the CCF were continuing to probe our front line areas to try to determine, apparently, the location of the American right (or east) flank and where the ROK troops began and extended to the coast. It was our opinion that the CCF were endeavoring to envelope the American forces right flank and to attack the less feared ROK troops. This led to our increasing our patrolling northward to the extent that when we built up a force of a company size north of our identified line, we would push elements forward and if it got into serious trouble with the enemy, we would reinforce it rather than withdraw the unit.

CPT FERCUSSON: As a matter of fact, General Almond, on 5 February 1951, General Ridgway ordered the X Corps to attack in the central sector. And your troops made good progress in their advance which was known as "Operation Roundup." However, enemy resistance increased as the X Corps approached the main CCF position. Would you describe this period, particularly the events at Chipyeongni?

GENERAL ALMOND: General Ridgway directed the advance by strong patrolling and as a matter of fact, it was to be a limited objective attack to gain

contact with the enemy then moving at various places against the Eighth Army's east-west line from Seoul. This resulted in the battle of Chipyeongni. When this development occurred between the 5th and 10th of February, it was with the full agreement between General Ridgway and myself as Commander of the X Corps that should a large engagement develop from our pushing elements of the 23rd Infantry well forward and into the Chinese lines, the U.S. forces involved would be rescued by an outside force of armor, infantry and air directed from the south and by the Eighth Army (since the X Corps had no reserves to apply to this rescue). Eighth Army would drive a wedge into any CCF force that might encircle the 23rd Infantry and by maneuver would roll the CCF position back. This did develop to the extent that by the 12th of February some five Chinese divisions were pushing in all directions and surrounding the 23rd Regiment which only had its own force, some artillery and mortar additions, and the French battalion, which had been with the 2nd Division for some months and fought bravely with them. When the encirclement of the 23rd Infantry occurred, I flew into the area several times and discussed with the commander, first Colonel Freeman and after he was wounded, Colonel Chiles, my G-3 who took command, and discussed the rescue of the regiment. General Ridgway had prepared the outside force to move to the relief of the Chipyeongni besieged forces and this was the effort that solved the problem and caused the Chinese to be disturbed and dissolved in our front. They withdrew immediately and began to move further eastward which was an indication that they had no intention of giving up the probing action that they were engaged in but they were determined at the same time not to suffer heavy casualties in their effort to destroy the 23d Regiment.

CPT FERGUSSON: The Chinese Divisions opened their main attack on the 23rd Regiment of the 2nd Division on the night of 13 February and these attacks continued for three days during which time the 23rd Regiment staved off all efforts by the Chinese to overrun the town of Chipyeongni and killed thousands of Chinese. At about this same time, General Ridgway, the Eighth Army Commander, gave you additional units, including re-attachment of the ROK II Corps. Would you discuss this, General Almond?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. When General Ridgway and I realized that the attack on the 23rd Infantry Regiment involved a large force of Chinese, General Ridgway also realized that his right flank and the ROK front to the east of the X Corps sector were becoming endangered and thought it essential to move reserves and supporting units at least in rear of the X Corps position. At the last moment he decided to attach two ROK Divisions under the command of the I ROK Corps, and also to attach the 187th Airborne Regiment to the X Corps as a reserve. This, of course, strengthened the position of the X Corps to the extent that it could repel other strong attacks like the one that had been made against the 23rd at Chipyeongni. On the 14th in my conversation with General Ridgway on the situation of the X Corps front, he expressed his desire to send immediate relief to the 23rd Regiment at Chipyeongni. This comprised a combat force of artillery, air, tanks and at least, ground force the size of a regiment. General Ridgway gave a directive as follows: "The Chinese attack appears to be on about a 20 mile front." (Remember this was on the 15th - 14th of February after the enemy had been attacking at Chipyeongni for two days) and General Ridgway continues: "On this front I want the shoulders to be held. The major units should

maintain contact and be maintained intact. The Army is assuming responsibility for the III ROK Corps to the east of the I ROK Corps which is attached to the X Corps. No equipment is to be abandoned. Wonju must be held and the attack checked in that area. The highest priority is the opening of the MSR with the 2nd Infantry Division employing the 23rd Infantry for that purpose. It is now beleaguered and surrounded. All echelons must be impressed with the importance of this mission every hour. Many times one small group, by determined action, can influence the entire situation. I expect, "said General Ridgway", the 1st RCT of the Marine Division to close in this area in about 72 hours. The Corps Commanders all along the Army front are being given complete responsibility for the control of civilians within their area. We will do everything we can to assist you in stemming this attack." Following this conversation with General Ridgway and other commanders, I met with General Ridgway and the new addition to the X Corps, in the form of the 1st Marine Division assisting division commander, General Puller, who had been the 1st Regimental Commander under me in the northeast Korean operation. General Puller assured us that the first combat team of the Marine Division would arrive in good order and ready for battle.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, following Chipyongni the X Corps moved to consolidate positions in its sector and there was no significant action throughout the rest of February and during the month of March. Do you have any general comments on this period?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. As you say, following Chipyongni the month of March was utilized in a general effort to advance wherever possible our own line and to probe as deeply as possible into the enemy occupied areas in order

to determine the movement of their troops as well as their strength and disposition. The action in the first three weeks of April followed the pattern that was established in February and March with the Corps continuing its methodical advance north. The advances were made by phase line and in the wake of strong combat patrols unleashed against Communist delaying forces and the general attack across the Soyang River. The latter resulted in the seizure of the "Kansas Line" and its preparation for defense. Orders were issued to resume the attack from the Kansas Line to the next phase line, Alabama. But this offensive action was forestalled by the Communists attack against us on the night of 22-23 April. The defense of the Kansas Line by the X Corps was successfully carried out as a result of the following: maintaining a close coordination of all units, securing the objectives, and constantly preparing to defend against counter-attack. We used strongly coordinated close air support and mass artillery fire. We employed immediate counter-attack and thereby reduced penetration. Elements driven out of defensive positions were rapidly reorganized and re-committed. Through the period of fighting, units were constantly shifted to meet tactical requirements and the weight of artillery fire was directed to the most critical areas.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you mentioned the planned attack from Kansas Line forward to seize the Alabama Line which was disrupted by the CCF large scale attacks against X Corps on the 22 and 23 of April. Did you have any intelligence warning of those CCF attacks on 22nd and 23rd April?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, we knew that the Communists were moving in the general area and were quite active in those movements and that made us suspicious. But the crafty way in which the majority of the CCF forces moved at night

and never in the daytime and moved across country rather than along roads was very difficult to interpret and to figure out. We were not surprised by the 22nd of April attack and we were prepared for it, but we never knew precisely when it was going to be launched.

CPT FERGUSSON: President Truman relieved General MacArthur from his command of the United Nations forces on 11 April 1951. How did you learn of this . . . when did you first learn of this action, General Almond?

GENERAL ALMOND: As we established our position in the east central front of the Eighth Army since the evacuation from Hungnam, I had worked rather diligently in a multitude of inspections and contracts between various units to secure their connection along the front line and the assembling of the major units in the proper places. I decided to take a week's leave to go back to Tokyo where I would have the opportunity not only of seeing my family, but I was sure that I would see General MacArthur. This seemed to be appropriate time to take such a small vacation and I did so. General Ruffner assumed command of the X Corps during my absence, 2nd to the 9th of April. On the 9th of April, as my leave in Tokyo was about to expire, I went to tell General MacArthur goodbye and he looked rather disconsolate and said to me, "I may not see you anymore, so goodbye, Ned." I said, "I don't understand what you mean, because you have been coming to see me frequently during the past six or eight months?" He said, "That isn't the question. I have become politically involved and may be relieved by the President." I said, "Well, General MacArthur, I consider that absurd and I don't believe the President has the intention of taking such a drastic action. We will expect to see you in X Corps headquarters very soon." He said, "Well, perhaps so." And we thus parted. On the next day while I was out observing the artillery shoot

with a new type of ammunition, my aide about 3 P.M. came to my side with a note. The note was a radio report that had just come through to the X Corps headquarters that, "General MacArthur had been relieved of his command by President Truman." "I cannot believe it," I replied. But it was true. Thus, General MacArthur as the world knows, was summarily relieved because of a disturbing letter that the President had seen from MacArthur to Congressman Martin of Massachusetts in which the President thought that General MacArthur had discussed matters of Army control unduly in a private manner. The whole X Corps and the Eighth Army, I would say, was shocked by this occurrence and this, of course, required the transfer of General Ridgway to assume command of General MacArthur's U.N. activities in Tokyo and the supervision of all troops involved in the Korean War. Immediately his replacement was announced: General James A. Van Fleet, an officer that every one knew from World War II experiences and before and after that. General Van Fleet was soon in command in Korea and I again in command of the X Corps after my leave in Tokyo. This relief of General MacArthur and change of command from General Ridgway to General Van Fleet, while not disturbing as far as our capabilities, disturbed our attitude because of interference by political forces with the military operation on the battlefield.

CPT FERCUSSON: General Almond, following the Chinese offensive starting on 22 April which lasted only a few days and after which the X Corps stabilized its positions, can you describe the general X Corps activities prior to the Chinese offensive in mid-May?

GENERAL ALMOND: As you have said, the Eighth Army, following the Chinese attack on the 22nd of April established a firm defensive position along the entire front which was a line just south of the 38th parallel. The X Corps position extended from the high ground west of Hongchon northeast

to Inje, a distance of approximately 60 kilometers. The 1st Marine Division secured the left flank and held the high ground south of the Chunchon Plain. The 2nd U.S. Infantry Division on its right was firmly established on the front of approximately 25 kilometers and throughout which, extensive fortification had been installed by the 2nd Division, of course. The right one third of the Corps front was occupied by the 5th and the 7th Korean Divisions, with the 7th Korean Division on the right flank; from the Corps right flank elements of the III ROK Corps extended the line to the east coast of Korea. The line thus occupied was titled the "No Name" Line. I am responsible for that name because when we received the order from Eighth Army headquarters to defend along the line and a parallel was given and points on the map were given, I asked the G-3 what is the name of this line? We've had names for others and the reply was, "They gave no name." I said, "Therefore, we will call it the "No Name Line." And this name was immediately used by the X Corps and adopted by the Eighth Army.

CPT FERGUSSON: The date is now 30 March 1975 and the interview with General Almond concerning the X Corps operations in May 1951 continues.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, during the two weeks of relative quiet which followed the failure of the April Chinese offensive, United Nations intelligence, warned by aerial observation of troops and supply movement, felt that a new Chinese-Communist offensive was in the making and that it would fall on your X Corps in the center of the Eighth Army lines. The Eighth Army Commander, General Van Fleet, accepting this estimate of upcoming Chinese attacks kept the Eighth Army on the defensive, dug in behind the so-called No Name Line. On the 16th of May, 1951 the Third and Ninth Army Groups comprising the 12th,

15th, 60th, 20th and 27th Armies, Chinese-Communist Forces moved 137,000 Chinese and 38,000 North Koreans southward against the X Corps and the ROK units to the east. The brunt of the attack fell on the 2nd Division in the center of the X Corps and the two ROK Divisions to the east. What do you recall of this massive Chinese attack and your actions as the Corps Commander encountering it?

