

*Korea*

Q: You went to Korea in March 1951.

A: No, it was in—was it March? I thought it was in January, but I'm not sure of that.

Q: Well, you became CG—I think you're right. You went there earlier, but you became CG of the IX Corps in Korea, March 1951; but I believe General Ridgway [Commanding General, Eighth US Army, December 1951-April 1952] had asked for you to come over.

A: Well, they were trying to beat the Marines because the previous commander [Lieutenant General Bryant E. Moore] had had a heart attack. He'd had a helicopter accident. He wasn't hurt in the accident, but he had a heart attack as a result of the accident and died. The next senior person was a Marine colonel named Smith and—

Q: He was a major general. Was he a colonel at that time?

A: Who?

Q: Major General Oliver P. Smith.

A: Yes, he was only a colonel, as I remember, at that time. Anyway, he would have been the next one. So that's when Ridgway sent for me, and I had to hurry over there to get there in time because they were breathing down his neck.

Q: He only kept command for two weeks.

A: He was [in command] until I got there.

Q: Yes, you took command the 5th of March 1951, and commanded through the 23d of December 1951. I believe also during that time, didn't you work as a special deputy to General Ridgway on some inspection trips?

A: No, I was the deputy to replace the American negotiator for the peace terms, and I didn't ever act as there was a Naval officer, what was he, a rear admiral? Seems to me there was a Naval rear admiral who was the head of the American mission, but they wanted to have some continuity; so every day they'd send a courier over to my headquarters with the report of the previous day's transactions so I could keep abreast of what was going on. I never had to act, thank God, because it was impossible. But I consider that as the finest command that I ever had. I mean just as a command. It wasn't the biggest, but I had more experience and got more. And I did, I think, an excellent job; I don't know. We drove them back. We could have broken through the lines. I don't know how many Chinese were killed, but we had a lot of trouble with the Koreans. I had one Korean division, the 2d, which turned out to be excellent. I never saw better soldiers. We had the 6th, which was one that was there, and their commander was no good. He ran once and lost his whole division, just took off. We had to fight to get back to the line again.

There was a Commonwealth Brigade of British in there with us under my command, and they were holding part of the line. Well, of course, they had Armistice or Dardanelles Day or whatever they call that. It went back to the First World War, and the Turks and the British ever since—then the Turks and the Anzacs—had always celebrated Anzac Day together. See, I had a Turkish brigade in there, too. And so they and the Turks—when the Anzac Day came along, the first thing I knew the whole damned line had disappeared. Well, fortunately I got hold of the 5th Cavalry and threw them in there. Those Australians are wonderful fighters and so was that Anzac outfit, the artillery, but they'd gone off. Their commander had taken them off to celebrate Anzac Day, and they left this great big hole. They damned near drove us back to Seoul. We were back on the outskirts. We had to fight our way all the way back and drive them out north of the line. But we did; we drove them clear back into their own territory and could have gone on up into China if we wanted to. But I consider that was the best command duty, combat command, I ever had. And I'm proud of what I did. Well, I had good combat commanders. I had Ridgway at first and then Van Fleet, and they were both crackerjack soldiers. They both supported me. There were a couple of other corps in there, too, at the same time. The X Corps was on my right. That was, what's that fellow's name? He had been MacArthur's chief of staff.

Q: General Almond?

A: Almond, yes.

Q: Well, General MacArthur kept General Almond in the X Corps under his command for much of the war.

A: I know, and he was always getting favoritism from that fact. He still retained his office, for a while, as Chief of Staff and that was finally dissolved. He had a regular traveling circus with him. He had more damned prefabs and what not. He built up this tremendous headquarters. He was overrun once or twice.

Q: Well, when you had the IX, was General Almond still under MacArthur with the X?

A: Yes, and it was during that time that he came out. He had come out from under that double command. He had this private line or this special line to MacArthur's headquarters, and he got all the soup and nuts and good treatment.

Q: Yes, I recall that was quite a problem for General Ridgway. He never was too happy with that situation.

A: No, he wasn't. I'm sure he wasn't. Ridgway was one of the best commanders I ever saw. He's a good one. And Van Fleet is, too [Commanding General, Eighth US Army, April 1951-February 1953]. They are somewhat different. Both of them are fighters. I remember when I was commanding that corps, and I tried to keep in touch with the front line all the time. I went up daily in helicopters or, if closer, I'd go up by jeep or an airplane. I remember one day we had recaptured some town after it had been captured by the Chinese, but we had driven them out and we had retaken it. The first thing in the morning I decided that I wanted to go up and see how they were getting along. So I got a helicopter; no, I guess I got a light plane and went up there and I arrived up there, oh, it was about 10:00 in the morning, I guess, and I had to land in the street. The telephone lines were all across the road, and poles were down and everything. But we got down and I went up to this

headquarters, and I went in there and I found that Ridgway had already been there. He beat me in. He was all over the place.

Q: He was never one for staying in the back. He always wanted firsthand information.

A: Yes, and he got it. I think he's the best combat commander I know of.

Q: I made some notes—

A: He had more brains, and he had plenty of brains but along with his bravery.

Q: I had some notes from General Ridgway's interview on that subject-of some of his principles. One was to make sure he knew what was going on. He didn't trust staff reports.

A: He was there constantly—

Q: As a matter of fact, he wanted people who would report directly to him. As a matter of fact, he said that was one reason he wanted you. He had known you from World War II.

A: Well, he had known me as a cadet. He was just a class behind me at the Academy. He had been manager of the football team. I was playing on the football team at the time. So we had that acquaintance. And we'd known each other at Benning before the war.

Q: And he made a comment that [it was] you and one other general that he wanted to pull up to work directly for him and to be his eyes and ears in the field, because he could trust you and he never knew if he was getting the straight information back through channels. He said if he couldn't get out there himself, he wanted somebody that he knew would.

A: Well, he was there and he helped me a great deal later.

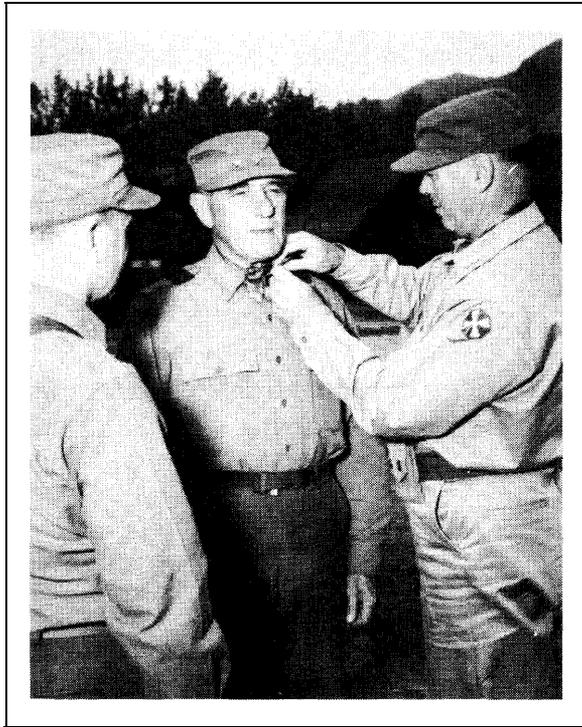
Q: General, you mentioned that you thought that your command of the IX Corps in Korea was probably the most successful of your commands and most interesting. I'd like to go back and review your assignment to Korea. You took command on the 5th of March 1951, took over from a Marine general who had commanded them for a two week period. What was the background for your selection for the command and [for] moving so quickly into Korea?

A: I have no idea except what I was told. I got word from EUCOM [European Command] that they'd send a special plane for me; and I was to leave there the next day and go directly to Korea, so I didn't stop. We stopped to refuel at a couple of points on those islands out in the middle of the Atlantic. I think it was the Portuguese islands or something.

Q: The Azores?

A: Azores, yes, and then we went on, landed in Massachusetts long enough to refuel there. And then we took right off across the country and refueled in Portland or Seattle, and then took off directly across the Pacific by way of Alaska, and then to Tokyo; and I reported in at Tokyo and got my instructions. What I got was to report immediately over to Ridgway in Korea, and I did that. At that time, they had just suffered the setback, though they had started the return. We lost Seoul, and we were back behind Seoul at the time; then we'd just started the operation. I forget what they called it, KILLER [began 21 February 1951] or something, and from then on it was just a continuous operation. We had several setbacks, and we almost made a lot of progress; but it was tough going and you had to make your roads. We were bottled up there behind the mountains, and you couldn't get out. You almost had to hand-carry the stuff over the mountains, so I built some roads up through the mountains. Finally broke through and we got into that valley; I think it's the Han River. I'm not sure; no, it isn't the Han. It's well north of the Han. Anyway, it's that river that runs from west to east, and that's when we broke the Iron Triangle—it was so called Iron Triangle—and we captured all of that except that one high hill and we drove them out of there. We went through that valley right behind there, drove them back up into—almost out of Korea completely; but that's when I had the great experience with the 2d ROK [Republic of Korea] Division. They were crackerjacks.

Q: You are quoted in the corps history on your opinion of the integration of the United Nations units. You stated that in a coordinated United Nations command it presented a surprisingly small number of problems, none of which proved to be too difficult to resolve. Planning and execution of tactical operations were accomplished in large measure due to the similarities of staff concepts and actions of United Nations units. What cannot be overlooked, however, was that the large proportion of United States troops to other United Nations troops with the extensive use of U.S. equipment were important factors in solving tactical and logistical problems.



*Lieutenant General Van Fleet promotes Hoge to lieutenant general.*

A: Well, we were the main force. We had the Turkish division; then we had the Commonwealth Battalion, and we had another British battalion, mixed units. We had a Dutch company, I think. We had a Luxembourg, maybe it was only a platoon, I've forgotten. I know we had some Mexican Air Force. We had a battalion from Colombia, South America. We had a Greek battalion; they were all good soldiers. We had some excellent fighters and they were all most cooperative. We got one battalion from Thailand. They were little rascals and they issued them American equipment. It got warm but they were still wearing those cold weather boots, and the boots were all too big for them. They were just as long in the foot as they were from the ground to the knee, and to see these little rascals jogging along in hot weather wearing these—what do they call them? The shoe packs. Well, then with their food, their cooking, and so on, they had to have some special food brought in. I went over to inspect

them—it was the stinkiest place; it smelled. They had no idea of sanitation in the latrines. I went and inspected their kitchen. There was a big tarpaulin across one end of the kitchen. I didn't know what that was. The stoves or whatever were out in front where they served. I went over there and pulled that up. It was just full of these little Thailanders in there asleep on the food sacks, and there must have been twenty of them behind this canvas. They were willing, but they had no concept of fighting. They had never done anything. They had a commander in charge. He was a graduate of Sandhurst, I think, but he spoke English—most of them couldn't speak English. We had an Ethiopian battalion which was excellent. They were just as tough as they could be. Those fellows go up a mountain just like goats at double time. They just seemed to be tireless. They were long, skinny chaps, thin, agile. They were pretty good soldiers, but you were always in trouble with translating or getting somebody to interpret for you to know what you were doing.

Q: Did each of the Allied commanders have an interpreter?

A: Well, they had a liaison officer, an American, I think. It was always an American, with each one of these outfits. He was sort of a supervisor. They had those with the Korean battalions, too, and they knew some language or they had somebody in the command who could translate for them and they could get word down.

