

Q: You did point out, and I thought that was interesting—and I've heard this from people over at West Point during World War II—that there is a sort of urgency, perhaps, being there in a wartime situation. The cadets know that soon thereafter they'll probably go to the theater, and that's given an emphasis.

A: Sure. When we interacted with them, they wanted to know about what was it like, and what's happening, and I'm able to provide their answers as the recent battalion commander of the 577th Engineer Battalion. A cadet who wanted to go engineers could talk to me, and I could talk about the kinds of things we did in the engineers.

Q: Anything else about West Point, before we turn to your next assignment?

A: No. I worked with some fine folks there. Colonel Bob Haldane, I've already mentioned, was the 2d Regiment commander. Colonel Bill Webb commanded the next regiment over, the 4th Regiment, and my classmate Lieutenant Colonel Tom Griffin was their executive officer.

Later I was to work with Major General Bill Webb when he took command of the 1st Armored Division and I was the 7th Engineer Brigade commander in Germany. Then, as I mentioned earlier, Colonel Haldane came back to be the Chief of Staff, USAREUR, when I was in the Office of the DCSENGR.

Then Colonel Dick Tallman, who was selected for brigadier general, went to Vietnam and unfortunately caught an artillery shell and was one of the few general officers killed there. He was a fine gentleman and a terrific leader.

I also enjoyed working with the commandant, Brigadier General Sam Walker, who, I thought, was a superb commander and individual. General Bill Knowlton came in as superintendent, and I enjoyed his time there.

I should say early on there was one other thing that did cause a lot of conversation and thoughts throughout the faculty and cadets. When I first arrived, General [Samuel W.] Koster was the superintendent. He, of course, was involved as the Americal Division commander with the My Lai affair, and so I was there when he was removed as superintendent and watched him leave and General Knowlton come aboard. I guess that happened just a couple to three months after I arrived.

## **Naval War College**

Q: Shall we turn to your next assignment, then? I guess the obvious question is, why did you go to the Naval War College?

A: I went to the Naval War College in 1971. I was due to stay at West Point for another year. I had a call from Engineer Branch and was told I was on the alternate list for the War College.

This was my first year of eligibility, so I had thought I hadn't been selected. They don't reveal names on the alternate list.

This was right at graduation time, so I'm talking about like the 3d to 5th of June in 1971. He said, "You've just been activated as an alternate and slated against the Naval War College. Our question is, do you wish to accept?"

I thought, "Well, I'd really rather go to the Army War College." So, I said, "Well, what about the Army War College. Do I have a choice?" He said, "You have no choice. You can go to the Naval now, or you can turn it down and go back into the competition for next year."

So, I decided that it was the right time; a rather abrupt change but I probably ought to go. So, I went on to the Naval War College.

Q: How many Army officers were there at the Naval War College?

A: Out of about 300 students, there were 26 Army; about the same number of Air Force officers.

Q: The Army War College also has Navy officers and Air Force officers, don't they? That's a deliberate policy?

A: Well, yes. I'd say there were about 26 Air Force and the balance were Navy and Marines.

Q: At the Army War College, there would be also Naval officers?

A: Yes. The number was supposedly 22 our year, as it had been for a couple of years. The Navy hadn't filled its own share and offered additional slots to the Army, so we had 26 rather than 22.

Q: What was the curriculum like?

A: It was basically much like that at our other War Colleges, oriented on national security. The course was divided into segments. Only one segment was maritime in nature and rather focused on the Navy and national security operations. The others were all national, Washington, geopolitical in aspect, and quite a broad well-structured course, I thought.

We had a lot of wonderful speakers who came up. Typically we would be in seminar groups, work sessions in the morning, and then in the late morning we'd have a very well-known speaker of some sort, either from academics or Washington or the services. Then we had a question and answer period, and some smaller group of students, maybe 8 to 12, would go to lunch with the speaker with another question and answer period. Then in the afternoon the speaker would interact with another group in a seminar kind of session.