GENERAL ALMOND: In response to your question and outline of the conditions between 16 and 20 May, I, of course, kept in close contact with all units concerned and realized that the 2nd Division had received a severe blow and was suffering from it. In anticipation of this attack, I had a thorough understanding with the Division Commander, General Ruffner, that instead of retaining his position longer than it was tactically wise to do so, that we would select lines to which we could withdraw, first by one regiment and then by another, keeping contact and re-establishing the lines in the rear successively as we had to. This occurred during this period, 16th to 20th. And the Marines on the left of the 2nd Division were also forced to withdraw before the 2nd Division had ever pulled back to its successive line of defense. This operation convinced me that the full strength of the Chinese offensive of the 16th to the 20th of May was designed to demolish the 2nd Division if possible but at least, to flow around it and through the ROK Corps areas on our right and to move straight to the south, to endanger our base of supply and the base of the Eighth Army at Pusan. This was a startling development and I felt it very strongly. As a matter of fact, when on the 20th, I returned to my CP from having visited the 1st Marine Division and then the 2nd Division, I arrived back at my Command Post about 2 o'clock in the afternoon and there I found that General Van Fleet, the

Eighth Army Commander, accompanied by General Ridgway who had come over to visit him from Tokyo. They were standing at my CP as I drove up in a jeep from the air strip where I had landed. General Ridgway, General Van Fleet and I conferred about the general situation. General Van Fleet said, "We are in a bad situation and I understand it." And asked me further, "General Almond, what is your opinion?" I said, "My opinion is worse than that and my fear is that I'm going to lose my base of supplies and as a matter of fact, you are going to lose yours for the Eighth Army, unless something drastic is done and I'm reinforced on this flank. The Chinese are flowing like water around my right flank. The 2nd Division is holding in successive positions, but the ROK Divisions on my right, the 5th and the 7th, are being disintegrated by this huge<sup>e</sup> attack of the enemy, and this will continue on and be extended to the coast shortly, against the other ROK Corps on the right flank. I think we are in a very serious situation." General Van Fleet then asked me, "What is your recommendation?" "Well," said I, "My recommendation is that I receive the 187th Airborne Regiment which is in Army reserve and that I hold it in readiness with the truck transportation for at least a battalion with artillery attached and that when the Chinese have gone a little further than at the present time, to strike across their rear from Hongchon to Inje and cut their line of communications and I think they will fall of their own weight and the lack of supplies, particularly ammunition. They are being forced to expend their ammunition and it has to be re-supplied or they will wilt." General Van Fleet said, "What else would you like to have that we could give you?" I said, "The 3rd Infantry Division." He replied that the 3rd Infantry Division had been withdrawn from the line

in the vicinity of Uijohnbu north of Seoul in the last three days. I said, "That may be true but that doesn't prevent their moving into this area and taking part in this combat which may be a fatal blow if the Chinese are allowed to continue." "When would you want them and where?" I said, "The leading elements should arrive tonight if possible, in the vicinity of Wonju." "What will you do with them," he said. I said, "I will arrange them by regimental combat team deployment in general areas about 15 miles apart. These I will use as islands so that the advancing Chinese Armies will have to bypass or eliminate them. In that effort to eliminate obstructing forces, widely separated, it would distract their main effort now being started in my opinion, in the direction of Pusan to the south." General Van Fleet then said, to General Ridgway, "May I talk to you alone?" And they retired out of ear shot to me and discussed what I had recommended. When they came back five minutes later, General Van Fleet said, "We will give you the 187th Airborne tonight in the vicinity of Hoengsong and the 3rd Division will begin to arrive at midnight for your disposition." I said, "Thank you very much, that will allow me to strike the enemy's rear and cut his line of communication as General Foch did in World War I when he used the XX French Corps. They moved by taxi cabs from Paris to assemble in the vicinity of Soissons when the Germans were attacking in that area from Soissons to Metz and had succeeded in crossing the Marne with six Divisions, posing a direct threat to Paris. The counter stroke by General Foch was very successful and caused the German attack to collapse. This I hope to do with the Chinese by striking on the axis of Hongchon to Inje at the appropriate time." I cite the foregoing to show in later years of high command, how I profited by my studies of successful commanders in

my junior years in the Army.

CPT FERGUSSON: After you had obtained the release of the 3rd Division for your use in the X Corps, as well as the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat team, how did you actually deploy them once you received them and how did you conduct the counter-offensive beginning on 22 May 1951?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, to go back to the 20th of May when I received the promise from General Van Fleet that the 3rd Division would begin arriving at Wonju that night, I found that this actually was complied with by the 3rd Division Commander and when I was informed that the division had begun to arrive in the X Corps area, I asked what the first unit was, and learned that it was the 15th Tank Battalion, the tank battalion of the 3rd Division. I wanted an infantry regiment first to establish the islands of defense that I had described to General Van Fleet. So I directed that the 15th Tank Battalion be parked at Wonju until one of the combat team regiments arrived. This happened on the morning of the 21st. At 10:30, I departed my Corps CP for the CP of the 2nd Division and discussed with General Ruffner and his Chief of Staff and his G-3 the utilization first of the 187th Airborne Regiment which was then in place at Hoengsong. We had decided on the plan of operation to attack across the enemy's rear as soon as possible on the line at Hongchon Inje and thus cut the enemy line of communication and supply of the attacking enemy. It was agreed that, if possible, we would launch this attack the following day, the 23rd, or if possible, the 22nd. (Remember that we are talking about the conference of the 21st of May.) I then proceeded to Hoengsong and met with Colonel Yancey, who had brought the 15th Regimental Combat Team of the 3rd Division to that area. I informed Colonel Yancey that at once he should move to the area near Saemal and to Pungamni and that

it should not be a leisurely movement. On arrival there, one battalion would be pushed through the pass at Pungamni and on the north side and protecting it against enemy invasion. This Colonel Yancey understood and I also directed him to have tank support for that battalion in the passes. The next morning to be sure that my instruction had been complied with, I took a small plane and was followed by my aide, Captain Haig and the pair of planes flew over the mountain from the Corps CP to the air strip near Pungamni and landed. We did not know whether we were in protected territory or not so we left our engines running. We found six tanks on the north side of the pass at Pungamni, but no infantry. I noticed about 800 yards north of the tank location what looked like some soldiers moving south in a deployed formation. I said to Haig, "That looks like the enemy to me" and he said, "Me too." I said, "Why aren't the tanks firing?" He said, "I don't know, they are buttoned up." "Well, crawl up on that tank and have it open fire." Haig took a rock and did so and battered on the tank until the hatch flew open. He said, "You see the enemy coming down the river bank there, 800 yards away? Why don't you fire on them? Open fire!" The tanks did this and dispersed the enemy. When we realized that the enemy was within 800 yards of our positions with the tanks and there were no infantry protecting them, we told the tank commanders to stay in place until I could get infantry to move in the area and oppose what the threat seemed to be. We then went to our planes and took off and went back to Corps headquarters. When I returned to my CP and got in touch with Colonel Yancey, the commander, he admitted that he had not put the infantry battalion through the pass on the north side to protect it. This shows the unnecessary danger that sometimes develops in combat when troops fail to carry out the

orders of the commander and that in fact, is the reason that I left my Corps headquarters early in the morning and flew to the area which I considered a vital one (the area that the 15th Infantry was establishing a defensive island in) to see that it was carried out. I'm happy that I made this command inspection and found an error and corrected it in time to establish the RCT of the 3rd Division, the first one to arrive, and furnish such an island of defense that I had contemplated. Developments were succeeding each other in rapid order and the plan we had for launching an attack on the 22nd or the 23rd was executed as historical records show.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you then describe General Almond, the actual counter-attack by the 187th Airborne Regiment which was, I believe, followed by the 2nd Infantry Division?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. I had decided by the 21st of May that the massive CCF thrust against Ruffner's Division had been contained for the moment at least. Believing that the CCF had been stopped and was faltering, I ordered the X Corps to counter-attack. I talked to General Van Fleet about the additional division which we hoped to have if we needed it. And the 187th Airborne was available of course. On the 23rd of May, attached to the 2nd Division, I sent the paratroopers forward on the line Hongchon Inje with the orders to breach the line and hold the position while the rest of the 2nd Division left its defensive position and supported it.

CPT FERGUSSON: How then did this actual attack go, General Almond?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, while the Chinese still defended from road blocks in opposition to this thrust along the rear areas and some of their men wandered on through the hills, the disorganization of the rear of the Chinese front line was complete. The main body of the Chinese Army was soon in full

retreat. And as the task force that we called "Task Force Gearhart" spearheading the 2nd Division pursued them and applied pressure, the Chinese displacement became a route. By the 1st of June, the X Corps was in complete control of this entire front line. The enemy was dispersed to the hills and we were prepared and so recommended that the pursuit be continued to achieve the destruction of this massive CCF force which was the best that the Chinese had south of the Yalu River, the boundary between Korea and Manchuria.

CPT FERGUSSON: So, you saw a great opportunity to exploit your success and completely destroy the Chinese forces in front of you in North Korea?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes I did and I so testified later when I returned to the United States before a Congressional Committee that was investigating the conduct of the Korean War, particularly in this period, and because of their shortage of equipment and ammunition.

CPT FERGUSSON: Why were you not allowed to go forward at that time?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, without knowing the details of what the recommendation of higher authority was, I considered it and so did General Van Fleet and we agreed. On the 24th of June we discussed the order that the President had issued for the United Nations, that we would remain in place and not pursue the enemy into the northern reaches of North Korea. Van Fleet and I were of the opinion that we should pursue the enemy and complete the operation. I so testified to Congress. However, we were interfered with by political orders which presumably came from the U.N. which knew nothing of the situation and was being politically pressed by, we thought, the British, who were pressing for diplomatic relations with the Chinese People's Republic

in Peking. I believe that the British thought that for us to pursue the war further and to the boundary of North Korea would interfere with their diplomatic plans of better relationship with the Chinese People's Republic.

CPT FERGUSSON: You said that General Van Fleet was in agreement with you on this recommendation to pursue the Chinese. What about General Ridgway -- do you recall him being in agreement also?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, the only recollection I have of that which seemed to indicate Ridgway's agreement with the orders that he received was that he said, "We are not interested in merely occupying the real estate of North Korea and we subscribe to the orders received."