Q: You didn't have many problems with the coordination and cooperation?

A: Oh, you had problems, but you had to explain things over. That fellow, what's his name—Willard—he's a lieutenant general now; he's retired. He was one of the advisors to an ROK battalion or an ROK regiment, I guess. No, it was more than that; it was an ROK division. He was excellent. I've forgotten his name now. I've seen his name recently. He got promoted. Last time I believe he was a lieutenant general. I think he's retired by now.

Q: Does he speak Korean?

A: No, he knew a few words but nothing more. Did you ever go to a Korean dinner?

Q: No, sir. I've been to some Vietnamese dinners, but never went to a Korean dinner.

A: That cooking had stuff called Kimchi—just stinks, just awful—and they had so much garlic and fish heads and old cabbage, something like sauerkraut in a way, except they'd thrown everything else in with it. There was meat and pieces of fish. I don't know how they could stomach it, but I went there once or twice. I couldn't eat.

Q: What were the differences in your command experience at corps level? You mentioned that the commander, no matter what size of unit he's commanding, is the all important factor in the success of the unit. You commanded the Combat Command and the 4th Armored Division in Europe and then the corps and later armies. What made the corps command in Korea different from your other commands?

A: Well, it was the first time I had that much independence. Before, I'd always been under some top supervision. You see, as a division commander, you always had a corps commander over you. Not that I had any trouble with them, and I had some good corps commanders in Europe, but when I got to Korea I was more or less independent. I was directly under, first, Ridgway and then, later, Van Fleet; and the handling of divisions was less detailed than getting down to handling combat commands or battalions or things of that sort. You could deal on the larger scale. It was more satisfactory. I liked the corps command best of all on that account. And I had a great deal of independence.

I planned a number of operations and I always got excellent support from, oh, all the way down from MacArthur, Ridgway, and Van Fleet. It couldn't have been better. In that respect, it was very highly satisfactory and I planned a number of those operations. There's one that isn't mentioned in that book which I thought was one of the best. Of course, a lot of that business in that country with no roads, you had to use men with packs; we had no pack animals. Oh, there were a few, but almost nothing. We captured a few pack animals from the Chinese, but most of it was done on men's backs. Well, we put on one of the final operations way up there in the north just before I left; I supported them with American troops on the flanks, but had to go through the center and the Koreans, who were much better in the hill country than the Americans

were. They were used to that tough backpacking. That was the first use I had of helicopters, that is, on a scale other than personal. I had a helicopter just for myself, for one person, with one other for reconnaissance and for getting around the area. Then later, at the end of that operation, we borrowed a couple of helicopters from the Marines. They had larger ones that would transport and that saved hundreds of pack men who were carrying over that hill. Well, we crossed over those mountains up there on the northeast corner of the American zone and cut in behind the Chinese in the X Corps. I've forgotten the name of that river. It comes down from the north and runs into the Han. What the hell is the name of it?

Q: The Imjin?

A: No, it's over further than that.

Q: The Pukhan?

A: I think it was the Pukhan. It came down and it separated the X Corps and the IX Corps.

Q: Yes, that was the Pukhan.

A: I think that was it. Well, we crossed above that behind whatever, the Chinese or Koreans or North Koreans, who were facing the IX Corps, and made them pull back, get out of there, which was a great relief on the flank of my corps and also for the X Corps. I supported it with my artillery from the flank and I used 155 [-mm.] guns—put them on a hill and fired direct, which was a great help. You'd fire at these bunkers, knock bunkers out. They were helping them all the time, but the actual fighting was carried on by the ROK division, which did a tough job.

Q: The 2d ROK?

A: The 2d ROK.

Q: You didn't have the 2d ROK Division under the corps the whole time you were there?

A: No, I got it later. The 2d ROK was in one of those routs before and had been completely routed and disbanded, lost everything. They had run. I don't know when it was—before I got there—but anyway it was reorganized and they'd gotten this new division commander. I've forgotten his name now, but he had been a paratrooper in the Japanese Army and he was a tough rascal. He couldn't speak English very well, but I remember one or two operations. I used to go there to his CP. I'd issue the orders from the TAC, and there'd be a couple of American divisions and maybe the 2d ROK mixed up. Actually, the operations orders after I got them across were better when they were issued by this 2d ROK Division than from the Americans. He was a first-class man. He was tough. He would walk the front line with a pistol in his hand, and he'd shoot anybody that ran.

Q: Well, that reminds me of some other questions that I want to get into later on, styles of leadership. I have some quotes on you in that respect. What was the difference in your use of staffs in the various levels? You talked about your staff before, that you weren't fortunate enough in World War II to have a very strong staff, but how about the use of staff at corps level?

A: Well, I had an excellent chief of staff. I had a top operations G-3. I had a good staff at the Corps. Later they were rotated and I lost them. But they were good. G-3 was named Kunzig and there were several of those Kunzigs. There was an old [father] Kunzig [Louis A., USMA 1906], colonel in the Army, and I've known two of them at least. This was Bill Kunzig [William B., USMA 1932]. I'd known Bing Kunzig [Henry B., USMA 1930] before that, but I thought Bill was one of the best operations men I ever knew, and I had a good intelligence officer in those days—I've forgotten. They were all changed about then—before I left they had been rotated. Peplow [George B., USMA 1925] was my chief of staff in the beginning, and he was first class. He had been in the fighting from the very beginning. I remember the last time he was there, I pinned about—I know it was a DSC and two or three Silver Stars on him, and he'd gotten a whole mess of decorations.

Van Fleet was fine. I remember Van Fleet though—he'd given me a—I've forgotten whether it was a platoon or a battery of 8-inch howitzers. That was a great gun, very accurate; it carried a lot of power. But the ammunition was very heavy. We were backpacking a lot of that stuff up into the hills to serve those guns. Van came up one day and criticized me. He said, "I want to see you fire those 8-inch howitzers more. They were sent here for you to use." "Well, that's all right, but you carry the ammunition to them because it takes one hell of an effort to get every round of ammunition and



*Lieutenant General William M. Hoge, commanding general of IX Corps, Korea, 1951.*

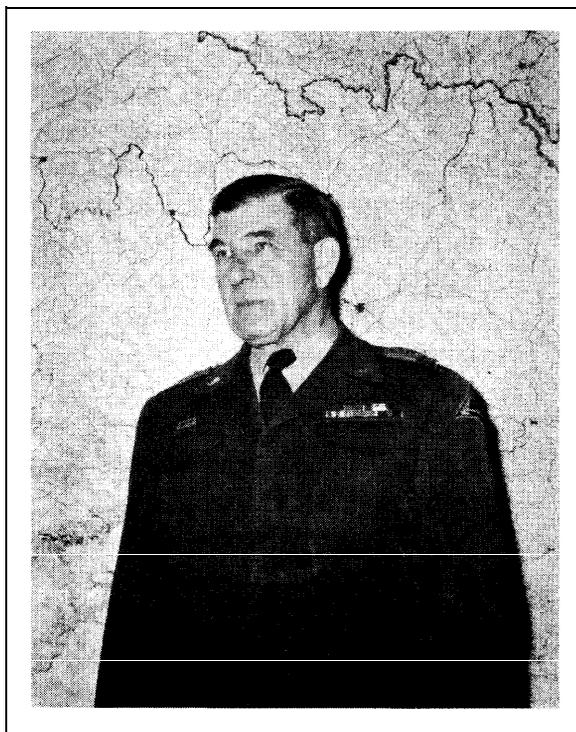
I'm trying to make every round pay; you can't waste it." He was a great person for firepower. You couldn't shoot enough for him. It didn't make any difference what kind of a cannon or gun it was, but he wanted just an avalanche of artillery poured on everything. But when you had to carry it, and all the labor of getting that supply of ammunition up to those guns, that was quite a problem. It was all right if you had a road and trucks. You could get them, but we couldn't [use them beyond] a certain distance. It [ammunition] had to be all carried on the backs and we had so few roads. I think we only had about one road per corps.

Q: Well, it mentioned in the history here that the 36th Engineer Group—I think you had in your corps—that you had them building roads practically all the time, seeking roads out?

- A: Well, we used them a great deal. I've forgotten which one that was but they're all mixed up. I don't remember units.
- Q: I think the 36th Group which remained in Korea at least through—I think they were still in 1965, 1966. There is an Engineer group in Korea now, but it isn't the 36th Group. There was something mentioned about the amount of artillery that was fired. Evidently, it was used extensively throughout Korea.
- A: Well, Van Fleet was a great person on shooting. A normal day of fire was not one day of fire. It would be two days to satisfy him, or three days. You couldn't shoot enough to satisfy him. Well, that was all right when you could get the ammunition to them, but I'll tell you, when you had to back-carry a lot of it, after we got knee deep in the country, you had to be a little bit more conservative.
- Q: Logistics became very difficult?
- A: Oh, yes. Well, I asked Van Fleet if he felt that way about it. He said, "I'm going to take that battery of 8-inch howitzers away from you if you don't shoot them enough." I said, "All right. You come up and carry the ammunition. I'll shoot them as long as you carry the ammunition, but I'm the one that's got to get it up there to the people." He was always fine. Old Van was a great soldier. I've known him ever since cadet days. We played football together. Both of us played in the backfield. I saw him years later at the beginning of the First World War. We were neighbors side by side at Fort Leavenworth and later down at Benning.
- Q: Were you and he on the staff at the same time down at Benning?
- A: Well, I was the Engineer instructor. Van Fleet was a student in those days.
- Q: After Korea, you returned to command the Fourth Army. How did you receive that command?

- A: See, when I was in Korea, Collins called me up and said, ‘Can you go back to the States right away? Can you go back by Christmas or get started?’ There was a rule that you could not take command of an army unless you had at least one year active duty left at that time. It was creeping up on me, and I said sure I’d go. Well, I got away. I had three Christmas dinners that Christmas. All of them were legitimate and all of them were at different places. I had a Christmas dinner in Tokyo. I had another Christmas dinner on some island. Oh, it was one of those islands out in the Pacific; that was before midnight. And then we crossed the date line, and I got to Honolulu on Christmas Day. I ate another Christmas dinner in Honolulu, and I came back the next day. Well, then I got command of the Fourth Army down at San Antonio and I was down there. I hadn’t been there about a year, I guess, and that was supposed to be my last station. Collins called me up, I think it was Christmas Eve [1952], and he said, “Will you go to Germany to take command of the Seventh Army?” And he said, “I’ll give you time to ask Mrs. Hoge whether she’s willing to go.” I said, “You don’t have to ask her. I know what her answer will be.” So I gave him the answer, and I got that assignment right away. And went to Germany to command the Seventh.
- Q: You commanded the Fourth Army at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, from February 1952 until March 1953. So, I guess, that was Christmas.
- A: I thought it was at Christmas. I thought it was a Christmas. I know it was a Christmas Eve—
- Q: That’s probably when he called you to go. I think you took command of the Seventh Army in April 1953.
- A: Well, I had to go to various places. I had to stop at the War Department and get special instructions and there were several other things: I had to stop at the USAREUR—not USAREUR, but the Command and the Army—
- Q: That’s CINCUSAREUR. I don’t think they had the EUCOM headquarters there.