We signed up for those lunches and seminars we wished to attend. I thought it was a really great, broadening kind of thing, plus an opportunity for exposure to a lot of nationally known folks.

In addition, we had to write a thesis and had considerable interaction with a faculty adviser. Mine was Professor Fred Hartman, who had written several books on national security.

We had a good faculty up there and a lot of activities. In addition, there was another program where, with George Washington University, you get certain credits for the work done within the Naval War College. At the same time, I took other courses in the evenings for credits towards an M.S. degree in international affairs. So, I did that, as well.

China was big at that time with Nixon opening the door to China, so courses on China were big, both at the War College and as an elective with the George Washington University faculty.

Q: So, you completed the course work for your master's degree at about the same time?

A: That's right. My War College thesis, by expanding it and meeting a more rigorous requirement, passed for the George Washington thesis as well.

Q: So, you completed the master's degree in '72, then? About the same time you completed the Naval War College.

A: That's right.

Q: Did you find the interaction with a lot of Naval officers interesting and different, or at this level is everyone focused at a fairly strategic level?

A: No, the Navy works differently. That was very obvious at the time. Just walk around Washington and hear people talk about the various services and how they approach things, or dodge things, or ignore things even with the Office of the Secretary of Defense. You could see some of that independent feeling up there as well.

That is a very fine college. I really enjoyed it. At the time the Navy had a thought that if you were good, you were at sea. In the Navy you didn't have to go to the War College, whereas in the Army and in the Air Force certainly going to a War College was a stepping stone to bigger responsibilities in the future. The whole thought and culture of the Navy was different than the other services.

Q: I hadn't known that. In the Navy you were supposed to be on a ship.

A: That's right, and that came out in the work ethic of the people there. When we got to group things, the people who got together and came up with the solutions in the group activity were Marine, Air Force, or Army, typically—and I know this is a generalization.

I remember that the Navy, the fleet, said, "We've got to have our folks know how to write a staff study." So, it came to the War College that "shouldn't we teach, and have our folks do, staff studies?" The answer that came back from the Army and Air Force liaison officers—both services had senior faculty members there—was, "No, we teach that at Fort

Leavenworth or Maxwell in the staff level course. It isn't appropriate for the senior course, the War College."

You need to understand that at the Naval War College there was both the staff level course, the Leavenworth level, and the senior course, the Army War College level course. Both were there at the same location.

So, nevertheless, it was decided they would require a staff study. Then the faculty decided that rather than individual staff studies, they would make it part of the next group effort. Why they thought that provided a great teaching and learning experience for individuals I don't know, but anyway, it was required in the next task. Then in all the work groups the strawman staff study was put together by either Air Force, Army, or Marine students. The Navy folks would look it over and say, "Well, that really looks good." So much for Navy officers needing to experience putting together a staff study. [Laughter]

Q: Were there any other engineer officers when you were there?

A: No.

### **Military Personnel Center**

Q: So, the next assignment, from 1972 to 1974, was as staff officer, Personnel Management Directorate, Military Personnel Center in Alexandria.

Did you find out about that assignment right at the end of your time at the Naval War College? Was it something you expected? How did that develop?

A: It was during the period when I was at the Naval War College, probably around the January time frame or so, that Lieutenant Colonel Bob Ayers, who was in the Engineer Branch of the Officer Personnel Directorate at the time, called me to see if I'd be interested in that position.

Chuck Fiala was in the position, the engineer colonels assignment officer, in the Colonels Division. It was really then still the Office of Personnel Operations and still located in the Tempo Building beside Fort McNair.

The Colonels Division basically had a single officer for each branch, with two for artillery and three for infantry because of size. Bob Ayers called to say this position was always selected with the concurrence of both the commander of the Office of Personnel Operations and also the Chief of Engineers.

I thought that it was a good position and said I'd like to do it—and so the nomination was made. I knew in February or March of that year that I would be going there.