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, during the period of the counter-attack by "Task Force Gearhart" and the following retreat by the Chinese Communist forces which had been attacking the X Corps, do you have any clear memories of flying over the battle area and seeing large numbers of Chinese with your own eyes, moving to the north?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I do. I repeatedly flew in a small plane up and down the roads being utilized by the retreating Chinese and I made a report to the effect that the counter-attack had been successful in my opinion and that the enemy was dispersed, disorganized, disheartened and they were being killed by every effort that our forces made. "They are dying like flies" were my exact words I think.

CPT FERGUSSON: From this point on, until your departure from Korea in July of 1951, the X Corps remained in relatively static position, did it not?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, it did. But the counter-attack that we have been discussing is called in many historical accounts the "Battle of the Soyand River" which involved the 2nd Division and the 187th Airborne for some days

and established the line. Therefore, the entire Army front, from the IX Corps on the left through the X Corps in the center and the ROK troops on the right was intact by 1st of June.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, before we discuss your departure from Korea and from the Far East, I would like to ask you a final general question about your assessment of the Chinese soldier. What, after your experiences in Korea, is your opinion of the individual fighting capabilities of the Chinese soldier and of Chinese fighting capabilities in larger units?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, my general estimate of the Chinese soldier as an individual is that when he is properly trained and led, he had a great potential as an individual because he had no fear of self-extermination. If properly motivated, he will fight very well. But the leadership is the question. If the leadership is good, the unit will perform well.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, how, then would you characterize Chinese unit tactics in Korea? Would you say that the principle of mass was the key to their unit tactics?

GENERAL ALMOND: Their principle tactical method was by mass strength. Mass and determination to gain their objectives was the secret of any success they had. Whenever equal forces opposed each other (Chinese against Americans or the UN force) especially where Americans were present, we thought that we had the better tactics and more coordinated maneuvers. This was illustrated in the defense that the 3rd Battalion of the 38th Regiment 2nd Division made in the original line before they were forced to retire by mass attacks. We found that the Chinese would rush a position, particularly a machine gun nest that we had set up, and by sheer numbers, would surround and attempt to overrun the positions. In one case, it was described to me that the gun

was not destroyed but merely kicked over so that it couldn't fire and the mass overflowed the defenders of the 38th Regiment.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you say then General Almond, that your general opinion of Chinese generalship in the Korean War was low?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I would say that. And an illustration of that is the attack at Chipyeongni. The Chinese attacked, with five divisions, a mere infantry regiment, reinforced, at Chipyeongni and encircled the entire position, when if these five divisions had been put two abreast and two or three deep and had struck in the one particular place and maneuvered based on the opposition received, instead of surrounding the whole place and thus weakening their striking force, they would probably have defeated the 23rd Regiment in its defense of Chipyeongni on February 14th.

CPT FERGUSSON: Were not the Chinese tactics dictated somewhat by the fact that they lacked completely tactical air support for their infantry and for their ground forces? In other words, we had complete control of the air, did we not? And wasn't this an important factor?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, it was an important factor and they were of course, handicapped by not having such air support. The fact that we had air support and utilized it, is one of the great assets we had in the success of our counter-attack on the 23rd of May. In that counter-attack against the CCF divisions that resulted in their collapse, it is estimated that we had killed 65,000 Chinese and North Koreans by the use of our artillery and our air strikes, particularly during their withdrawal.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, would you comment in more detail on the role of tactical air support in the success of your counter offensive against the CCF starting on the 22nd of May?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, it was our intention (and it was largely successful) to have a Tactical Air Control Party with every battalion engaged with the enemy, so that direct call could be made for available attack and pursuit aircraft to strike immediately the targets that we located. Furthermore, in the withdrawal of the Chinese between the 23rd of May and the 1st of June when they became completely disorganized, we located by air reconnaissance many targets. Frequently, aerial observers spotted CCF troops in groups of 10, 50 or 100 men; armed reconnaissance aircraft were prepared to strike immediately upon detection of such targets and did so. That was a great asset to us and had a devastating effect upon the retiring enemy. That's how we thought we had killed many of the estimated 65,000 Chinamen. In one valley alone, when the air and artillery had done their work, 5000 enemy corpses were counted. This was later referred to by our soldiers as the "May Massacre". At the end of this operation, the Eighth Army, including the X Corps, began again to move north. When we were stopped, along the 38th Parallel we were not stopped by enemy guns but by words from higher authority.

CPT FERGUSSON: As far as tactical air support from the U.S. Air Force goes, were you as Corps Commander satisfied and pleased with the support you got in this May counter offensive?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I was and I'll add that it had improved considerably by this date as compared to the support that was available (except for the Marine aviation) in northeast Korea in the days of the Chosin Reservoir.

CPT FERGUSSON: Later, in an article, you wrote somewhat critically of the Air Force's close air support of the Army and I suppose you were referring to those operations in Northeast Korea. What changes would you have made

at that time in the relationship of the tactical air force to the Army commanders if you could have made changes? What was wrong with the existing relationships?

GENERAL ALMOND: The chief objection I had to the support that we received in Northeast Korea was the fact that the Air Force's high command desired notification of tactical air support requirements 24 hours in advance. I explained to General Partridge, the 5th Air Force Commander who visited me frequently, that this was impossible. Our requirements for immediate air support were not always predictable 24 hours in advance; we needed an Air Force commitment to respond to unplanned tactical air support requests within 30-50 minutes of the initial request so that the enemy located by ground units could not be moved to a different place and probably better concealed. This was my chief complaint and my constant complaint. The Air Force required requests for the support too far ahead of the use to which it was to be put.

CPT FERGUSSON: You are referring here to the northeast Korean operations prior to Christmas of 1950?

GENERAL ALMOND: That's correct.

CPT FERGUSSON: How and why did the improvement come about between that time and May of 1951 in the relationship between the tactical Air Force and the Army? Was this because of your recommendations?

GENERAL ALMOND: I think so and because the Air Force realized that we were dissatisfied with their failure to provide a prompt response to our requests. What they had really been doing was conducting a planned bombardment program in support of tactical ground units when what we wanted was instant support for contacts made by troops on the ground in various areas along the front line.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, during the time the 1st Marine Division operated under X Corps (both during the Inchon landing and later in Northeast Korea) you had had a somewhat unpleasant relationship with the Division Commander, General Smith. However, when the 1st Marine Division joined you again in the Spring of 1951, I believe the new division commander and you got along somewhat better. Would you comment on this?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I would. As a matter of fact, instead of getting along somewhat better, we got along perfectly. Charlie Thomas (Major General U.S. Marine Corps) was in command of the Marines in April when the Marines joined us from the IX Corps. As the operations of the Marines continued under my command with General Thomas as Division Commander, I couldn't have asked for better cooperation and a more wholehearted and pleasant relationship. As a matter of fact, when I left the X Corps on the 15th of July, General Thomas was one of my greatest friends and I might chance the term, admirers.

CPT FERGUSSON: And you considered him one of the best division commander that you had seen in Korea, is that not true?

GENERAL ALMOND: That is correct.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, at various times during your command of the X Corps in addition to the U.S. and ROK units under your command, you also had occasion to command various other United Nations forces, including at one time the French Battalion, the battalion from the Netherlands, and some other units. Would you make any comments on these other United Nations forces? Were they of any real use to you and what were the special problems of commanding other nationalities within your Corps?

GENERAL ALMOND: I received these units that you refer to, the Netherlands unit and the French unit, both of which were in battalion combat team

size. They came with the 2nd Division from the Eighth Army area on the west coast (specifically Kunu-ri) when the 2nd Division joined the X Corps in the beginning of the year '51 at Wonju. I found that the French Battalion had been working with the 23rd Regiment as sort of a fourth battalion and I allowed this to continue because it seemed to be working well. On the other hand, the Netherlands Battalion seemed to be utilized as the occasion demanded and it was capable of working with any of the regiments for that reason. Therefore, at Chipyeongni, we found the French Battalion integrated with the 23rd Regiment in defense of that area while the Netherlands Battalion was in a specific location in the vicinity of Hoengsong just north of Wonju. As a matter of fact, the Netherlands Battalion suffered some casualties and lost its commander in that area due to a heavy enemy attack preceded the April 22nd general attack. It knocked about the Netherlands Battalion fairly extensively, which we regretted but had no way of avoiding. I had no trouble with either of these battalions and I considered both battalions very well commanded and efficient fighting forces and we used them as such.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you ever have special requests coming to your headquarters from their respective governments? Was there ever any attempted interference in your handling of these units?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, never.

CPT FERGUSSON: You had full authority to use them as you wished?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: And you never had Turkish or British forces under your command, did you General Almond?

GENERAL ALMOND: No, the only British force under my command during this period that we are discussing was at the time of Chipyeongni in February. The British Brigade over on the east central front of the Eighth Army provided

some artillery support to the task force units which relieved the 23rd Infantry at Chipyongni.

CPT FERGUSSON: And what about the South Korean (ROK) forces which fought under your command at various times? Did you note an improvement in their fighting capabilities as the war went along? Were they of greater and greater use to you?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, I did notice an improvement. And I attributed this in part to my frequent contacts with division commanders and usually their Chiefs of Staff. Many times these ROK Commanders would come into my headquarters staff or command meetings, but more often I would go to their headquarters. When I offered suggestions about the tactical deployment of their forces (as well as in matters of supply and training), I found that they were anxious to learn and to comply with my orders. They began to understand that I wanted them to follow my example by frequent visits to the troops wherever they were, in line or in reserve, to determine what the training methods were, what the deficiencies in equipment were, and whether or not the position was organized properly. This could only be accomplished by inspection, which I made frequently and they learned to adapt themselves to doing the same thing.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you departed from X Corps in the middle of July 1951. How long before that date did you learn that you were going to be relieved from command of the X Corps and depart Korea?

GENERAL ALMOND: Late in June 1951, when the fighting was really over (except for some skirmishes and local battle actions which were in progress) General Ridgway came to visit me and offered me several choices of assignments to the U.S. All commanders in Korea were rotated in order to avoid imposing on any particular individual and we found that the corps commanders of the I Corps, the IX Corps, and the X Corps were going to be replaced by commanders

from the States. I say that General Ridgway offered me several choices of assignment in the States. This I appreciated very much and told him so, and I chose the Army War College at which there was a vacancy and which was going to be moved from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas to Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. I had been in the Far East since June, 1946, five years. I had been in Korea for the past year. The serenity and fixed status of the Army War College in role of Commandant or President looked like a desirable spot for me.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, would you describe your departure from X Corps?