A: What's that overall command in Europe? SHAPE. It wasn't SHAPE in those days but it later became SHAPE. Handy [General Thomas T.] had it at that time and I had to go stop there and get instructions, and I finally went down to the Seventh Army and took over. And I guess it was in March, I don't know. And I stayed there until [General Charles] Bolte, who had been there before me and had gone up to the command at USAREUR, was designated to be a Deputy Chief of Staff [Vice Chief of Staff]; so he came back to the States and I was given the command.



*General Hoge as commanding general, Seventh Army, 1953.*

Q: That was in September 1953.

A: Yes, something like that. See, by that time I was a couple of years over; they had told me I was going to be retired. I didn't mind it. They were all good commands and I always did what I thought was right. I got in trouble once or twice, not through my fault. One was on the insurance business. They pulled a fast one, and that was again where the staff let me down because I was in Heidelberg at the time and we had an insurance officer. I don't know whether we still have those or not, but we had one and he was supposed to handle all these insurance agents and so on. Well, I don't know where they came from but they got me involved somehow and invited me to a luncheon or something with these insurance people. Hell, they had more damned insurance companies than I knew; they had Metropolitan, they took Prudential-all of them, all the big names. But all of them had been organized in Texas or someplace, and

they were not worth a damn. They were just gyps. Well, I didn't know anything about it. I went up there to see them and I think I gave them a little talk about how I was for insurance. I always believed in it and it was a good thing for the soldier. But it wasn't; it was all a gyp, because they would sell these soldiers insurance with big promises. Well, then the soldier couldn't keep up his payments so they took the premiums and the down payments and pocketed them. Well, I didn't know that. My insurance man should have told me that. He let me down. And the first thing I knew, there was a couple of congressmen over there to investigate this situation. I didn't know what they were talking about, and it turned out that that was the trouble.

Q: You weren't getting the word?

A: They weren't passing it on to me. And another one was this shenanigan on the Class VI supplies. There was a crook that was supposed to be a great friend of Eisenhower's; I've forgotten his name. He's with a gyp liquor firm in business. It's not a reputable liquor firm, but they were taking liquor to Belgium in barrels. It wasn't bonded liquor at all, but they'd get it into Belgium just as cheap liquor; and by some finagling of the law, they got it bonded and bottled in Belgium and then they'd sell it to the Class VI people. It was just a crooked deal. Well, somebody got hold of that and they raised hell on that subject, too. Both of them were not my fault unless I'd dug into each one of these things. You didn't have time to do all that. You expected your insurance man and your liquor man to tell you these things. You know we always handled first-class liquor, most of it, and a great deal of it was bonded and it was sold as bonded; but this firm was selling the cheap stuff and getting away with it. Well, that's two of my mistakes. I figure they let me down, but I don't know how I could have known all of these little facts.

Q: This type thing still goes on. I'm sure you're familiar with the big blowup on the Army club system in Europe and then in Vietnam?

A: I had that trouble in Belvoir, and I busted that up. I don't know whether you ever heard of that, but when I first went to Belvoir with all those slot machines, there were slot machines on both sides of the post; and they were owned by a company in town. Their agent would come out and service these machines, but he took a big percentage of the receipts. I

don't know what we got but we got a very small amount proportionately of the receipts of these things, and we were the people who were paying it. And the clubs were supporting it; they were keeping them running. So I decided that that was a waste of money, that we would buy the machines; and service them ourselves. Well, we did. We got rid of these agents from town and then we put them in the club. We had some in the enlisted men's clubs and some in both clubs on both sides of the road.

In the officers' club, we were getting a return of about \$15,000-\$16,000 a month out of the slot machines; and that went on for a while and suddenly it dropped to around \$5,000. I used to get a report from the club once a month, and it was just something you glanced at, to see where they stood. I didn't study it. You could just pick that up and just see it right off. Well, suddenly they dropped from \$15,000 to \$5,000-\$6,000. I said, "There's something wrong here. I don't know what it is, but I know it's wrong. I think somebody's stealing from the machines." So, I changed all the locks on the machines. I only had one key, and I gave instructions that those machines would not be opened except with one disinterested officer. A club officer and a club steward could be present when they opened them up and took the money out. Well, that went on and the minute we started that they bounced right back again up to where they had been, \$15,000-\$16,000 a month.

Well, then it went on that way maybe several months. Suddenly it dropped again. I said, "Where in the hell is the key?" Well, it was supposed to be kept in the headquarters' safe. We looked in the headquarters' safe and it wasn't there. Somebody had stolen the key. So we had all locks changed again and then it went right back up again. Well, then the same thing happened in the noncoms' club. They hadn't been making as much money, but the noncoms' club had been making around \$7,000 or \$8,000 a month. Maybe not that much, \$5,000 maybe. But suddenly that dropped down to \$2,000. So I did the same thing with them and put them under supervision. They came right back again, too. Never did find out who was stealing the money. When we had that supervision, and the key to open the machine was kept in the office safe and was only permitted out by the chief of staff or the officer of the day or somebody who supervised it, you just watched that; it was just like a barometer. If the key was missing, it meant that somebody was stealing.

Q: Well, that was SOP in Europe for the duty officer. He went around to all the clubs every night and got with the club steward and removed the money and counted it while he was there; and then the club officer had to take it back, lock it up in the safe, and put it in the bank the next day. Not the club officer, the duty officer. So that might have started with you at Belvoir.

A: I don't know; I didn't pass it on. But we lost a considerable amount of money from both clubs until we rigidly enforced control of the key.

Q: Well, as you know, the slot machines have been banned from all Army clubs.

A: Yes, I know. It was later done in the United States. They did it all over the United States. In those days, it was our main source of revenue for the clubs. We ran the clubs on the liquor sales and the slot machine sales. The liquor and the meals and everything else were reasonable from the profits of the club.

Q: Well, that's been taken away now primarily by congressional pressure. But I'm sure that those people who gambled then are probably still gambling some other way, particularly overseas; but did you have any thoughts about the slot machines being there and the propriety of it?

A: Where?

Q: In the clubs both in Europe and Belvoir.

A: No, I never had any. The order came out that they were to be stopped, and we stopped them. We had to close them all down. That was in the United States. As I remember, in Europe it was still going on.

Q: Yes, until 1970 or 1971. It was in that time frame. But EUCOM fought it. The CINCUSAREUR and the EUCOM commander, the joint command headquarters, fought it rather stringently because, of course, you've got free gambling all over Germany anyway, and those slot machines were what maintained the clubs or pretty close to it.

A: Well, that was what we had in the States. Slot machines ran our clubs. I've seen these things happen in other places, but if you don't watch, somebody's got sticky fingers all the time. But just watch when you see some sergeant major or somebody suddenly change his old lifestyle, and he's driving a Cadillac around the post, then be suspicious.

Q: Of course, they found that later the sergeant major of the Army had been involved in that in Europe.

A: He got involved in that. I didn't know any of those people, but I know they got into it. But it's just one of those things that you've got to be constantly watching.

Q: I'd like to discuss ethics within the Army, both in the officer and enlisted ranks, later on. That takes us up to your retirement in January 1955. We'll want to go back and talk about some more details on part of these a little later on.

We talked about some of the leadership styles of various people before. I want to go back and talk a little bit more about your command, primarily when you returned to Europe as the CG of the Seventh Army in April of 1953 and remained in Europe until January 1955 as CINCUSAREUR. At that time we had a national strategy policy, I guess you could call it massive retaliation, instead of flexible response, the thing we have now. What was your view of the readiness of the Seventh Army to meet any possible threat from the Soviet Union and your capability in the way of men and equipment in Europe at that time?

A: Well, I wasn't in total agreement with parts of the policy. There was a scorched-earth policy in there which I disagreed with completely, and I later changed that or tried to take action, and, I think, I did modify it. But initially, everybody was to get out; we were to bum everything in the place: all the oil supplies, destroy all bridges, towns, everything in the way. My conception of that was that all we would do would make enemies of the German people, and our effects on the Russians would have been relatively small.

Q: So that was in the event of an attack from the Soviet Union?

A: That was in the event of an attack from the Soviet Union. We were supposed to set up lines of destruction along the way, and we had it all set. We were to bum certain things—destroy towns, all facilities—and retreat ahead of this thing and get back behind the Rhine, which I considered a very bad policy.

Q: Well, I think that's been changed now.

A: Well, I took steps to change it while I was there because I objected to it. It was all wrong to destroy a country—a friendly country. It would have

been different if we had been in Russia or someplace like that; it would have been different. But people you are supposed to defend—and then to destroy them, that's worse than the Russians would have done. I never could take that and I did my best to change. I don't know how effective I was, but I know I did issue some orders before I left Seventh Army to that effect.

Q: To change the—

A: To change that concept.

Q: Well, did you agree at that time with the nuclear retaliation? You'd be trading space for time under that conventional strategy.



*General William M. Hoge as commander in chief of US Army Europe, 1954.*

A: Yes, that was tied in and within limits; we had to use what we could in nuclear. Of course, we had several things to use it with; we could fire that—what was that gun?

Q: The Honest John or the 175?

A: No, we had a bigger gun, the 240 or something like that [280-mm. gun cannon M-66, atomic cannon]. I've forgotten. I know we fired it several times, not with an atomic head on it, but it would carry a head. And then there was a smaller gun that would carry a shell.

Q: The 8-inch will carry it and 175 carries it.

A: I think the 175. We had the guns around. They were quite cumbersome and big and a hell of a thing to move. I think it should have been used if we had to. There wasn't any objection to it. We'd probably get it back so—but what the hell, you've got to do the best you can; you don't go all humanitarian and expect somebody like the Russians to obey your impulses or follow that example. They weren't there to do that; they were there to destroy us. But I thought we should fight a delaying action and use whatever means we had. We had some maneuvers in those days under Marshal Juin [Marshal Alphonse Juin, Commander in Chief, Land Forces, Central Europe]. He was commanding at that time all the Allied armies and he had his headquarters in Paris and we had some maneuvers and critiques [in] which we discussed these things. I don't know if any decision was ever arrived at. But I remember several problems in which, I guess, Montgomery was in on it. He held to this damned schoolmaster business—ridiculous; he was a damned fool if there ever was one.

Q: Field Marshal Montgomery?

A: Yes. He was head of the Allied forces at that time from Paris and he conducted this. He had set up a regular schoolroom. All sitting in benches around sort of like a medical operating room. Anyway, he was sitting in the middle of the table, and he carried a bell like a schoolmaster and he would ring the bell to start the class. And then he had a big tray of cough drops, and if anybody coughed he would immediately have somebody carry him over a cough drop.

Q: That was while they were critiquing the maneuvers?

A: Well, that was the maneuver we had; it was afterwards. He held those things about once a year or something like that.

Q: What were the French and German thoughts on the use of tac nuclear weapons and the policy at that time?

A: Never heard the Germans—the Germans were not involved with us at that time. They were taken in later; about the time that I left there they began to be integrated. I don't know that the French expressed much one way or the other. They didn't have anything at that time to use; we had to furnish it. We had nuclear weapons at various—I don't remember how many—depots, but I remember we had them. We had these things stored. They were under high-security guards of our own around through the zone and they could have been used. I think they were mostly in the form of artillery weapons or something. Big ones!

Q: I think they had the Davy Crockett at that time, too.

A: They were always getting out something new. I am not sure—well, maybe the Davy Crockett—I am not sure I ever saw those fired. I did see the big gun! I've forgotten what it was, the 240 or something. We hauled that around several times and got it into maneuvers.