GENERAL ALMOND: My departure from X Corps was on the 15th of July. The first days of July were crowded ones in my activities, both as commander and as visitor to the people with whom I had served with in the Korean War for so long and so intimately. And I had many visitors during that period just before my departure and after the heavy fighting of late May had abated somewhat. We had already received orders that we would maintain our position along the 38th Parallel and there was very little activity along the line except for training activities to prepare if necessary for an advance or for defense. During this period, many dignitaries from the States decided to visit Korea. These included General Marshall, Secretary of Defense, and Governor Dewey of New York. In the meantime, I visited President Syngman Rhee of Korea; Mr. Muccio, the US Ambassador in Korea; and even Jack Benny and his entertainment group that had come to Korea to amuse the troops. All of these required time. When General Byers, who was to be the new commander of the X Corps, arrived on the 13th of July, I immediately invited the division commanders in to meet him and the next morning General Byers and I visited all the CP's of the Corps' major subordinate units --

the 2nd Division, the Marine Division and the V ROK Corps so he could say hello to them as their new commander and for me to say good-bye. On the 15th itself, I rose early of course, and made the trip to the various divisions as I just stated. I was back at Corps headquarters by lunch time and at that time a farewell salute was fired (via radio) by all Corps artillery batteries, 274 guns and 12 tanks. I took the farewell from an honor guard and departed for Chunchon by L-19, accompanied by General Byers, Colonel Billingsly, and Captain McCleary my aide. We departed in a Constellation aircraft from Chunchon for Seoul. When we arrived at Seoul on this day of departure, we were met by General Allen, the Chief of Staff at USAK. We drove to the headquarters where we met General Van Fleet, the Army Commander. General Van Fleet presented me with a DSM Cluster and we departed from there shortly for the advanced flying field for the Eighth Army, accompanied by General Allen, who bid me good-bye at that airfield and I took the Constellation, for the Haneda airport in Tokyo. I arrived at this last station where I started to handle my personal affairs preliminary to my departure from Tokyo a week later. I was met by Mrs. Almond and departed for our quarters. Thus ended the tour of my service in Korea. As I have indicated, after a week in Tokyo, concerned with personal activities and preparation for my property to be sent back to the States, Mrs. Almond and I, accompanied by my aide, Captain Barrett, proceeded to Yokohama and embarked on a passenger liner for San Francisco where we arrived in due course and took the Vista Dome train from Oakland, California to New York City, passing through the Feather River Canyon and a beautiful section of California mountains, through Denver, Chicago and in due time, without changing trains, arrived at New York and proceeded to

West Point on leave to visit my daughter and son-in-law, Major Charles Fergusson, who was with the faculty at West Point.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond at this time, you were proceeding to take up your new post as Commandant of the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Did you anticipate at this time that this would be your last assignment in the Army before retiring or did you expect possibly to be promoted to full General and go on to further assignments?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, at the time that I reported to the Army War College as the Commandant, I was 58 1/2 years old. Up to that time, and really to the end of World War II, the practice had been to have Army officers retire at age 64. Shortly after arrival at the Army War College, it was learned that the policy had been changed and that all general officers would retire at age 60. This was new to me of course, but there was nothing to be done about it and for that reason, I realized that I only had about a year and three quarters left for active duty. Accepting the facts as they were, my remaining active duty time in the army had been reduced by four years, leaving little opportunity for expectations of increased rank. This didn't bother me to any degree because I had attained the rank that I felt that I deserved and anything else in addition would have been gratefully received but not expected.

CPT FERGUSSON: At this time, the Chief of Staff of the Army was General J. Lawton Collins. Hadn't you had a fairly stormy relationship with General Collins up to this time?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes, stormy to some degree in that many of the proposals that General Collins had made in connection with the Inchon landing, had been contrary to my views and General MacArthur's views and it was possible

that General Collins didn't look with too great a favor on my future for that reason. However, when I became Commandant of the Army War College, General Collins came to visit me and at one time in 1951, addressed the War College students at my request. There was nothing very outspoken about our attitude towards each other and therefore, there is nothing specific that I attribute to General Collins.

CPT FERGUSSON: As you've said, General Almond, at the time that you took over as Commandant at Carlisle, the Army War College was just moving there from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. How did you approach this new job and what did you feel that you accomplished in your time at Carlisle?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, when I arrived at Carlisle in late August 1951, I found that General Swing, the prior Commandant at Leavenworth before the College had moved, had planned the expansion and rehabilitation of the Carlisle area to accommodate the War College. The addition of the War College to Carlisle Barracks meant a major increment to its former functions and created a shortage of classroom space and quarters for students. Few students were able to live on the post itself. They all lived either in the town of Carlisle, in a special apartment house area, or had to live in the surrounding country. Some were as far as 50 miles away, as far as Gettysburg and York, Pennsylvania. This was unfortunate but necessary. However, there were plans for the rehabilitation of Carlisle which I carried out and which had been initiated by General Swing. These plans conflicted somewhat with the President's orders of reduction of expenses after the Korean War. This curbed our activities but we made the most of it and made the best construction of plans and changes that we could. This in itself was one of my conflicts with General Collins who thought that the plans that

had been made were too elaborate. I didn't agree with him on this and neither did General Swing before me. As a matter of fact, the plans, except for a few details, were designed by General Swing and approved by the Second Army before my arrival. All I did was carry them out.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, in light of your considerable combat experience, your duties at Carlisle must have afforded you an opportunity to impart some of your wisdom to many of the students coming through. How did you look upon this aspect of your tour as Commandant?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, rather than wisdom, I would entitle my accomplishment in this area as Commandant as providing the students with the advice of an experienced senior commander with recent combat experience. My duty at the AWC was very rewarding to me, especially since it gave me the opportunity to impart to more than 100 senior officers of our military service what my experience in the Army had been over the last 36 years, especially my combat experience in Korea where I exercised comparatively high command. It also gave me the chance to revamp what I had found lacking in senior officers' training and in that I proceeded to occupy myself both by lecture and by a special conversation with all the students involved. Furthermore, I had the satisfaction of planning for an increase in War College student strength of almost 100%.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, specifically, what had you seen as lacking in senior officers training that you attempted to rectify as Commandant at Carlisle?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, the principal thing that I recall is the fact that many senior officers when they graduated from the Army War Collge, had failed to gain an appreciation for the true value of cooperation with the

other Armed Services, particularly with the Air Force and the Navy. While I was a Commandant of the Army War College, I was responsible for instituting an Army/Air Force course of instruction for more than a week at Southern Pines, North Carolina. My purpose in getting this course of training in hand was to be sure that the senior Army officers at the War College and senior Air Force officers at the Air Corps Tactical School, later the Air University, understood each other about the problems that I have already discussed about tactical air support in Korea. There were many other subjects that the War College should have been teaching -- for example, amphibious operations such as I had been able to accomplish both in the Inchon landing and the attempt to move the X Corps around Korea in October '50 to the Wonsan area. Also, the utilization of Marines was something that should have been thoroughly reviewed and considered. Another deficiency that I was conscious of was the fact that the Army War College had no capability for continuous study of the relationship between our nation and other nations, particularly the Soviet Union. For this reason, I established a Committee of Strategic Studies which met once a week for at least two hours in the basement of the War College main structure, Root Hall. This committee took logistics and geographical considerations into account, as well as intelligence reports on foreign armed forces, as they attempted to develop strategic plans. I established this committee and I understand that today, it has been largely expanded and is still in operation.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, were you satisfied with the quality of faculty that you found at the Army War College? Did, you, for example, have sufficient faculty members from the other services, the Marines, Navy and

Air Force to do the sort of things that you wanted to do?

GENERAL ALMOND: Yes. I found that on my arrival before the 1951-52 course began early in September, that the previous spring, General Swing, when the War College was operating for the single year at Leavenworth where it had been revived after World War II, had made a very comprehensive and worthwhile selection of faculty. I also found that Brigadier General Arthur Trudeau was the Assistant Commandant and responsible directly for the instruction of the student body. General Trudeau was a brilliant Army officer and had done well in World War II and has done even better since. He became Chief of Intelligence for the Department of the Army on his return from Korea, having gone to Korea from the Army War College in the spring of 1952. My satisfaction with the staff at the Army War College was complete and from my standpoint, the course was successfully launched and pursued during the period of my tenure as Commandant. Of course, from time to time, we lose instructors due to normal rotation. In my own case, I brought my long time associate in combat, William J. McCaffrey, then a Colonel, to the War College to be my Secretary of the School. Also, at that time, Colonel John H. Chiles had left the X Corps in time to arrive at the War College on detail as a student by September. Chiles finished the course in '52 and by that time, McCaffrey had been designated as a student of the War College and they changed jobs. Chiles became my Secretary of the Staff and of the School and McCaffrey became a student. These two officers were outstanding in every way in all my contacts with them and I had known them for many years, so my need for good administration and sound tactical reviews of the course at the College was made much easier by having these two officers in the categories described.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you retired from the Army on January 1st, 1953. What do you recall of that period?

GENERAL ALMOND: Well, I became 60 years of age, actually on the 12th of December 1952 but the policy of the War Department was to retire within the 30 days after the age is obtained. We left Carlisle Barracks with appropriate ceremonies both by troop courtesies and by social courtesies and by the 10th of December were on terminal leave to the 1st of January 1953. We proceeded to the selected place of our retirement at Anniston, Alabama, which was the home of my wife, Margaret.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, after your retirement in November of 1954, you testified before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee of the Judiciary of the U.S. Senate. Your testimony concerned operations in the Korean War. Without going into the details of that testimony, which is all available in government publications, what generally do you recall of that period?

GENERAL ALMOND: I was queried by the general committee, the name of which you just stated, to come to Washington a certain period of the year prepared to testify before the investigating committee as to general conditions in Korea as I observed them and as to the adequacy of the equipment with which we were furnished for our participation in the United Nations actions there, particularly with regard to ammunition shortages. I took a good deal of energy and time in the preparation of my report. I prepared maps from the maps in my record of the X Corps historical recording of the operations during my experience there and tried to show the congressional committee the areas in which we operated and the conditions that we had to meet,

sometimes with adequate equipment, but many times without the necessary artillery and particularly small mortar projectiles that the infantry platoons were supported by.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, did you feel that the committee, any members of the committee, tried to antagonize you or were you on the whole, well treated and treated with respect by the Congressional members.

GENERAL ALMOND: No, I had no criticism of the attitude of the committee members. They were courteous and generous in their attitude and asked me numerous questions in addition to the testimony that I was prepared to present. I had to make responses to these questions, of course, off the top of my head and to the best of my knowledge and memory. This proved to be satisfactory in my opinion.

CPT FERGUSSON: Prior to your appearance before this committee, did you receive any guidance from the Department of the Army high level officials on what you should or should not say or did you feel free to state all of your opinions?

GENERAL ALMOND: Not at all, I didn't receive any guidance or instruction from higher authority. I was a retired officer and I wouldn't have appeared unless I had been given permission to speak my mind.

CPT FERGUSSON: This completes side two of tape five of the interviews with General Almond. The date is March 30, 1975.