Q: What were your thoughts later on, when France withdrew from NATO?

A: Well, I thought it was an extremely bad move. We had supported France; we had done everything to defend her and here were all of our supply depots back in there. We had a pipeline across from the Atlantic coast right across France. They took that away from us. We were depending on getting petroleum supplies and so on in by ship through Germany down the Rhine—that way. It was just another one of de Gaulle's—He was a hard one to deal with: stubborn, mean. I thought the French had turned on us. In fact, somewhat of a traitor to the Allied forces, particularly the Americans. Because, by God, we certainly defended them in my lifetime. I've been over there and fought for their damned country twice. First

World War, maybe we turned the tide in the First World War. I'm sure [in] the Second World War we were the determining factor.

Q: Well, what did you think of the strength of NATO at that time as a military organization?

A: Well, it wasn't particularly strong. I think the strongest element in the whole thing was the American forces—Seventh Army. Of course, I commanded in that time the Central Army Group [CENTAG], which included the First French Army and the Seventh US Army, plus, I guess, we later, just toward the end, got some German forces in there. They were subordinate; they were not major units. We didn't have anything as big as a division or corps as I remember. I know the First French Army was part of my command and that was a good outfit. I've forgotten that little fellow's name. He was a commander of the First French Army down at Baden-Baden, [which] was his headquarters.

Q: The French forces were still there when I was in Europe in 1959. Was the defensive planning at that time predicated on the assumption that an attack would come across the Fulda plain and through the Central Army Group?

A: I don't remember what the thought was on that at this time. I can't remember.

Q: I saw the classic scenario where the US forces were located. How about your troop morale at that time; you know, recently we have had many difficulties with troop morale in Europe?

A: I know. We had high morale, had fine troops and good men. Conducted some good maneuvers and I had some good exercises of it. Grafenwohr and Wildflecken, we had that one and we had another one; there was a third one, it's down in the southern part.

Q: Grafenwohr was down in the south.

A: Well, that was further east, but this was west of that and somewhat south near the French zone. But we held maneuvers down there. Grafenwohr, of course, was the big one and the best. We held maneuvers pretty well over Germany. We had to pay some damages—destroyed fences, roads, and so on—but they were cooperative; they were all right.

Q: Are there any items that stand out as your biggest problems while you were commanding the Seventh Army or USAREUR?

A: I don't remember any major problems. Of course, you always had morale problems, and you had to maintain that. And their training. We'd hold those alerts constantly: regiment, battalion, division, and what not.

Q: What about your war reserve stock?

A: We had pretty good stocks and we built up that place on the west bank of the Rhine. You know, it is over in—what the hell is the name [Kaiserslautern].

Q: Garmisch?

A: No, it isn't that; it became an American colony back there, really a city. And they brought all of those tanks and things, thousands of tanks and trucks and everything else under cover.

Q: Yes, sir, that was the forerunner of the Reforger: the prestocked supplies for CONUS-based troops.

A: It was just a reserve supply we had, as the demobilization didn't take them back; and they put them over there in a zone—what the hell was that? It was under my command at that time, the big area that was quite a colony of supply.

Q: Was this in France or Germany, sir?

A: It's in Germany, just in back—

Q: Did you have a special unit that maintained that equipment?

A: There was a special unit, and we had a major general back then in there, who was in command of the thing. I've even forgotten his name now. Two or three different ones.

Q: Yes, that was under COMZ, I guess. They still had the communication zone at that time.

A: It was under the Seventh Army.

Q: Oh, it was under Seventh Army?

A: At least under USAREUR, it wasn't back under COMZ; the big headquarters at Paris which commanded all of them.

Q: SHAPE.

A: It was under US Army, well, now SHAPE, but in those days—Handy was in command of it when I went over there and I think he was there—I don't remember who took it after he left. I guess he was still there when I left; I am not sure. Yes, I guess he was, because they tried to get us to move into their house in Heidelberg and we didn't do it. The Handys had a great big chateau, tremendous house, that was requisitioned from the Germans; and I think the expense was rather great and maintaining it and a lot of servants. And there had been an objection at that time of the expense being too great. We got that from headquarters COMZ—no, that was the Communications Zone, that wasn't it—had all of them, the Army and the Navy and the Air Force were all under this command. USAREUR was under that.

Q: EUCOM?

A: EUCOM is the one that I am thinking of. They were up in Frankfurt when I first went in there. They had been at Heidelberg and they were moved up to Frankfurt and they took over that big—

Q: I. G. Farben Building?

A: And they occupied that, and that was when we were down at Heidelberg. We were all separated in those days, had the Seventh Army down at Stuttgart and USAREUR was up at Heidelberg and whatcha-m'-callit moved up to Frankfurt. Nowadays I think they all are combined. Now, of course, SHAPE has taken over.

Q: SHAPE is now in Belgium; EUCOM is at Patch Barracks, Stuttgart; and USAREUR is still at Heidelberg, I think.

A: USAREUR and the Seventh Army have been combined. They are both up at Heidelberg now. The commander of the Seventh Army is deputy commander of USAREUR and they both are in the same headquarters.

Q: Yes, and CENTAG is also located there, right? CENTAG headquarters?

A: I don't know, it all has changed so much since. We were spread out quite a bit in those days. There was always that fight for quarters.

Q: It still is.

A: At the time I went in there, I remember, I had to move up to Heidelberg when I took over USAREUR; and Handy was still living in Heidelberg, but he had to commute daily up to Frankfurt to his headquarters. It was a hell of a mess. But the women wouldn't move; somebody had to move and Mrs. Handy wouldn't move. They had this big house and they tried their damndest to get us to take over that house. But economy had begun to come in. We didn't want it anyway; we had a very comfortable house down there on the river bank, Wolfgang, just outside Heidelberg.

Q: Seckenheim?

A: No, it's Wolfgang. It's just a suburb of Heidelberg right along the river. It had belonged to the German postal people. It was quite nice grounds and a decent house. We did considerable changing and fixing it up, but

Bolte had lived there before. He had been forced into [it] when he moved up to Heidelberg; he was ahead of me. He couldn't move in because all of these houses were taken. It was always jammed up because nobody would move, the women wouldn't move. So they opened up this house and we moved in there and it was perfectly comfortable. And later after this thing cleared up, we wouldn't take the rest of the houses. We just turned them back to the Germans.

Q: Did they go back to the German government or back to the original owners?

A: They went back to the original owners, as far as I know. Everything was on requisition—houses, furniture. That clock there, for instance, that belonged to [Albert] Speer. His wife was living in Heidelberg at the time. That clock was in my quarters in Heidelberg. It wasn't running at that time, hadn't been running for years. So, we asked around to find out who it belonged to, if it could be bought. And finally had a hell of a time, sort of a skullduggery going on in the property division, particularly among the Germans. They had this stuff spotted and they weren't telling. They wouldn't trace this stuff, because they hoped, if finally the Americans evacuated, [we] wouldn't know who this stuff belonged to and they would get it for nothing or very cheaply. Well, we finally traced that clock down. And we found out that it belonged to Mrs. Speer or Speer himself. He was in prison then up in Berlin. He was one of those three prisoners. He is now out and he wrote that book [*Inside the Third Reich*]. Mrs. Speer came down to our house and talked to my wife. Their daughter had been to school in England or America, and she spoke English very well. She came with her. Mrs. Speer agreed to sell the clock to us, so we bought it from her and I've got the receipt for it. There was some stealing that went on among some of these Americans. One was a chaplain who stole some pianos. Don't you remember that?

Q: No, I have not heard about that.

A: And jewelry and all sorts of things, silver plates, and all this stolen from some of those castles and so on by Americans-picked it up and brought it home. I've got the receipt for that clock in the drawer there, from Mrs. Speer. So, I had no trouble bringing it back to the United States, but there were two Ordnance officers that came over to dinner one night and

the clock was standing there in the living room. It wasn't running, hadn't been running. We tried to get the Germans to fix it, and we couldn't get anybody to fix it. One of these—I don't know whether you ever knew General Shermberg; he was an Ordnance officer. He is dead now; he's just died in the last couple of years, a very fine person. I've forgotten the other Ordnance officer. They were there for dinner one night and were talking about that clock, and Shermberg was an enthusiastic clock man. They took it right down in the living room floor, and he said, "Just let me take it home." He got it, took the works out, put them back, brought it back, and it ran perfectly. And it runs right now as well as any clock runs except an electric clock—keeps perfect time. I've had some trouble with it since I've got it back here, and it's cost me several times to get it repaired back here than the original clock cost.

Q: Yes, it's a beautiful old clock.

A: That clock is over two hundred years old. That man was a clock maker for one of the kings of England, one of the Jameses. I think it was around 1700 that he lived, and he was one of the most prominent clock makers. But the clock was ticking; English was still inscribed, but it was bought by somebody and got over in Germany. But I traced it back to England; there are a number of them made in England.

Q: You mentioned you had quite a bit of pilferage that went on by some of the Americans in requisition housing?

A: Terrible! Stealing of jewelry and silver plates and all sorts of things. As I say, one of them was a chaplain who stole pianos; I don't know how many pianos it was. Maybe just one, but I remember that.

Q: We've covered your corps command, sir, and then you went and took the Fourth Army at Sam Houston and then to Europe, Seventh Army commander. Looking back over your command experience, all through your career, you primarily were an operations command type?

A: That's true and that's probably a great shortcoming of mine. I feel that, but I have no ability on staff lines. I enjoy operations and I enjoy being in the thick of it and I always have, and I take direct control. I always

tried to be up and see what the men were doing up on the front line or anyplace else. I did that in the First World War. I led over in the Vosges mountains in the First World War. I led a patrol that blew up German wire with a Bangalore torpedo. I led the patrol out.

Q: I think you also personally conducted the reconnaissance of the Meuse River?

A: I did. Yes, I did. I did that for several days before we picked the site that we would cross and I led the pontoon train. They were all French. They couldn't speak English—oh, they could speak a little English—and I wasn't sure what you could do with them. I had to lead them down to the river personally. I didn't know whether they would stay with us or not. But we got our pontoons down to the riverbank and got the transport away from there before we started building.

Q: You cited that crossing as an excellent example of how well textbook methods could work in a combat situation in your articles that you wrote about the Meuse crossing; and you cited several examples of how that related, how the textbook or the school situation did apply in combat. Did you find that all through your career? Did you find that you had to have more flexibility and sometimes you had to throw the book away?

A: Oh yes, that's true. You couldn't follow it slavishly at any time. But the whole principle behind river crossings had been taught by a German-written book. I remember, we used it when I was an instructor at the Engineer School. That was our basic text, this German textbook on river crossing. But that gave all the principles of the reconnaissance: getting the covering force across, the bringing-up of the small boats. They didn't have footbridges in those days; they used boats and then got the pontoons in. But the whole principle of the broad scope of river crossing is classic and you had to follow that; you couldn't follow it slavishly.

Q: Another thing I found interesting in one of your lessons learned from that was the broad front. You had a very wide front along the Meuse which evidently confused the enemy. You did not choose the logical crossing

point but chose one that was somewhat obscured from observation by the enemy.