THIS IS SIDE ONE OF TAPE SIX OF THE INTERVIEWS WITH LIEUTENANT GENERAL EDWARD M. ALMOND. INTERVIEWER IS CAPTAIN THOMAS G. FERGUSON, CGSC STUDENT. THE DATE IS MARCH 30, 1975. THE INTERVIEW IS BEING CONDUCTED AT THE HOME OF GENERAL ALMOND IN ANNISTON, ALABAMA.

CPT FERGUSON: General Almond, since your retirement to Anniston in 1953, you have been active in many areas of civic life. Would you briefly comment on the highlights of your retirement?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I'll be glad to be as brief and as complete as possible. When I learned at the Army War College in 1951 that I had to be retired at age 60 I began with my wife to consider places of retirement. We considered Washington, D. C.; San Antonio, Texas; and Anniston, Alabama, the place where she was born and had known so well throughout her life. We finally decided that she would be happy in Anniston and I had always been happy anywhere I was. Therefore, we chose Anniston in 1952 and came here on leave to select a place to reside. Soon we found one and we have lived there for 22 years. For the first year of our life in Anniston, I began to renew old friendships and acquaintances made in Anniston throughout my service. We returned here frequently on our leaves with our family to stay with the Crook family, Margaret's father and mother. In addition to this social activity, I tried to improve our new home, a very livable house of Spanish tile and brick construction. In the year and a half immediately after my retirement, I became affiliated with the Rotary Club and other organizations which I will mention in a minute. At the end of this period, I was approached by an old war comrade of mine, Colonel C. W. Daugette, who had been a major and later a lieutenant colonel commanding one of the battalions of my divisions in Italy from 1943 to 1945. Colonel

Daugette, whom I had long known, was in the insurance business and at the time of my arrival in the Anniston area had just organized a young and vigorous insurance company of his own, The Life Insurance Company of Alabama. His pre-war experience as an insurance salesman and his wartime experience in Europe and the United States had made him a well balanced executive, experienced in the sale of insurance. Colonel Daugette asked me to come with his company to direct the military sales' activities of the company for both officers and enlisted men. I was reluctant to do this to begin with, but after some discussion of what I would have to do and how I could aid the company, I gradually changed my mind and in late 1954 became affiliated with The Life Insurance Company of Alabama, at the head of its military services department. Later, this was changed due to the war in Indo-China when the approach to insurance sales through the supervision of the Pentagon changed. I then became Director of Public Relations. This was about 1966 and I have held this position ever since. I have an office in Anniston, Alabama. My company's headquarters is in Gadsden, Alabama, some thirty miles away. My secretarial service and the relationship with the company has been adequate and very pleasant for me. I should relate, I think, in this connection, my associations in a civic way. My philosophy of living in any civilian community is that as a citizen of that community the individual and his family should participate in the things that are vital to the contentment and organization of the place where he lives and exists and provides for his family. This I've endeavored to do in all directions, both civic and social. For example, I have been President of the John H. Forney Historical Society since

1955. I've been a member of the Executive Committee of the Choccolocco Council of the Boy Scouts of America since 1954, as well as to the National Council of Representatives of the Boy Scouts of America. I've been a member of the National Council at large of the Boy Scouts of America. I have received the silver antelope and the silver beaver in connection with my scouting activities. I've been a member of the Gallant Pelham Chapter, AUSA, Association of the Army of the United States, the Army-Navy Club, Washington, D. C., and the Army-Navy Country Club of Arlington, Virginia. I've been a member of the Anniston Country Club and a Director of the Alabama Chapter of Americans for Constitutional Action. I've been advisor of the Alabama Chapter of the Young Americans for Freedom. One of the most interesting national associations that I've had is to be a member of the Committee of Strategy of the American Security Council. The Council was organized about 1960 by General Robert E. Wood, the famous World War I General, who served under General Pershing and was a friend of General MacArthur. In fact, he visited us in Tokyo. I got to know General Wood in that respect and when he asked me to join the American Security Council which he was organizing, I gladly accepted. The American Security Council over the years since its organization has been a patriotic association, dedicated to the welfare and preparedness of this country. It has in recent years been a severe critic of our negotiations with the Soviet Union in connection with the Strategic Arms Limitation which we generally know as the Salt Agreement. I have also been involved recently with the preservation of the military activities at Fort McClellan. When the Army began to

reduce the size of the Chemical Corps, a proposal was made to close Ft. McClellan and I took an active part with the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of Defense in reversing that attitude. I have had adequate time to reflect on all phases of my service in the Army of nearly 37 years, and to review the actions that I took under certain circumstances and to consider whether or not I had made the proper decision under proper circumstances. No one is perfect, I realize, but my attitude had always been to consider objectively the problem at hand, especially if it is a military problem, and to use the best judgment and common sense possible. On reflection, I have not been disappointed from my own personal standpoint although I do not claim to have "made no mistakes." We must remember that I have been speaking of my retirement years and my opportunity to reflect. In addition to this, I have been able to accumulate historical documents, particularly those that I was personally concerned with, and have been able to amass those documents in such form that they are very valuable for reference material. I've used these in speeches that I've made to various civic clubs from time to time. And because of them have been able to cite the facts and the dates to support what I had to say. I have also presented documents of historical value to places (Ft. Leavenworth, Carlisle Barracks) where students are studying past American military operations and could have the opportunity at least to have my viewpoint. It must be remembered that at the present time, the Department of the Army is publishing historical volumes on the Korean War. The title of one already published volume is Policy and Direction: the First Year, by James F. Schnabel. Colonel Schnabel was a member of General MacArthur's staff in the first

part of the Occupation. Another volume that has been finished is South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu, by Appleman. This is a very fine description of the first year of the war as well and I rely on it many times in my documentation and reference material.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the third volume that is under way that you reviewed partially, sir?

GEN ALMOND: I understand that there is a third volume under way at the USA Historical Dept. at the present time and have had a chance to read the manuscript once. I returned this manuscript to the Army Historical Office with suggestions of what it should contain & modifications of the documentation.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, this is the volume that takes up where South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu leaves off about Christmas of 1950? Is that correct? On the tactical operations?

GEN ALMOND: That's correct and I was assured by the Chief of Military History, General Collins, in my last communication with him that the comments/criticisms I provided would be carefully considered and incorporated in many cases. General Collins assured me that when this initial manuscript was completed, I was to be provided with a copy for my criticism and that has been satisfactory to me. I'm prepared to render this service at any time because I think I have the documents to correctly make the statements on the cases at hand.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about the official history of the U. S. Marine Corps in the Korean War, General Almond?

GEN ALMOND: Much has been written since the Korean War about my association with the Marine Corps in the Korean operations. Some has been derogatory to me and some vary complimentary. For example, shortly

after the war was over in Korea, the Marine Corps published in four volumes the history of its operations. When they were preparing the manuscript, the Chief of Staff of the Marine Corps in Washington wrote me a very friendly letter and asked if I would be willing to contribute and I gladly accepted. I furnished the Marine Corps headquarters my personal diary which gave the activities and the relationship between the Marine Corps and me from the Inchon landing's preparation to the termination of my service in Korea a year later. These four volumes of the history of the Marine Corps in Korea were written by the well-known writer, Lynn Montross, and were collaborated in for the Marine Corps by Captain Nicholas Canzona, USMC. The forward to the volumes was written by the Commandant who was the Fleet Marine officer at the time of Inchon and Admiral Radford's headquarters in Honolulu. He was General Lemuel C. Shephard, later the Commandant of the USMC. His Chief of Staff was very appreciative of my participation and I consider the contents of this history reliable and, in general, have no major disagreement with it. Some details could have been differently stated but they were not totally inaccurate.

CPT FERGUSSON: You do feel that the Marines made an effort to be fair toward you and the Army in general in their treatment of the Korean War?

GEN ALMOND: Decidedly so.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, since your retirement and prior to General MacArthur's death, did you see him again? What sort of a relationship did you maintain with your former commander? Did you correspond with him frequently?

GEN ALMOND: Well, when I returned from Korea in 1951 and went with the

Army War College, the first person that I called on was General MacArthur who, with his family, lived in the Waldorf Towers of the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in New York City. I spent the entire day with General MacArthur and Mrs. Almond with Mrs. MacArthur. We enjoyed this contact tremendously and from General MacArthur I got a good briefing on conditions in the United States at the present time and what he still thought of the Korean situation, which, it will be recalled, was only terminated by the Armistice at Uijongbu in 1953 when Admiral Joy was the U. S. Chief representative. With relationship to General MacArthur, I maintained frequent communications by letter with him until he died in 1964. At that time, I attended his funeral in Norfolk after the display of his remains in the Rotunda of the Capital in Washington before the funeral. During this time I always sent General MacArthur a birthday card and always received a fine acknowledgement. And when General MacArthur wrote his reminiscences, sometime before his death, he mentioned me with great respect and admiration. It is very rewarding to me to be thought of in such a high manner by General MacArthur even to the day of his death.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you ever see General MacArthur again after that time you met him in the Waldorf-Astoria in New York, sir?

GEN ALMOND: No.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, I know that one of your major activities during your retirement which you have not mentioned has been in connection with your Alma Mater, the Virginia Military Institute. Could you briefly discuss your actions in V.M.I. affairs?

GEN ALMOND: I mentioned earlier in this interview the fact that when

General Kilburn retired as Superintendent of V.M.I., before I went to command the 2nd Division in 1946, that he sought my agreement to become Superintendent to succeed him, but I chose to continue my service in the Army as is recorded. However, when I retired in 1953, I became interested again in my capabilities of in some way doing something to repay a great debt I felt I owed to V.M.I. The first thing I discovered was that the Superintendent of V.M.I., then General Milton, a World War II officer, was very lax in his idea of discipline and limited in his ability to administer properly to the cadet corps as I thought it ought to be administered. I took part with some other individuals in finally getting rid of this individual and securing a very fine Superintendent for the Institute by the name of Major General George Shell. A Marine who had been severely wounded in the Pacific Campaign, Shell had served under General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz on numerous occasions. General Shell made a fine superintendent and I've always given myself credit for playing a part in securing his services. This led to my closer association with VMI, when in 1960, I was made a member of the Board of Visitors which was a rare and very honorable assignment.

CPT FERGUSSON: Wasn't this an unusual precedent in that few men had served on the Board as out of state residents prior to that time?

GEN ALMOND: Yes. I, living in Alabama 700 miles from the Institute, had a little bit of a problem in staying as close in touch with the Institute as I probably should have. However, this was alleviated by the fact that we held four board meetings a year and I attended all those board meetings and would take my wife along and reside at the Institute

before the meetings and after so that I could make contacts with all sources of information that were available. In the meantime, during the interims between these board meetings, I could, by correspondence, gain the information that I wanted. I considered this arrangement very satisfactory and was appointed for a second term, four years, the limit of such appoints being two four-year terms. And the last year of my service in 1968 I became President of the Board.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, during your eight years on the V.M.I. Board of Visitors, what were your objectives generally? What did you try to do for V.M.I. and what do you think you accomplished?