A: It wasn't so much that. That was the only place we could get across. The problem was getting communications on the far bank of the river; and at the place we crossed I had to use a towpath along the canal for a long distance before I could get off just a single track. I remember during that period, right after we'd gotten that bridge across at that section, we were on the flank of the Germans. Why, the corps [111 Corps] commander, General Hines [John L. Hines, USMA 1891], came down that road to inspect in an automobile. He just disrupted the whole business because the road was only wide enough for single traffic, and you had to be very careful of that if you went off the road. You were on this embankment towpath; you were either in the river or in a ditch, and you stopped everything. That was our whole supply line until we could get back to get to some roads to branch off, and it was two or three miles up the river before we could get off to the bank land. So that was the problem.

Q: Yes, limited approaches to the—

A: And that was possibly one reason why and how the Germans put up, I guess, more resistance back up at the crossing that was made by the other battalion of the 7th Engineers after we had crossed down below.

Q: Yes, and you had, I think, elements of the 308th Engineer Battalion with you. I think E and F companies were involved in the crossing.

A: I don't remember. I know we had a bridge train which came up later. I'm not sure that we ever used those because they came in later, and we'd already used this French battalion to get the initial boats across.

Q: Well, going back to your experiences primarily in operations and as commander and your method of leadership. You're described by Ken Hechler in his Bridge at Remagen book as "utterly fearless and expected his men to follow his example. If they faltered, his normally quiet voice took on sharpness and lacerated the offenders. Quick to make decisions, he had the reputation of being a bulldog in carrying them out and a cat in jumping to meet new circumstances," which describes your flexibility y.

But evidently through all the reading you've done you are always quick on decisions and able to inspire men a great deal. Do you feel that this was one of the most important aspects of your successful leadership, being with the men and inspiration?

A: Well, I felt it. I had to know what the men were up against constantly, and I never was satisfied unless I knew what the opposition was so I could do something for them, tell them whereto go. This thing of giving orders and not knowing whether it could be carried out just because it's an order and it looks on paper that it would be a good thing to do. There were always two principles I used in evaluating orders when I gave them. One, was it possible to do that thing? Not that it's the normal thing, but is it possible? Can it be done by somebody or you could do it or not? The other is are you yourself willing to be on that mission? Not that you want to be, but would you—would you do it? Would you flunk out on it? And if you couldn't answer in the affirmative on both of those points, you should find some other way of doing it or change your orders.

Q: So you found it necessary to put yourself in the position of the man to whom you were giving the orders?

A: And that was one reason for always being up someplace to find out what the men were up against. It's all right to sit back and it looks nice to take a certain piece of ground or make a certain advance, but do you know that it can be done? It may be a very difficult job, but is it possible? Is there some way that it can be done?

Q: Well, from that description you were as much motivated towards the men as you were towards the mission, but combine the two.

A: Well, it was the part of the men that made the mission possible. If you couldn't have the man, there was no use in having the mission, if you didn't have the means to carry it out.

Q: Well, in your career progression, you've hit on a sore subject with a lot of officers in today's Army and one of the main reasons for the creation of a new officer personnel management system, which allows a man who is particularly good in a field to stay in that field and not jump from one

type of job to another so he can be a total generalist. And one of the terms used for this is ticket punching. In other words, you had to command your platoon, your company, the battalion. You had to be on a high staff; you had to be on the DA [Department of the Army] staff. Do you agree that this new approach of allowing a man to specialize and achieve success in the Army is better than doing a little bit of everything and being a total generalist?

A: I don't know that I could answer that. You've got to follow your own capabilities, and I don't think everybody is a well-rounded man. For instance, I could never be a staff officer and there was no point in my being trained to be a G-2 or G-3 or anything else. I may have been able to do it and I could have gotten by with it, but I had no liking for it and I didn't have the ability along that line.

Q: Well, did you consciously avoid being on the DA staff or high-level staffs?

A: I never tried one way or the other. There's one thing I tried to avoid, and that was being stationed in the Pentagon.

Q: Yes, and successful at it.

A: But otherwise, I never made an effort one way or the other. And I think a lot of people wouldn't have had me on their staff anyway.

Q: Well, you evidently had a reputation for being an excellent commander and that's where most of your assignments came. That was part of the purpose of my question about your going to Korea. In the interview of General Ridgway two years ago, he commented that he went out of his way to get you into Korea out of Trieste. That's why I had asked you if your previous contact with Ridgway helped in that assignment and others.

A: I think they did all along. Just like when you know someone, and, well, I'd known Ridgway very well and I admired him. We had been together ever since cadet days and several times in the Army. I was a great admirer of him and I respected him. I think that is the point. I've forgotten what we started-the question was?

Q: Knowing people gives you a lot of opportunities—

A: The knowing of people—that's been true all along. I have never made any effort to bootlick anybody and never went around with that purpose in mind, but I know that the people with whom I have associated have been a great help throughout my career and they have helped me by their advice, by their giving me their support and giving me the opportunity to do things. I don't know where that came from. They had confidence in me, but I look back on my acquaintance with these various people as being vital, not from the standpoint of favoritism or selection, but in understanding them and being able to think along their lines or help them because they helped me. The whole thing is mutual. You don't get anything by giving it all to somebody else. He helps you some; you help him whenever you can. Loyalty is a great thing. I can't remember, but in every scope of my career there's been always somebody who's been a great friend. I'll tell you who that [VIII] Corps commander was who was a great friend of mine. It was Troy Middleton. He was a fine soldier. He was the one that commanded the [VIII] Corps and went over to take Brest. I followed him and later he was in command in that area that was attacked in the Battle of the Bulge. Eisenhower asked for Troy Middleton as a corps commander, and they sent word back from the Department of the Army that Troy Middleton was sick; he wasn't able. Eisenhower replied, "I'd rather have Troy Middleton on crutches than most of these people. "

Q: Of course, General Middleton had been out of the service for quite some time.

A: Oh, yes, he'd been out; he'd resigned from the service. I forgot I was with him in the Philippines for a while and then he retired. He had a heart attack. He went down to Louisiana State University and became its president. But he had been PMS&T down there before, and after he retired he went back there and became president of the university and he was that until the war broke out. Then he volunteered again and came in, and he got to be a major general. I guess he eventually retired as a lieutenant general or more. He was a good top man. There was no show about him. He didn't show off all the time or try to make an impression. It was just good common sense. Well, I've always found friends like that. For instance, Courtney Hodges was a close friend of mine. Bradley was

always a good friend of mine. Collins, Ridgway, and all of them have been tremendous help by their advice, by giving me opportunities.

Q: It was rather obvious throughout your career that you'd never tied yourself to any one particular man who was marked for greatness.

A: No, I never did. I somehow admired Omar Bradley almost more than any except for General Marshall. I think he's the greatest of all the generals—the top commander. I put him ahead of MacArthur, Eisenhower, and Patton. Each of them had his strengths, but they were more or less specialists, it seems to me—Patton as a tactical commander, MacArthur more as a strategic commander, Eisenhower with his ability to coordinate and get along with people. They were all fine. I'm not sure whether Bradley could have done those jobs. I think he could have, because he's a well-rounded man with a great deal of intelligence and just good common sense. I always thought he was one of the greats. He's always been a close friend of mine.

Q: Have you had any recent contact with General Bradley?

A: Yes, I've seen him. I went to Europe with him for the 25th anniversary of the landing in Normandy—he took me along. And I'm supposed to go on the 30th, but I'm not going; I'm not able to. I'd just be in the way. Too much care.

Q: Is General Bradley going to try to make that trip?

A: As well as I know, he's going. They got a group together. I don't know who. Somebody called me up from the Department of the Army and asked me whether I was willing to go. They first sent me an invitation, and it was more or less travel by commercial aircraft or something. Well, I knew I wasn't going on that one. It was too much of a hassle. It wasn't a question of expense—it was too much trouble. Then he came back and said that, I think, the Chief of Staff or somebody had made his own private plane available and that Bradley and his wife were going, Collins and his wife, I think Ridgway was going, and I was invited. I don't remember who else was in the group. I haven't heard anymore from that. I told them I would reconsider. I didn't say I would go, and they were

supposed to call me later. But since then I've had these troubles with rheumatism and tiring and so on, so I decided that I'd better not do it. I would just be a burden to the other people.

Q: Well, I wouldn't think so.

A: No, it's too much. I might get over there and pass out or something, have another of those blackouts.

Q: We were talking about the various generals, sir. When we were here before I gave you a little comparison sheet on various techniques of leadership and how different people approach it. Well, on this chart we've been talking about some of the methods of leadership and decision making. I'd like to go right down this sheet that is used at the War College to try to pick out various characteristics and traits of leadership and the various methods used by different successful generals. The first area covered is decision making, and rather than paraphrase what you've said before, I know what the answer to most of these are with you. But do you make decisions yourself or delegate the authority for decisions in command positions?

A: Generally, I made the decision if it was of any importance. I delegated as much as I could if I could trust the people, and I asked for their help. As I told you before, I think one of my weaknesses is that I never had very many or much of a staff I could depend on and had confidence in.

Q: How do you think General Eisenhower would respond to that, or what's your evaluation of Eisenhower's method in decision making?

A: I'm not sure whether I can. I think Ike makes his own decisions; I don't think there's any doubt about that. He's decisive enough. I'm not sure.

Q: Of the generals that you mentioned that you had known—Patton, Bradley, Marshall, Ridgway, Van Fleet—do you think any one of those or any other general that you knew stood out as being very pragmatic and very decisive?

A: Oh, I think Marshall did. I'm not sure of the meaning of pragmatic myself—it means you've got some rule that you follow without question. I don't know of any of them who did that. You've got to have some intuition about what's right and what's wrong. You've got to know the situation to make decisions. You can't just make it because it sounds good. It has been done before. No two situations are alike. They must be evaluated and they must be decided on the merits, pros and cons of that particular situation.

Q: Looking back on all your commands and jobs, you mentioned that probably Remagen was the turning point of your career, but by that time you were already a brigadier general. What would you say prior to that time was the thing that contributed the most to your eventual success?

A: I had a period of stagnation there for a long time. My biggest job up to the beginning of the war—well, I started out pretty good—I organized the first training camp at Belvoir and was one of the first in the United States. And we developed a number of systems of training—it wasn't a great big one. I think we had 12 battalions, 12,000 men at a time. And we had various courses that would change sometimes; it was 16 weeks and sometimes 14 weeks. It varied according to how many men they needed. Then we started those various specialty courses in equipment and so on. That was quite a good job and a very interesting job, and I had some crackerjack men that were helping me. Particularly a man, General Pence, Arthur Pence, he was my top man. I had a number of others that were head of different departments. We did a very good job. I think we put in the first obstacle course in the Army. I don't know whether that would draw any great acclaim; Paul Thompson was the one. He had been in Germany as a student officer and had gotten his degree at some German university, and he came back. I had known Paul since he was a boy. He stayed with me while he was going to Waterways Experiment Station, and I thought a great deal of him. Well, when Paul got back we were cramped for room for physical exercise, training, and I said to him, "What did the Germans do; they are much more restricted than we are?" Then, he told me about right there in the courtyard, or the city square, they had all this development of physical exercise. Bars of all kinds, obstacles you scale, but something that got exercise. So from that, we designed and built that first obstacle course. And then we built a second one. Well, General Marshall, I think he came down to see it, and he sent word out throughout the Army about this. It wasn't as good as it should

have been because you could go through it too fast. We could run that obstacle course and we did everything we could think of. We had you walk planks-narrow, made out of four-by-fours—cross streams. You had to jump ditches; you had to crawl through sewage pipes, climb over walls, go through barbed wire—everything we could think of, but all in a limited space. And you could run the entire course, from end to end, in about ten minutes; that wasn't enough exercise!

Q: To get through that fast, I imagine you had to be—

A: You went in two or three pairs and yet it was quite difficult at times—had to scale walls, I think, almost as high as this ceiling. All sorts of things that you had to do—went over ladders that you went hand-over-hand and crossed streams. We did what we could within that limited space and things we had—natural obstacles like streams and woods and it was all right, it was an innovation.

Q: Did you have an Officer Candidate School there also at that time?

A: We had one, but I had nothing to do with it. That was separate. It was over under the school itself. Mine were entirely enlisted men, training these enlisted men, draftees. We later, as I say, expanded into various schools such as carpenter school and plumbers and electricians and heavy equipment operators. That was about six weeks or more or eight weeks added to the other courses. And lots of experiments in trying to evaluate people and what their capabilities were. We gave those as examinations; I don't know how good they are. I think they found out something about people's abilities—these tests, I've forgotten what they called them.

Q: The Armed Forces Qualification Tests?

A: That wasn't the name of it. But you tried these different people and you could determine whether a man had the ability to be a carpenter or a plumber or an equipment operator. And from that we would select certain men. They would send in requisitions from the new regiments that when their replacements came in they wanted so many carpenters or so many equipment operators and what not. Well, we would send men who had shown the aptitude, picking some of them out; we couldn't do all of them,

but we could do something. I thought the ALCAN Highway was a great opportunity and a great challenge, and that was a tough job! There were three jobs that were classified. The toughest job, the one that you couldn't see a solution to, was the ALCAN Highway. When we went up there, nobody had ever been there; nobody knew what the country was; nobody knew where the road was going except those few points that we were going to stop at, that was all.

Q: Where the airfields were?

A: So, it was a challenge from beginning to end. And you could never, until we had gotten pretty well into it, know whether it could ever be solved. And then when we hit the permafrost, almost impossible. But it was all whipped. The second one was the most impossible job—frustration—was that on the beach landing. That was primarily due to the Navy. The division there of landing forces was absolutely wrong. You've got to draw the line. You see, in the Pacific, they had the amphibious forces; engineer forces were organized near the boats and so on, and they had the stevedores and everything else. They went out and unloaded the ships, had the boats under their control, took them to shore, unloaded them, and disposed of the cargo. That was possible.

Q: All under the control of the Army?

A: You had a definite dividing line; the Navy was responsible for delivering the stuff on shipboard and opening the hatches and assisting on the cranes and what not, in getting the stuff out and into the various ships, like the landing craft and DUKWs and so on. That was possible because you could draw a line. But when we got to Europe—on that one the Navy controlled all the boats. We had the responsibility for the depots on the land and for unloading this stuff. We also controlled the stevedores, but we had no control over the ships. And it was impossible to get coordination between them. I know time after time I would order a battalion of stevedores down to the beach to unload the ships, and the boats would never show up. They would sit there all night long, just waiting, and nobody would show up. That type of thing. And they wouldn't cooperate at all with where you wanted to go. The Navy could control it all right had they been responsible for landing it on the beach. Then we could take it over—you had a definite dividing line. But that

was all wrong; that was a most frustrating, impossible job and was primarily due to cooperation. The third experience, so dangerous and hopeless-looking I never expected to come through, was the Battle of the Bulge. I never expected to live through that. I wasn't going to give up! I was going to fight to the end, but I just could see no way of getting out of there—that we all wouldn't be killed. But we all hung together and we fought our way out and we got out. Those three experiences I have always thought stood out in their respective categories. Of course, the luckiest thing I ever had was Remagen Bridge. But that was relatively easy compared with some of these other things. It was quick and brought results and worked fine.

Q: I imagine a lot of the other experiences though prepared you for that type of quick decision in recognizing the value of—

A: Luck—the opportunity was there and I was very fortunate to get it. You go a lifetime and never get—you had to have some luck too, you know, as you go along. I could never have been at Remagen for instance. It was just luck that I happened to be there under those circumstances. But you were talking about—you said something about the orders and what not of Remagen. I remember after all those people supported the line, but I had disobeyed orders. Now remember I found it later among Mrs. Hoge's papers, one of those letters that we wrote. What do you call those letters, sent through the mail during the war where all you had to do was seal them up? I told her I expected to be court-martialed. I had the bull by the tail and I didn't know whether I would come out or not. I might be busted and sent home.

Q: I think everybody all up and down the line recognized the value of that, except for—

A: Well, that's luck—right place—

Q: Being in the right place at the right time. But it wasn't something that you got into by planning. Many people will put themselves in a position like that.

A: I know several other people that tried to get a bridge. One up at Cologne before that and I think another tried south of Remagen to get across, and the bridge was blown up in their face and they never made it. But we were just lucky.

Q: And you took, when you commanded the 4th Armored Division, you took two more bridges across the Main River at Tolz also, didn't you?

A: That wasn't too difficult.

Q: With the 4th Armored—the 4th Armored was known as the point of Patton's Third Army.

A: It was his favorite division, no question about that.

Q: Used to have stories about Patton outrunning his fuel supplies. Did you have many problems like that?

A: Yes, we had that; sometimes we had to fly it in. Not often, but we did at times—we ran out. But they would always give it to us and get it in some way, fly it in behind us.

Q: Was that before they put the heavy armor plate on your Sherman tanks? You had mentioned that the additional armor that was put on the Sherman cut the range from 100 miles to 25 miles.

A: Oh yes, that was long before that. Those changes that would take place were after the war. That's when they ruined it; the Sherman tank wasn't too bad as it was used during the Second World War. It was after they began to improve it. Whoever was running or designing tanks didn't know what a tank was. A tank has two or three fine characteristics, and one—the major one—is mobility. But somebody was always trying to put heavy armor on it to protect it. Well, you want protection against—you must have it certainly up to all machine-gun bullets, including the .50-caliber. But beyond that, it's nice to have something; but when you weigh the thing down to where it can't move, it becomes useless. Now, you need a good gun. The primary thing is mobility; your second one is

a good gun and shooting ability. They've loaded the tanks at the present time; I haven't seen one for years, but they've loaded it on with so much equipment and made them so complicated. Of course, nowadays, I don't think they sight using ordinary sighters or anything like that; everything is computerized.

Q: Computerized and range-finding equipment on the guns.

A: And they have to make the crew comfortable and all of that stuff. But in those days, we didn't worry about that. But the Sherman tank was not a bad tank; it wasn't as good as the Russian tank, I don't think. I am sure it wasn't. I think it was better than the British. I don't know. I never ran any of those; I never saw them. But it was more active. And somebody who knew how to use them—like [Creighton] Abrams, he really could use them; and he used his mobility constantly. He could get as much out of a light tank as many people could get out of these heavy ones. Well, you moved so fast because the main thing with a tank was to get behind them—break through and get behind them. Once you get behind a man, you scare him; then he is going to quit. And you get on his supply line behind him, then you've got him on the run. That was the main principle, you should never attack towns with tanks—run through the outskirts, but never get tied up in a town. Go around it and get on the other side; let the infantry follow and go through the town.

Q: You would be in agreement with those who today say we are getting our tanks too heavy?

A: We are. I knew that just before I left USAREUR when we had maneuvers. Well, you had to have almost a pipeline dragging behind you to keep a tank going. We could run about a hundred miles on a tankful of gas with the old Sherman, maybe go a little over a hundred. But our radius of action was about a hundred miles. We would have liked to have two hundred, but I am talking about what you could carry.

Q: There is an example of an order that you had given to the Combat Command wherein you directed them to bypass the town and let the infantry clean those up and just keep the tanks moving. That's when you were heading south to join with the Third Army before Remagen. Well,

do you think with the advent of long-range guided missiles, which are now in the hands of the infantry, do you think that will reduce the role of the tank on a modern conventional battlefield?

A: I doubt it. The tank still has its place; I am not up enough on what's happening in changes. I think the tank, by getting behind, rolling behind there—of course, the machine guns, the .50-caliber machine gun is a great weapon. We had all of our tanks in the 4th Armored equipped with .50-caliber machine guns up on the turret. Most of the tanks were equipped with a normal .30-caliber, but ours were .50-caliber. And when I tell you they burst into action, they really made an impression. When we rolled on these highways, autobahns particularly, just rolling and shooting at everything that was moving ahead of you. Well, you had a lot of destroyed bridges and you had to bypass a lot of places, go through gulleys and up the other side. But that was a great boon to the American Army, the autobahns.

Q: You mentioned earlier two of the greatest mistakes you think the US government made during the 20th century or during your lifetime. I would like for you to go over those two items again.

A: My opinions—purely the effect on the people themselves—but I think, of course, the prohibition era was wrong in its inception. And it tried to tell people what you could do, and too much prohibition—people have got to learn something. There is no question that liquor can be overdone and there were lots of drunks. But the crowd of crooks that were brought in by the introduction of prohibition that started a whole cycle of underworld, I don't think we have overcome it yet. We still suffer effects of it. That was my objection to prohibition, and it made a lot of hypocrites. We didn't stop drinking, nobody did. Even the preachers and some of the old ladies. I know, my father-in-law was a physician, and these old ladies would come up to him and ask him, "Doctor, give me a prescription, I need it for my rheumatism." He said, "No, I won't give you any, Mrs. Bess; you voted for that prohibition and I'm not going to help you out of it. You put that on the books and you got to live with it." He was a very temperate man, but those old ladies and old men would just come around and beg. But they were the ones who were leading the prohibition parades. It was all right for them; the liquor was good. But you were not to be trusted—the common man. Well, of course, there

were a lot of barroom bums and people spent their pay and everything else, but that wasn't as bad as what was going on.

As far as the Vietnam War, I just think we expended time trying to instill some of our thoughts and way of living, our political system, on a totally foreign people, of which we knew nothing. That type of thing may be exactly right for them. And we have no right to dictate to the world that everybody is going to be a Democrat or Republican or any other particular thing. That's what the Russians are trying to do, dictate everybody will be a Communist. I think that's wrong. I think communism is probably better for those people than anything they've ever had. I don't know, that's just my feeling. And it's done a great deal of harm to the Vietnamese people and the expenditure that we had in money; but not only that, the loss of life and the suffering we had among our young men is absolutely unwarranted.

Q: It certainly had a great effect on the will of the American people and the public in support.

A: Why, sure it had. Trying to follow an ideal which we are trying to force on other people—we shouldn't be in that business.

Q: Of course, that wasn't the primary motivation for it, but to try to let them choose their own way rather than have something forced on them.

A: Well, that may have been, but it isn't what it wound up with. I don't know anything about—I was against it from the very beginning because we were meddling in something that was none of our business. Going out of our way. And we don't understand those people and I don't know that we ever will. I don't know the Vietnamese, but I have lived with the Filipinos enough to know something about the Oriental and his way of life and his way of thinking, and it doesn't follow our pattern. It may be right for him and maybe it probably is—he developed that. And as long as he keeps out of poverty and suffering—there is no question that they have got plenty of poverty and anything will be an advantage over some of the lives they live. But it isn't through becoming Democrats and Republicans. It's from an economic standpoint. They could get out from under the oppression of capitalism or whatever you want to call it; and I am not sure it's capitalism, but the top men have all the money and oppress the

peasant type, the lower people. But I saw plenty of that in the Philippines. Few families—some of them were Americans, but most of them were Spanish and a few Filipinos—they had the money and they ran the country and the other people were practically slaves. It seems to me a farmer in those days for planting rice got about 20 cents a day working in the fields. Well, the Mexicans are going through the same thing and have been for years. We are going to have trouble down there if we haven't already got it. But there is a wealthy class that is dominating and the others are just downtrodden and oppressed. I don't know anything about politics, that's just my feelings.