GEN ALMOND: Well, we tried to generate interest in the Institute by the various alumni chapters. We tried to increase the respect for the contributions to the Founders Fund which was to the advantage of V.M.I. and any expansion method that it contemplated. We were always interested in the discipline and the maintenance of discipline of the cadet corps as we had known it in earlier days. We were interested in the athletic program and did everything we could to sponsor it in a financial as well as a patriotic and appreciative way as alumni. We were annually called upon by the Legislature of Virginia (since it was a State supported institution) to make recommendations for the budget that the State of Virginia had to appropriate and also to approve the expansion of the facilities for classroom space, library enlargement, and the comfort of the cadet corps from the standpoint of living and feeding. We were successful in convincing the legislative finance committee of the needs that we thought necessary and I'm glad to say that most of those have been met in completed structures or structures whose construction is underway.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, did you take an active role at all during your retirement, in Alabama politics, particularly in the area around Anniston?

GEN ALMOND: Well, Yes I could say I have. I should announce if it hasn't already been suspected that I'm a conservative American. I'm not flighty in mind as to people or the nation gaining something for no effort and when the Goldwater campaign was in force in 1964, I was very active in traveling all over the country in support of Goldwater as many other conservatives were. As far as faith in county politics, I've always voted and so has my wife in the past 22 years in Anniston in every election that has meant anything in the way of county, state, city and even national respect. I think that the American citizen ought to participate in the politics of any levels of governmental control.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you feel, sir, that you've been instrumental in the election of any of the local politicians to office, say in the case of Congressman Andrews or any of the other Congressmen from this part of Alabama?

GEN ALMOND: Well, not beyond the extent of discussing of the prospects and the attitudes and principles that the candidate based his campaign on. I've always supported them and tried to exercise the little influence I had as an individual citizen in constructive agreements with people whom I thought meant something either in support or in the particular political activity or participation of the candidate.

CPT FERGUSSON: But you never actually did campaigning for these people?

GEN ALMOND: Not especially, no.

CPT FERGUSSON: Have you ever been a member of either of the two major political parties or have you been an independent?

GEN ALMOND: I've been a member of the Republican Club from the Goldwater campaign days and am at the present time.

CPT FERGUSSON: You are a member of the Republican Party?

GEN ALMOND: Yes.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, to go back to the earlier period of your retirement, were not you very active at one time in straightening out an unfortunate situation at the Anniston Memorial Hospital and what was your role in that?

GEN ALMOND: Well, shortly after my taking up residence in Anniston, it developed that the administration of the Anniston Memorial Hospital had been poorly executed and the hospital was not only in debt, that it was in administrative confusion. One of my old time friends in Anniston appealed to me to become a member of the Board of Trustees of the hospital. This I agreed to do because I recognized the need for civic assistance in that direction. At the first meeting of the Board, much to my surprise, I was elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees. I responded by stating that I would only accept this honorable position on the condition that all Board members would agree to attend all the meetings that the Board held and participate in the active correction of the many things we thought necessary. This the Board agreed to do and this they complied with during my administration of three or four years. Whenever they were unable to meet with me, I cancelled the meeting until we could find a time agreeable to all. This was a fortunate agreement with the Board because instead of placing all the prior planning and execution

of changes in the hospital on one member, the Chairman of the Board, they all had assignments of duty to perform and they performed them. This arrangement resulted in the wide expansion of the hospital, the change of administrative staff and the administrative method. I consider it a considerable contribution that I made to the civic welfare of my community.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, were you ever honored by your own home area in Virginia, the Luray- Culpeper area?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, when I returned from Korea in 1951, the first thing I was confronted with was the celebration in my honor in Luray, Virginia. And who was the Mayor of Luray except my old friend of grade school days at the Luray High School, Harry Dike. He was a World War I veteran, a World War II Legionnaire contributor, and had been Mayor of Luray for some 20 years. He organized what they called "Ned Almond Day" in Luray. This gave Culpeper, my second residence as a young boy, the idea and the Chamber of Commerce of Culpeper gave an "Almond Day" with a parade and a dinner. I went through speech making in Richmond, Virginia, and various other towns at one time representing the President of the United States on Legion Reunion days. This was a common occurrence and I tried to respond to such invitations both in Virginia and in Alabama and in some occasions, other states of the Union.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, shortly before your retirement, General Dwight David Eisenhower was elected as President of the United States. He was re-elected again during your retirement and, therefore, for the first approximately seven years of your retirement, he was serving as President. I believe you had known General Eisenhower while you were

a Captain on the faculty of the Infantry School at Fort Benning. Had you maintained any relationship with Eisenhower over the years; did you see him while he was President? Can you just briefly trace your friendship with General Eisenhower?

GEN ALMOND: No, I had no continued close relationship with Eisenhower and had no occasion to. But now and then when I had an idea on the State of the Union and what action he might take, I would write personal letters to him suggesting certain action. I always received a courteous reply or indications through his staff that he took notice of my appeals and considered them at least in his decision.

CPT FERGUSSON: I believe you saw General Eisenhower at West Point in 1965 when he was there for his 50th class reunion, did you not, sir?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I did and he was very friendly on that occasion.

CPT FERGUSSON: And again you saw him while you were in the hospital in 1966 and he was hospitalized at the same time in an adjacent room at Walter Reed?

GEN ALMOND: That's correct and General Eisenhower was on his feet before I was and came into my room, not frequently but on appropriate occasions and invited me into his apartment for a discussion of our experiences together in World War I and World War II. And we discussed MacArthur, Patton, Marshall, and many other mutually known important individuals of both wars.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you ever know General Patton personally, General Almond:

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I knew General Patton when I was G-3 of the VI Corps in Providence and General Patton had an assignment in, I believe, the

Cavalry School. He participated then as a general officer, later in the North Carolina maneuvers just before Pearl Harbor and on one occasion I had the satisfaction of having my troops capture General Patton when he exposed himself unduly. It might be interesting to note that General Patton ignored my capture and returned to his own headquarters.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you form any sort of impression of General Patton from that time or any other time?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I thought General Patton had exhibited in his previous years in the Army and especially in this maneuver period of being a resourceful, courageous and hard driving tactical commander. And he had many of the qualities that Stonewall Jackson advocated in the Civil War. He had the resolution and the conviction of victory and he took all measures possible to attain that.

CPT FERGUSSON: What about General of the Army, Omar Bradley? Did you know him at all, General Almond?

GEN ALMOND: Bradley and I were Majors together at the Infantry School. He was in the tactics section when I left it to go to Leavenworth in 1928. I had known General Bradley earlier and I had known him later. As a matter of fact, when World War II in Europe was over and I returned to the gravesite of my son and son-in-law near Paris in July 1945, I came through Frankfurt, Germany, on my way back to Italy and spent the night at General Bradley's headquarters. We were always on friendly terms and I saw him frequently after the war was over and especially after my retirement. I've seen him at West Point on occasions and I saw him in 1965 when I saw Eisenhower, they being classmates. I had many pleasant and sociable encounters with General Bradley and his family.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you've had personal associations to varying degrees with four and five-star generals; General Bradley, General Marshall, General Patton, General Eisenhower, and General MacArthur. You've also known a great many other high ranking military officers. Who would you rate . . . who would you put at the top of your list of those you've known as the greatest American military Commander of our times?

GEN ALMOND: General MacArthur. And I know many who will criticize that decision and many who will agree with it. And I'll pick among those whom I think agree with me; a non-American and a fine contributor to the success of the Allies in World War II, none other than Lord Allanbrooke who was the Chief of Staff of the British forces and a staunch supporter of Mr. Churchill, the leader of the British during the war.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, your career in the United States Army was a long and distinguished one, including combat service in three wars. In your view, what particular characteristics must an individual possess or acquire to be capable of performing successfully in positions of high responsibility in the Army?

GEN ALMOND: I consider the basic essentials and the basic education to be a college degree or the equivalent, higher if possible, for technical or supporting services. Physical education is also necessary, of course. Youth development to a degree of insuring the coordinated functioning of the body to stand vigorous strain. The prime essentials to mental education in my opinion is the highest development of the moral stamina and concepts of the individual with no qualifying conditions. There is no value to being, quote "A little dishonest" unquote.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what advice would you offer to young officers today who aspire to higher military rank? Looking over your own entire career, can you single out reasons for your own success in the Army?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I can. First, the guideline that is the most important is for the individual, whether officer or enlisted man, who desires to enter the military service must decide that he wants to follow the military service. The worst influence on the Army, which can lead to its destruction or deterioration, is the fact that the people with which you are concerned are set against the profession that they are following. The next guideline that I would say would be the preparation, mentally, that I have discussed above. Basic education, physical education, and moral stamina. Then the individual should be qualified in the fundamentals of military operations. Equally important is the study of the principles of war and the military operations in the past in order to acquire knowledge of the mistakes and the successes of former military leaders. What has been the secret, if any, of their success? All of recorded military history should be considered, from the days of Alexander the Great to Vietnam. The selection of capable assistants in all aspects of operations, men as capable as you can find and are available. And you must work with them and not at them. Constantly observe the nature of performance of your staff as well as yourself. Require satisfactory results or change the individual responsible for failure. The reason for success, in my opinion, is understanding the problem at hand and making the maximum effort necessary for its satisfactory accomplishment.

CPT FERGUSSON: Did you find that officers who were outstanding commanders

were also likely to be outstanding staff officers? As a Division and Corps Commander, how did you go about selecting your staff, General Almond?

GEN ALMOND: No, they are not always equal in these capabilities. Some commanders detest staff duty and not all good staff officers make good commanders. They sometimes are too insistent on perfection. In the selection of a staff, it is always difficult. The men you want are always in demand by everybody and rarely available to you. You want to get your own first choice, but you must take the next best when you are not able to get your own first choice. Sometimes the "next best" with more training and experience develop very well. When you get an unknown, you must develop him as soon as possible, but use your own common sense in this. Previous experience is a great asset to a prospective staff officer. The G-3 for example must know the limitations of all types of troops that he utilizes in the military operation that he has been dealing with, or is dealing with. As a Corps Commander, I made many selections based on the foregoing and I made many mistakes, but made the necessary change as soon as I discovered the mistake. In considering the qualities of a staff officer, I made an effort to be sure that he knew his staff job itself and that he had a good basic knowledge of all other types of staff work. In order to cooperate and not infringe on others, he must be energetic, resourceful, and have high moral integrity. He must know his duties and perform them. I cannot say who was the best. I had many good staff officers in my service and some poor ones, the latter for as short a time as I could possibly make it. In X Corps, some of the good ones that I recall off-hand. First is Nick Ruffner, Chief of Staff; Jack

Chiles, my G-3 and later my regimental commander at Chipyeongni; Jimmy Polk, my G-2; Mildren, my G-3 and later 38th infantry regimental commander; Ed Rowney, later commander of the 38th infantry; John Guthrie, later my Chief of Staff after Ruffner; and a number of others too numerous to mention.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what particular qualities did you look for when selecting officers for a command position? Did you look for different qualities in war time combat situations than in peace time garrison situations?

GEN ALMOND: Well, I would say in general that I looked for the same qualities that I discussed in opening this response to questions. That is, the mental preparation of the individual concerned. What was his basic education, how physically well would he be able to execute the duties that he would be assigned to and whether his moral courage and mental attitude were satisfactory. I looked for these qualities repeatedly. And I also considered whether or not he had had similar command positions before-hand or whether or not he had a special insight into the characteristics of the troops to be commanded. (As I myself thought that I had some knowledge of the personal characteristic of the troops of the 92nd Division.) Apparently General George Marshall, Chief of Staff of the Army, also had this opinion of me.

CPT FERGUSSON: In your opinion, General Almond, are some men born to be leaders? Is there such a thing as a natural leader? Or were most of the leaders you've known men who made themselves and trained themselves to be leaders?

GEN ALMOND: I do not believe that you can stipulate either because a

strong character sometimes with a crude method can illicit compliance with his orders from those who respect his ability. The qualities in leadership or command capacity do not vary greatly in war or in peace in my opinion. The qualities of the military man as set forth previously by me are adequate for a commander under all circumstances. I know too many outstanding commanders to attempt to differentiate. I can only say that when I found an unqualified leader I made every effort to transfer him to a job that he could handle and to replace him with a better man. If unable to do so, I called upon my superior for replacements needed.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you have seen many brave men under combat conditions. Some were highly decorated for deeds of valor. What type of individual is most likely to emerge as a battlefield hero or is this predictable at all?

GEN ALMOND: I do not believe it is predictable. It is very difficult to predict the battlefield hero and Sergeant York of the First World War fame is an example thereof.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, how would you describe your own style of command?

GEN ALMOND: My concept of command is fairly comparable to what I consider that of a good commander. He should be conscientious, resourceful, energetic, determined to get results and not offer excuses or reasons why a task cannot be performed before he even makes an attempt.

CPT FERGUSSON: How would you rate yourself as a disciplinarian; exceptionally tough, average or relatively tolerant?

GEN ALMOND: As a disciplinarian I could probably be rated on the

"determined side" rather than the tough side. I'm intolerant of excuses or evasion in the performance of duty.

CPT FERGUSSON: How would you compare the discipline in American units you observed during World War I and World War II and the Korean War?

GEN ALMOND: The comparison of discipline in any period with that of another period is very difficult. I'd say that the difficulties of reaching a certain stage of discipline is more evident now in the present permissive era than it was in World War I or even in World War II. Korea was much like World War II. It is just harder to produce a hard and tough fighter from the soft, leisurely individual who gives up on a tough job, who grows up in a life of ease and comfort as compared with the early period of World War I.

CPT FERGUSSON: In this respect, do you feel that we are at a serious disadvantage when compared to a society like that of the Communist Chinese?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, in a superficial way. I believe that the integrity and the stability of our American citizens is far superior to the Asiatic but I think it has been tampered with and upset by the ease within which we've been bringing up the present generation.

CPT FERGUSSON: Would you also compare morale and esprit de corps in the three wars?

GEN ALMOND: I believe that high morale as we know it and understand it and esprit de corps was more evident in World War I than since that time. I think that our national patriotism has declined and that it is harder now to make an average American believe that you get what you earn by effort in any endeavor.

CPT. FERGUSSON: During your thirty-seven years in the Army you saw the popularity and prestige of the armed services in this country rise and decline several times. In recent years the Armed Forces, due in large part to an unpopular war in Indo China, have once again experienced shrinking public support. Do you see much similarity between the present public attitude and that during the era after World War I?

GEN ALMOND: I think that the after-war reaction following all wars is about the same. After World War I, we had a let-down attitude everywhere expressed by the phrase, "Ain't the war over?" or "Isn't the war over?" The U. S. Army dropped from several million men to 146,000 men with only 6,000 regular officers and this endured for ten years. The bonus marchers in Washington, D. C., with much back home support, paraded in 1931, although the war had ended November 11, 1918.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what are your feelings about an all volunteer Army as opposed to an Army relying on the draft?

GEN ALMOND: I believe that the volunteer Army is an attempt on the higher authority part to beat the popular resentment of today to the punch and possibly a rejection of the draft. I hope that it works. The monetary, separate quarters, "No reveille," and "No KP" inducements are dangerous and useless to obtain worthwhile soldiers who will stand up under a worthwhile training schedule and required discipline. It is possible that the economy shortages and unemployment have changed the attitude of some of our people towards the Armed Forces. I hope so. Perhaps they will attract a more serious type of individual and thus improve upon the typical volunteer of today. I am satisfied that the draft system insures a good cross-section of the American citizenship.

CPT FERGUSSON: At the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth the Department of Logistics stresses the maxim that tactical or strategic decisions cannot be made by the commander without careful consideration of logistical capabilities. In the classroom one often hears the argument that logistical considerations will usually be the deciding factor when a commander is weighing various courses of action. In the light of your experiences as a division and corps commander in combat, General Almond, what is your reaction to this?

GEN ALMOND: I agree that logistics are a very important aspect of all military operations. And that the commander who ignores the value of adequate means to carry out any plan takes a great risk in its accomplishment. Napoleon said, "An Army travels on its belly." And he meant just that, but he didn't mean to "capture the hill" by wishing the enemy would go away. Every aspect of a plan has its place. That is where the principles of war come in. My principles of war are contained in my readings of many years and I remember them by the phrase "ME/SMOC/SOS." The first letter of each one of these words are as follows: Mass, Economy of force, Simplicity, Maneuverability, Objectives, Cooperation, Security, Offensive and Surprise. Every military plan should be tested by the foregoing principles. Tactics, major and minor, concern methods of applying troop units, large or small, with the most modern equipment available for the prosecution of the plan. Perfection in all aspects of the plan is a dangerous requirement. British Field Marshal Montgomery of World War II is a good example of this attitude of required perfection before attempting to perform a task.

CPT FERGUSSON: When you needed an estimate of the enemy situation, while either a Corps or a Division Commander in combat, did you generally rely heavily on what you were told by your G-2 or did you often prefer to read intelligence reports from various sources and develop your own estimate of enemy intentions and capabilities?

GEN ALMOND: On all occasions where time permitted, my G-2 at any grade of my command level was always required to study all of the military situations as far as the enemy was concerned and with which I was concerned, and within the scope of my command also. And within this scope, I endeavored to be generally aware of the military situation myself, but I used my G-2 and his estimates to the fullest extent and his maximum capabilities. All staff officers should be so used remembering that the commander is always responsible for his actions and recommendations to his superior, that he is not able to excuse himself because he has accepted a staff officer's recommendation. I've seen many commanders fail because they try to do the staff work all themselves. One of them was one of my best friends during the first half of my Army service. World War II was his undoing because he acted like a major and lieutenant colonel or colonel when he should have been functioning like a major general.

CPT FERGUSSON: I was thinking specifically General Almond, of your personal interrogations of Chinese prisoners in Korea. Was not this type of activity something that you would normally rely on your G-2 and his subordinates to perform? Why did you see a need to personally interrogate these prisoners?

GEN ALMOND: Because I felt that at the time that time was of the essence.

These were the first Chinese soldiers captured in Korea and I wanted to report this to General MacArthur because I was the commander responsible to him. I, therefore, went personally at once and used the best knowledge I had of G-2 interrogation with the thought that my initial impression should be reported and that G-2 could modify it by later examination if necessary.

CPT FERGUSSON: When you selected an officer to be your G-2, did you look for an intelligence specialists or at least an officer with previous intelligence experience or simply a good staff officer, preferably with a good combat record?

GEN ALMOND: I always sought a good man for G-2 as I did for every other staff job (with experience on the job if possible), always one with combat experience whenever possible. If he had no combat experience, I saw that he got out with the troops as soon as it was practical to gain what experience he could as soon as it was practical to do so.

CPT FERGUSSON: Sir, what is your view of the role of Chief of Staff? What qualities did you look for when selecting a Chief of Staff?

GEN ALMOND: The chief of my staff was always the coordinator of the work of the entire staff. He is the agitator of its efforts and the father confessor of all among the staff. They operate efficiently when he praises them. He should do so. If they are lacking in any way, he corrects them. If they prove utterly incapable, he asks the commander to replace them. He should not do their respective tasks. His job is to see that they do theirs. He is always at the call of and must have the full confidence of the commander.

CPT FERGUSSON: Do you see a need for assistant division commanders for a division in war time, General Almond? What is your view of their role?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, there is a distinct need for an assistant division commander. He should be fully utilized and given important supervision jobs that will enable the division commander to get out of his office and be with the troops (instead of being a bookworm and a producer of competent orders) whenever it was appropriate for him to get out of the office. He should be prepared to take over whenever the occasion arises but in the meantime avoid usurping the functions of the commander. His loyalty to the commander should be unquestioned.

CPT FERGUSSON: How did you use your assistant division commander of the 92nd Division in Italy, General Almond?

GEN ALMOND: Due to the fact that the 92nd Division was scattered over a very wide front, I had my assistant division commander live with and exercise immediate control over the portion of the 92nd Division which was in the Serchio Valley, some 40 kilometers from my own command post down on the coast at Viareggio. I would talk to him daily as to matters that had arisen and verify what he had transmitted as his concept based on our discussion to the troops concerned.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, in the Korean War the Chinese Communists Armies which opposed you, although weak in artillery and air support and technologically far inferior, required at the same time a considerably lighter logistical tail. If anything, American reliance on heavy fire power and technology was even greater in Vietnam than in Korea, adding greatly to the monetary costs of the war, while undoubtedly saving a

great number of American lives. Have we, in your opinion, become too dependent on air power, massive artillery and gadgetry?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I think we have gone overboard to substitute gadgetry for sound infantry tactics. All of the aids or substitutes that you mentioned are highly useful to military operations but should be tempered by judgment in the utilization thereof. I never could get enough of artillery or air support to support my ground operations but I never used these to replace my troops. The objective gained, the terrain objective that is, in an operation must be denied the power of the enemy to infiltrate. I do not visualize the taking over and retention of important areas without the necessary ground troops to occupy the area or to prevent the enemy from doing so. With reference to the necessity for sufficient ground troops to occupy the area, we have seen this both in Korea and now in Vietnam. The dangers involved in the threat to the supply lines of our troops is apparent as they operated in Korea and as they operated more recently in Vietnam.

CPT FERGUSSON: General Almond, you've had a great deal of experience working with the other services in combat. Would you make some final general comment on your relations with or your opinions on the Navy, Air Force and the Marine Corps?