Q: Many attribute to the Vietnam War a lot of the problems we have now and have had a long time; other problems have come in the—particularly in the 1960s and up through now, the racial tension, the drugs, and sort of a breakdown in discipline within the society. What effect do you think that has on the Army, and do you think the Army will be able to recover its discipline that it had before?

A: I understand-I don't know, I have no contact-I understand that it is improving a great deal in the Army. I've seen some articles, I've seen one in the last week or so that showed enlistment has gone way up and morale is higher. I think they are being overpaid; I don't see how we can afford [it], because I think a private gets more than I got as a second lieutenant. A private coming into the Army gets more than I got after going four years to the Academy and graduating.

Q: I guess he does now.

A: Well, I don't know, he may get as much as a captain. I know a major or lieutenant colonel nowadays gets more than I got as a lieutenant general or general, when I retired.

Q: And it all happened in the last ten years.

A: The question of expense, I have no objection to that. I question some of the organization for taking away some of the responsibility for cooking and mess maintenance. I don't see how you are going to take the field without the ability to take care of yourself.

- Q: They still maintain the cooks and mess stewards, but the KP [kitchen police] duty is performed by civilians.
- A: I didn't know they still had the cooks.
- Q: Yes, they still have the MOS [military occupational specialty] for cooks. It's changing now, but we have had a relatively short period of command time for the young company commander. Particularly in Vietnam, the most he could get was 12 months; and it got to a point, when we had the most troops in Vietnam, where the battalion commanders were changing every six months. Do you think this is enough time, or what are your views on the length of time officers should spend in seasoning?
- A: I think you need more than that much time to know your people and for them to know you and to understand their problems and be able to solve them and do things. I've always felt that the most important time in your career was as a company commander; that is basic. The rest of it—some of it is good and some of it is bad, but company commander is really boss—he used to be. I don't know what he is today. He impressed his command and personality on them, and he learned something about them. I don't know what he has now in the way of discipline; I don't think he has the powers that we had in the way of imposing various disciplinary actions. Do they or not?
- Q: Yes, he has a little bit more, but it has to be more carefully used. The Article 15 is still in existence.
- A: I know there have been changes, and there was a time when they tried to take it all away. Everything had to be tried in a court. That is just like telling a father you can't discipline your children. You've got to send them to a schoolmaster or the police. What does the father mean—his word means nothing after you have carried that out. If you are going to lead men into battle, you damned well better be able to tell them and have them believe what you are talking about.

Q: Yes, you better be able to discipline them. The Army now is trying to establish minimum command tours, and for a company command it's 12 months minimum and 18 months preferred.

A: Well, of course, in the old days, I think, it never was in my time, but I know back before the First World War there were command periods that went for 10, 15, 20 years as a company commander. That was nothing; you lost everything in those days. But I think you've got to be a commander for two to four years—two years probably—to get the feel of your people, to find who they are and what they can do and how they react. Maybe after four years will be enough, more than enough, you stagnate.

Q: Well, do you think that time is compressed during wartime?

A: Well, you get promotions and moving all the time. Well, I never have commanded long enough. In my experience they were getting killed or sick or wounded or something. So, I never was bothered with that, it was just a question of holding long enough—

Q: Well, let me ask you a couple of questions to go back to engineering a little bit, sir. We discussed during our first session some of your Civil Works assignments in Vicksburg and the Mississippi River Commission. We have an officer that's doing individual study; in fact, you probably knew his father, General Galloway, Jerry Galloway.

A: Yes, I knew him very well; he was my engineer with the IX Corps in Korea for a while, his father was.

Q: Jerry graduated in the Class of 1957; he just was promoted to a full colonel in February and is doing extremely well. He is doing an individual project on the Civil Works effort in the Corps of Engineers and just a whole study of the role of the Corps of Engineers in the Civil Works field. You have generally answered these questions, but I will just ask them in a block and pass them on to him. How do you view the Civil Works efforts of the Corps of Engineers?

A: I think it is very important. It is excellent when you get out and do some work. I don't think shoving papers around in an office does any good, but making surveys and carrying on projects and initiating projects, flood controls, navigation is extremely important. It fills in so much stagnating time in the Army. To me that was a great thing about the Corps. Those days when the Depression was on, the Army was just nothing. You had nobody to drill, you had no money to work with, no maneuvers; and a great many of them were sent over to these conservation camps—CCC camps—so it was deadly in those days. But we were kept alive; we had plenty to do, that is, in my time. Of course, I don't consider my time on the Mississippi River Commission to be worth anything because I wasted that year down there. They tried to have me write a manual on cost keeping—I knew nothing about cost keeping. There had been a manual written by [Philip] Fleming, which I suppose was all right. It went into great detail. The best I could think of was to simplify it, get down to costs you could keep, not study every detail working out back down to where the pennies went and all that. I tried to get the thing on a larger scale, and I've forgotten it's been so many years ago, but I tried to initiate that. Well, I got out of that; and I think after I got up to Memphis and particularly after I got to be District Engineer, I had some very broad and wide experience, excellent. In management, handling of men, we had—well, I've forgotten now—but I'd say a contracting force—We were supervising them and you had to go and see how they were doing their work. And you had to exercise some discipline because there were abuses, particularly the Negro laborers. I remember one case where I had to cancel a contract with a contractor. He got a Negro in and one of them held a pistol on him and the other beat him to death, right in the office. And I had a hell of a time getting those men tried. The civil people wouldn't handle it; I finally got, I think, I got the contract canceled. I don't know whether that was in Mississippi or Arkansas, but one of those states—could not get anybody to take action. And yet it was evident what happened. Those things you had to supervise. And you had to supervise the performance of the contracts, and there were a great many surveys at that time [by] which we were opening up all of those areas out in the west. At that time the Memphis District extended as far as Denver and down to Santa Fe on that side, down to the Red River on the south. It was quite large. There were a number of projects that came in under the WPA [Works Progress Administration] or PWA [Public Works Administration], I guess it was, for dams and whatnot to be built.

Q: You know, many argue that—

A: I had some good staffs; I had some excellent civilian engineers.

Q: Well, many people argue that a lot of good is done by it, but it could probably be done just as well by the Bureau of Reclamation of the Department of the Interior. But one of the counterarguments of that is that the experience gained by the Corps of Engineers—

A: Well, I think that is the major thing, but I think the Corps of Engineers does as good a job as these other people do. I've worked with the one that you've just mentioned.

Q: The Bureau of Reclamation?

A: I don't think they did their work any better than we did. We fought a lot with them. "Old Pick" [Lewis A. Pick] relieved me up in there. I guess he came in after I thought of joining up with the Bureau of Reclamation and the Corps of Engineers—there is a constant contest there. Of course, that wasn't too good, I think, because that competition and the urge to get the bigger jobs, maybe they were worthwhile and maybe they weren't. But the bigger your job was, supposedly, the better it was. It didn't make any difference whether it was worthwhile; it was a question of how much it cost us.

Q: That's one of the big things that kept the Corps of Engineers in the business, I think, particularly the integrity of the Corps.

A: I never knew any lack of integrity in the Corps, not that I know of; as far as I know, the Bureau of Reclamation is perfectly reliable. I never ran into any skullduggery among them, but we had some hot competition.

Q: Well, do you think your Civil Works experience benefited you later on in the Army career?

A: Well, it was just a question of management of people and funds and equipment. I don't know of any; I can't point my finger at anything specific that applied.

Q: Well, the management of something like the road in the Philippines?

A: That was the handling of equipment, and we had that experience back on the Mississippi River jobs. So, we had experience with heavy equipment and we were able to do it and evaluate what was good equipment and what was bad equipment.

Q: And the management of large-scale jobs.

A: I think that part was very valuable. I don't know any other place you can get it unless you got it through Civil Works, because the Army as a rule doesn't have anything like it even if they turned it all over to them. The amount of money available to build barracks and posts and so on isn't enough, and those are relatively small jobs.

Q: Most of that has to be done by contract now; you can't use troops on it. Do you think the Civil Works effort diverts the Corps of Engineers from Army in any way, diverts the attention of the Corps too much?

A: I don't think so. I think it used to be. I know we had quite an argument when I was a young officer down on first duty at the Engineer School as an instructor, and [John C. H.] Lee was one of those we objected to. General [Lieutenant Colonel] Lee was in the chief's office. I've forgotten what job he had, but we objected to the amount of emphasis put on the Civil Works against the military. And he came down and gave us a lecture on it. "These youngsters," he said we were young Turks and we didn't know what we were talking about; trying to raise a revolution. But at that time the Corps did shunt their military duties, and the all-important thing was Civil Works. They were gravitating to that, and they felt their time was wasted unless they got on civil jobs.

Q: That's when you were at the basic course?

- A: No, I never took the basic course. That was when I was a junior officer back in the 1920s. In those years civil works was everything. Military was kind of class B when you had to take a military job.
- Q: The emphasis is the other way now. The emphasis is now that the Corps of Engineers' primary mission is to support the infantry division or the fighting divisions.
- A: That's all right; there is nothing wrong with that. What I am talking about was that military duty—the military duty of the Corps—in those days was downgraded; and anybody who had to take a division engineer job before the First World War, and those years right afterwards, was in the doghouse to have to do that. All the good jobs were being District Engineers or working on district work. Those were the ones that were sought after and fought.
- Q: Did you see a change in that attitude later on?
- A: I think it was, well, the wars, of course, always brought on a big change. I haven't been connected with the Corps since—my last connection was at Belvoir, the Engineer Center, but actually that was supervisory there—command job—and had nothing—no direct interest in engineering or anything else; it was management. So actually my last job as an engineer was really on the [Alaska] Highway.
- Q: Well, if we go through a long period of peace, which we all hope we do, if that emphasis shifts again where the engineer officer feels that the Civil Works area is the place he should be rather than the military, do you think under that circumstance it would be better to turn the Civil Works function over to a nondefense agency?
- A: I don't think so, no. That wouldn't help you any. If the work is interesting and you've got enough work, keep the engineer learning something as a military engineer; that's all right. But if the work isn't there, you still want to have him available when wartime comes. So, you've got to get him trained someplace. But to [allow him to] just lie idle or just sit and twiddle his thumbs doing nothing because you have taken the one work he's got—I consider the Civil Works very important

and those are dull times. Now in wartime I do not—no question it was very important in war.

Q: In wartime, that Civil Works experience pays off dividends for the Army?

A: That carries you over those dull times in peace when you have very little to do.

Q: But also keeps you trained for your wartime mission?

A: I think it is necessary and I think it is a very valuable training, personally.

Q: Yes, I would agree wholeheartedly. We were discussing the value done during wartimes.

A: It seems that when I was busiest, I read more. For instance, when I was doing work on the Mississippi River, I always carried paperbound books in my pocket on the trips. I would read Dickens a great deal in those days. But I was going back to the day the dam broke, which was how rumors spread. I made everybody read it.