GEN ALMOND: Yes, I'll be glad to. I am a graduate of the Naval War College of the class of 1939-40 and have known many Naval officers throughout my service, but I'd never had the opportunity to operate with them or with the Navy until I became Chief of Staff for General MacArthur in Japan in 1948 and later in the Korean War at the Inchon landing and following that in 1950 and '51. I've always gotten along well with the Navy without

vital disagreement. I found out that the Naval Commanders are ship safety conscious and that they should be, but where the decision is vital, I've always had cooperation, especially at the Inchon Landing, the Wonsan Landing, and the Hungnam evacuation action. Admiral Joy, Admiral Struble and Admiral Doyle in the Korean War operations were outstanding in their cooperation with me when I was ground commander in all of the X Corps operations. As to the Air Force, I am a graduate of the Air Corps Tactical School; in my combat operations both in Italy in World War II and in Korea, I always endeavored to use air support to the maximum. Sometimes I may have been too demanding, but if air support seemed feasible to support an operation or to gain air observation of the enemy, I always used it. This sometimes seemed too demanding to the commander, especially General Pat Partridge, the 5th Air Force Commander in Korea. The Air Force naturally liked to plan ahead and always liked the request for their support to be in hand 24 hours or more before the action was to take place. To the infantryman and artilleryman, this is sometimes impossible. For example, at midnight of any night when the enemy is discovered, where will he be tomorrow? Who knows? Sometimes an air strike is required in 30 minutes in the case of an enemy movement just discovered. This need led us to develop tactic air support control parties that we used in Korea with great success. The Air Force prefers long range bombing missions planned long before the execution. The Army Division of Corps Commander really want the air support available in 30 minutes to pose a real protection against an enemy threat. Otherwise, my relations and utilization of Air Force efforts had always been excellent. I am, as I have said, a graduate



of the Air Corps Tactical School in 1938-39, the forerunner of present Air University. Next, I will consider the Marine Corps, which I myself almost became a Marine officer when I entered the Army in 1916. I had received my Army commission for November 1916 when I was recommended by the Superintendent at the Virginia Military Institute, General Nichols, as one of some 60 V.M.I. graduates who had been waiting to enter the Armed Forces from 1912 to 1915. I was considered qualified for commissioning in the Marines and the Marine Corps Commandant advised me that if I could pass the physical examination, I'd be commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Marine Corps. I had to thank him and say that the Army commission had been accepted one month earlier and I could not comply. I had many friends in the Marine Corps before that event. Throughout my service I have known of the history of the Marine Corps combat competence and have always admired their morale and Marine Corps spirit, their combat abilities and their audacity. I had never commanded Marines until the Inchon Landing September 15th, 1950, and then found them superb, not only in the Landing operations at Inchon but in their performance in the Wonsan Landing operations nearly a month later and in advance to the Chosin Reservoir as well as their withdrawal from there to Hungnam in early December, as well as their later battle action in South Korea when they came to the X Corps again in defense of the No Name line, April and May of '51. Always they exhibited outstanding battle action capabilities. No troops are perfect in their battle performance and the following comments are merely to suggest improvements in performance in the Marine Corps. First, is the need for improvement in their tactics as to the use of maneuver of units to reach their objective area, thus





reducing casualties. To maneuver and secure your objective is better than front line effort after the Marines once landed in the area of our actions. The next improvement that I suggest is a corollary to the foregoing statement--effective use of supporting artillery. The Marines have a habit of detailing artillery support units to each of their regimental organizations. This sometimes prevents all the artillery of the supported units from being able to reach any part of the front effected. This could be corrected easily by placing the artillery centrally, although it is supposed to be able to accompany the particular Marine unit or regiment when acting separately. This is a matter that requires only definite action to insure proper and total artillery support anywhere along the line and thus reducing the casualties that will be inflicted by the enemy without artillery total support. These are minor matters and its only a matter of taking action on their parts. Before we finish this discussion on personal reactions on military leadership, I feel compelled to acknowledge the influence that General Douglas MacArthur, as an example, had on my concept of leadership and staff and command performance. This was acquired during the five years' association I had with him in all these categories from 1946 to 1951. They are influences that are beyond my power to describe vut I've tried to do so in an address that I gave to a Civic Club in Alabama on 14 May 1964, two weeks after General MacArthur died. This description of my reaction to this five-year association with a great commander is entitled Reflections on my Associations with General Douglas MacArthur. A copy of this is available in all military libraries, Army, Navy, and Air Force and in General MacArthur's Memorial Library in Norfolk, Virginia.



CPT FERGUSSON: This completes the interviews with Lieutenant General Edward M. Almond in Anniston, Alabama, during the period 24 through 30 March 1975. General Almond, in closing, I would like to thank you on behalf of the Commandant of the Command and General Staff College, the Department of Strategy, and myself for your participation in these interviews. You have been most helpful and extremely patient throughout the past six days. This is an experience that I shall always remember and I think certainly that you have made a contribution to the Army's Historical records by your participation in this Oral History Project. Thank you, sir.

GEN ALMOND: Well, Captain Fergusson, as I wrote to your Commandant, General Cushman, I am happy to have contributed anything from my experience and my records thereof that will be of value to your fine institution, now engaged in modifying and refining the practices of the Armed Forces in execution of war efforts. And, finally, I want to say that my records are always available at any time that your institution might desire elaboration on what we have gone over here. And, finally, this interview and those that we've just passed through were greatly enhanced by the questions that you have prepared beforehand and have transmitted to me in elaboration of the general subjects that we discussed. These questions have shown a studious background of the operations to be dealt with or the events that concerned my entire lifetime and what I've gained by my experiences in the services. They were broad-gauged, deep in inquisitiveness and drew from me much more intelligent answers than I could have otherwise provided. Your preliminary study was an inspiration to me and especially in the nature of the

questions and interpretations that you made which were off the cuff as a result of some of the answers that I gave. Thank you very much for reviving old memories that I treasure and consider worthwhile events in my military career.

END OF SIDE 2, TAPE NO. 6.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA  
EDWARD MALLORY ALMOND

July 20, 1962

ALMOND, Edward Mallory, Retired Army Officer; Born, Luray, Virginia, 12 December 1892; B.S., Virginia Military Institute 1915; Son of Walter Coles and Grace (Popham) Almond; Married: Margaret Crook, August 4, 1917; Children: Margaret Mallory (wife of Lieut. Col. Charles M. Fergusson, U. S. Army); Edward Mallory Almond, Jr., (Captain, U. S. Army, killed in action in World War II).

SERVICE:

Commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, Infantry, 30 November 1916.

WORLD WAR I:

4th Infantry, Ft. Brown Texas; 58th Infantry, 4th Division, 12th Machine Gun Battalion, Camp Green, North Carolina, December 1917; 30 September 1918, through Aisne-Marne and Meuse-Argonne Offensive.

POST WAR:

Army of Occupation of Germany to July 1919; Professor of Military Science and Tactics Marion Institute, Marion, Alabama, 1919-1923; Student, Infantry School Fort Benning, Georgia, 1923-23; Instructor, Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia, 1924-28; Student, Command and General Staff School, 1928-1930; Commanding Officer, 3d Battalion, 45th Infantry, Fort McKinley, PI, 1930-1933; Army War College, 1933-34; War Department General Staff, MI Section, 1934-38; Air Corps Tactical School, Maxwell Field, Alabama, 1938-1939; Student, Naval War College, 1939-1940; G-3, VI Corps, Providence, RI, 1941-1942.

WORLD WAR II:

Chief of Staff, VI Corps, January-March 1942; Assistant Division Commander, 93rd Division, Fort Huachuca, Arizona, March 1942-July 1942; Commanding General 92nd Infantry Division, August 1942, throughout training and combat in Italy (Rome-Arno-Appenines and Po Valley Campaigns, to August 1945.)

POST WAR:

Commanding General 2nd Infantry Division, 17 September 1945-June 1, 1946 (U. S. Stations); G-1, DC/S, AFP and FEC, 1946-1949; Chief of Staff GHQ, Far East Command and Supreme Commander Allied Powers-Japan, February 1949-July 1950; Chief of Staff, GHQ, Far East Command and United Nations Command, July 1950-September 1950.

KOREAN CAMPAIGN:

Commanding General, X Corps September 1950 to July 1951 (Inchon-Seoul Campaign, Wonson-Iwon Landings and advance to Yalu River, Chosin Reservoir Operation, Hungnam Evacuation, Southeast and Central Korean Operations).

POST KOREA:

Commandant, The Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, August 1951 until retirement.

DECORATIONS:

World War I: Silver Star, Purple Heart, Estrella Abdon Calderon (Equadorean).

World War II: DSM; OLC Silver Star; Legion of Merit (US); Commendation Ribbon (US) with 2/OLC; Commanders Award of Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus (Italian); Order of the Bath (British); Legion of Honor (French); Medalha de Guerra (Brazilian); Honorary Citizen of Genoa, Italy, 12 May 1945.

Korean Campaign: DSC w/ 1OLC; OLC to DSM; DFC w/2OLC; Bronze Star Medal with "V"; 15 OLC to Air Medal; Medal of Military Merit with Silver Star (Korean).

PROMOTIONS: 2nd Lieutenant, 30 Nov. 1916; 1st Lieutenant also dates from 30 Nov. 1916; Captain (T) 25 July 1917; Major (T) 20 October 1918; Captain, 20 January 1920; Major, 7 August 1928; Lieutenant Colonel, 1 September 1938; Colonel 14 October 1941; Brigadier General (T), 13 March 1942; Major General (T), 10 September 1942; Major General 17 September 1944; Lieutenant General (T) 12 February 1951; retired with rank of Lieutenant General, US Army, January 1953.

**RETIREMENT:**

Retired from U. S. Army after 37 Years Commissioned service: Officer, Life Insurance Company of Alabama; President, General John H. Forney Historical Society; Vice-President, Choccolocco Council No. 1, Boy Scouts of America; Member, National Council At Large, Boy Scouts of America; Member, Anniston Rotary Club; Member, Army-Navy Club, Washington, D. C.; Member, Army-Navy Country, Arlington, Virginia; Anniston Country Club, Anniston, Alabama; Member, Board of Regents, Alabama Museum of Natural History; Past Chairman and Member of Board of Trustees, International House, Jacksonville State College, Jacksonville, Alabama; Past Chairman, Board of Trustees, Anniston Memorial Hospital, Anniston, Alabama (March 1955 to November 1, 1958); Chairman, Speakers Bureau, International House, Jacksonville State College, December 1960 to date; Member, National Strategy Committee, American Security Council, January 1961 to date; Member, Board of Visitors, Virginia Military Institute, June 30, 1960 to date; Resides at 50 Sunset Drive, Anniston, Alabama.

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