Q: That's the great Battle of the Bulge.

A: Yes, that's a great story. Thurber tells a story, the rumor went out in Columbus that the dam had broken on some river—goes through Columbus—some river; it isn't a big river.

Q: Chattahoochee, Columbus, Georgia?

A: No, this is Columbus, Ohio. And rumors started up and down the town that the dam had broken. So they started to leave town; everybody who could walk and run or had a car started out for high ground. They all took off. And I remember one part of it; they took out past the officers' club at Fort Hayes in Columbus and all of these old soldiers were sitting out in front and they got their sabers and they got out and they said, "Morgan's cavalry is coming," and they took out down the road. Well,

after they had all run until they couldn't breathe anymore and the town was practically deserted, we suddenly discovered that had the dam broken it still wouldn't have ever gotten in town because the top of the dam was well below the streets of the town. But the rumor got started and the whole town just took off for the high ground. I made them all read that.

Q: All your commanders, didn't they?

A: Well, it wasn't only commanders, it was those in my headquarters.

Q: It's said that General Eisenhower was an avid reader, but he primarily read western novels.

A: He liked westerns. I read anything I could lay my hands on. I like history more than anything, but I like humor. And one of my favorites was James Thurber; he wrote some wonderful stories all to a poem—I don't know, there are two or three in that one. Just wonderful. He was always writing about dogs. You remember Rex; they had him as a boy, and Rex was always bringing something home. He would get people's furniture or anything in the back alley and he would bring it home and deposit it in the Thurber's yard. One day, Rex got a big two-by-four. It was about 12 feet long and he got it so it would balance in his mouth and he started home and he couldn't get through the gate—the thing in his mouth balanced like that was too wide. He tried several times and jolted himself. So, Rex backed off and thought the thing over, grabbed the two-by-four by one end and dragged it through. The last thing Rex did was to—they heard a thumping on the front steps and they went out and Rex was dragging an old bureau with the drawers still in it that he had found down on the salvage heap someplace. He was bringing that home and he was dragging it up to the front steps and left it and then died right in the front yard. I knew so many of those stories; I liked them very much.

Q: Was that your primary method of relaxation, in reading?

A: Yes, reading; I read my eyes out.

Q: You mentioned you rode quite a bit. Did you and Mrs. Hoge?

A: I've ridden all my life. Even from a boy. Colonel Hickman was the start of that. I think I mentioned him; he was a great inspiration. He loaned me his horses. He had two racehorses, I remember, he got on a bad debt. They weren't good racehorses, but they were nice thoroughbred horses—wild as could be. But take them on the track and they always thought they could run themselves out, just take them around and around the track. But they later broke them down and they got pretty good. I rode those, and Colonel Hickman had his own private mount that I rode more than he did. He loaned it to me and I exercised that. I had a pony when I was a boy. Actually the pony wasn't mine, he was my brother's, who was sick at the time that they designated he needed to get out in the open and ride a pony. The boy wasn't big enough to ride much—I rode the pony almost entirely until he got too big. Took care of him. And then I later played polo. We used to have great polo games at Belvoir. I never got very good. I know I had a one-goal handicap; I might have gotten up to two. We played a lot. We had a great competition. We were always picking teams, and we would go out and meet after school was over about four o'clock in the afternoon. We had a string of horses there.

Q: So, you evidently remained active athletically practically all the way through your career?

A: As long as I could stand up. I played tennis for a while; I was never an expert. I played some golf, but that took too much time; and then there came a period in there where there were no golf courses available. Of course, in the war that was completely out, no time and anyplace else. Well, in Germany in occupation there were practically no golf courses in Germany, one or two; they may have more now, but we played tennis and then I got to playing badminton. Badminton is a great game; I think it is one of the best.

Q: Yes, it is a fast game.

A: It is a fast game, and I think after a while tennis is too strenuous, to play good tennis. I liked to play doubles all the time, and if you do that a fast game of tennis takes a good strong heart and muscle. And as you get

older I don't believe you can stand it if you [have] any dissipation at all in your other life, smoking or anything like that. But I kept up badminton; I liked badminton very much.

Q: I imagine you stressed physical fitness among your troops quite a bit, too, from creating the obstacle course?

A: I tried to do it. As a company commander I used to go take them out every day for the morning sit-up exercises, and we went through them all. And I led them just as we used to do at West Point under old Colonel Wheeler. And I hiked with them; I hiked as far as 30 or 35 miles a day.

Q: Well, that's turned out to be extremely important and worthwhile in combat, I am sure?

A: Well, you have got to have stamina enough to stay, because you've got long periods when you live a rather sedentary life and then you go soft.

Q: You have to prevent that as much as possible, particularly troops in a peacetime army.

A: Did you read those four volumes by [Douglas Southall] Freeman?

Q: No, sir. I haven't read them all.

A: And later Washington's biography by Freeman was excellent. I've got them all and read them all. And I like Stonewall Jackson—what was the fellow who wrote the classic on Stonewall Jackson? He was an Englishman—he was a peculiar person but a great one [George F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War*].

Q: Stonewall Jackson. I remember the comment you made before, “a person has to learn by doing,” and yet you study a great deal or studied history [and] a great deal of biographies.

A: I never tried to imitate somebody else. You have got to do it your way, but you do learn and you get inspiration from what these other people did. I thought Robert E. Lee was the greatest general we ever had in America, absolutely marvelous.

Q: What characteristics of Lee or any other generals would you say contributed the most to his being a great leader?

A: His understanding of operations and tactics and diagnosing what the enemy was going to do. It was classic the way he carried out some of his maneuvers; for instance, that Wilderness Campaign for the Richmond Defense—with a half or third, at times, of what the other people had. But he was always ahead of them; he would anticipate, he made moves. Of course, they claim that he had learned a great deal about his opponents from his acquaintance with them in the old army. He knew whether a man had initiative or was impulsive or timid by his old associations, and from that he could judge opponents as to what they would do. How much of that I don't know, but he demonstrated in that Mexican Campaign—his demonstration of his ability when Scott went into Mexico. He was absolutely everywhere, knew the country, was all over it. And just his intelligence, his integrity and his ability—he knew what good tactics were. He wasn't making frontal assaults like some of those people were and losing thousands of men uselessly; he was using maneuver, and he did some classic ones.

Q: What modern-day general or 20th-century general do you think came the closest to having the ability of Lee, tactically?

A: Well, I think maybe Bradley is as close as any. I think Bradley is a great man.

Q: Would you say that he is probably the greatest field general that we had?

A: He is the greatest one—that's my opinion, in the Second World War. I don't know that we had any great ones in the First World War. Of course, there we were all bound in.

Q: Yes, that was a defensive war.

A: We were copying other people. We had no experience; we were doing what the British had done. But a man like Bradley or Lee would never lose all those men that they lost in those useless attacks on the western front in the First World War—just mass murder.

Q: Patton was known for—

A: Patton was tough, and he was a great tactical [leader]. I don't think Patton—that's just my opinion, I have nothing to judge it from—I think strategically he was not equal to Bradley, and his lack of judgment in some things—like he would lose his temper. There is no question that he was a great general, but he was limited in his conception. Bradley was so forethinking and he is so kindly. I stopped at his headquarters. I was a brigadier general at that time and I remember when I left the SOS and joined the 9th Armored Division up in Luxembourg, I had to stop by and report in to Bradley before I went up to the 9th Armored. Old Bradley was in his office when I got there and came in. He sat down, as busy as he was and he was commanding an army [group] at that time and explained to me what the situation was, what he intended to do, and all about it. He was just so kindly; it was like a friend, a father, talking to you. And to have wasted that time on me. And so in many other respects Bradley showed consideration for the other people. But he could make a decision—and he could be just as tough and mean as was necessary. But he had resolution, carried out what he intended to do.

Q: Did you see the film *Patton*?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you think that properly portrayed Bradley in *Patton*?

A: I think Bradley was the best character, though he had a very small part.

Q: Yes, it was.

A: Very, very small.

Q: But it brought out a personality.

A: Bradley sent me complimentary tickets when the first showing took place here.

Q: Generals Bradley and Patton were somewhat of a study in contrast, where Bradley gave the impression of being kind, considerate, and Patton was a hard-charging, bombastic type; and they came over that way pretty much in the movie.

A: I didn't think there was anything particularly to be learned from the film of Patton. I wouldn't rate it as high as the movie industry did in acclaim. I didn't see anything particularly about it. I was just talking about his consideration and understanding of other people. I remember after the Second World War, [in] which I was late in getting my second star. I went most of the war with one star; and then I came down to Belvoir, whenever it was, I came back and was commander at Belvoir. And about that time the permanent list of MGs—and they were general officers, before that we were all temporary, you know, and they were selecting for the permanent general officers. I knew who the members of the board were. I didn't ever talk to any of them. I knew I had several people that knew me pretty well. I thought there was one man who didn't like me worth a damn, so I didn't expect much consideration. When I was down there at Belvoir in command, temporary major general, I knew you could get busted back. I knew some major generals went back to a colonel, who had been a major general much longer than I was. Bradley called me up one day. He was Chief of Staff of the Army at that time in Washington. He said he wanted to take his bird dog down to A. P. Hill, and I used to sometimes go down there. It wasn't too far from Belvoir, maybe 30 or 40 miles, and he wanted to know if there were any quail down there; and I said, "I don't know, but we could go down there and look." I hadn't hunted there much. I didn't have a dog at that time myself, but I had been down there. So he called—he wanted to go down there one day. We made an appointment and went down there. We hunted, exercised his dog that nice day. I don't know if we got any birds or not. Anyway, in some way or other Bradley managed to convey to me that I was on that permanent list for ages. I thought that was just

kindness, it was thoughtfulness—he had no reason to do it, nothing else. I had never spoken to him about it. I had no reason to expect any—he even thought of that, but he managed to do it. It was just one of the big-hearted, nice things he was always doing.

Q: Yes, I guess that's what made him so admired by his troops; that type of reputation permeated his entire command, I understand?

A: I don't know how many knew it. If you saw a soldier anyplace and asked him what he was in, he would say Patton's Army. He might have served sometimes; nobody served as an army except if you happened to be inside of an army headquarters because army, division, and corps will constantly change between armies. But I never saw a soldier—nine out of ten of them, if you ask them where did you serve in World War II, they would say Patton's Army; that's a great thing. Patton took the eye of the soldier in spite of some of his behavior in slapping.

Q: Did the word of that get around to the other commanders much when that happened?

A: I don't remember. I remember hearing of it, knowing that had happened and that he had been relieved on account of it. It seems to me that Patton was in command down there in North Africa; Bradley was one of his corps commanders, and then when they got up to Sicily, Bradley went in as a corps commander [and] wound up taking Patton's place—that was after the slapping incident. That was over in Sicily, wasn't it; it seems to me it was. I am not sure, I think it was. That was the time he got in the doghouse and he didn't get back; was sent back to the States, as I remember, after that slapping incident. And then he came over with the Third Army—that's later, after the invasion; Bradley had gone on direct to England.

### *Recap*

Q: Well, General, I went back and reviewed my list of questions and original manuscript and it looks like we have covered most everything, but there are a few gaps I would like to fill in. I'd like to first go back to our original discussion, sir, on your being from a military family. You told