

A: Well, I'm not sure it really matters. I think it does from the standpoint of knowing, but I think the Corps has got such a great bunch of professionals that, certainly to do the job I was doing, you can take the basic professional and make it work. You're going to go to each district to do that and ask them to identify, as I was identified, five captains. I mean, that doesn't mention all of the civilian professionals that had already gone as part of the Alaska earthquake recovery. I suppose those were done through the system by asking folks to nominate and look for volunteers or look for certain skills just as we do today. So, I think we have the capability to do that very well.

I'm not so sure that any one experience then qualifies you for the next experience. Yes, I'd been through it, but would I know beforehand that you've got to deal with these folks in Public Affairs? It was easily identifiable wherever I was later that I had those kinds of experiences. I think we have the ability to communicate and find out these things. I don't think you can have a ready district or a ready team that's on standby ready to go. I think, as we demonstrated in Loma Prieta by mobilizing 350 Corps folks over a weekend, we can get the right people there in almost no time at all, if somebody alerts us and tells us what they want.

### **Advanced Course, U.S. Army Engineer School**

Q: Around March of 1965, then, I guess you go back to Fort Belvoir for the advanced course, is that correct?

A: Yes.

Q: After having company command, or the equivalent, really.

A: I had not had company command.

Q: Had been an adviser in Vietnam.

A: Yes. Well, by this time I'd come out on the majors list, like I mentioned. Actually, I returned from Alaska and somebody said, "We saw your name on the majors list." I said, "I don't think so." I certainly wasn't aware of lists or eligibility or even what "below the zone" meant at that time, as opposed to today. I guess you get the feeling today like everybody knows where they stand, but that wasn't on my screen at the moment.

So, we got the list and looked it up and I was. I called to verify it, and sure enough that was me. So, then I said, "Well, look, guys, you better get me the company command quickly. I mean, first of all, here I am in my ninth year, I'm just going the advanced course. I'm already late. I really ought to go to company command." They said, "Nope. You've got to go to

Belvoir now, not company command. You've been selected for major, so don't worry about it." So, I went on to Belvoir.

Then, at the advanced course, Engineer Branch came down and my assignment officer said, "You're never going to Leavenworth because you've never had company command."

I said, "Wait a minute. Let's do a little math. We send 50 percent of our officers to Leavenworth and I got selected at below the zone, which is a 5 percent selection. Doesn't that really say that I probably will go?"

He said, "No, that's it. You're not going to Leavenworth."

So, luckily, I did.

Q: Well, I asked this before about the basic course and I'll ask it again, to compare your experience in the advanced course down at Belvoir with what you were familiar with later when you were commandant at the Engineer School. It was longer, I think, to start with, wasn't it? A longer course?

A: Yes. I really enjoyed the advanced course at Belvoir. It was a nice time with my family. We lived in Fairfax Village. There were a bunch of our friends there, folks we would see time and time again, like the Ken Withers, the Bunkers who lived next door, the Barneys. I mean, here was a great bunch of peers, all there at the same time. Chris Allaire sat next to me in class. There was a whole bunch of folks we knew that were all there, so it was a very enjoyable six months. We had two children now and it was an enjoyable time with them.

The course was not overly rigorous, but the course was very good, I thought. I learned some things. I also learned to play golf there. Chris Allaire got me on the golf course, and it was the first place I really took to golf because we had afternoons to be able to do that sort of thing. It didn't have the rigor of the course that was there later when I was commandant. When I was commandant, Jim Ellis had just been commandant and they'd just gone through this whole revamping of the advanced course. He put a lot of effort into it with a lot of people, like "Stretch" Dunn, and really created a dynamic but not easy course that challenged folks—because they said they really wanted to be challenged.

The course that Jim Ellis had developed was in place and I just provided a little fine-tuning and add-ons. We completed the execution that was well under way when I arrived as commandant. It was a much better course than the one I took in 1965. But, once again, I learned a lot of things from that advanced course. The pace was more leisurely; it might even have been more enjoyable.

Q: Did the course at that time include material on the civil works mission of the Corps? Or was it mostly or entirely military?

A: The course at that time included a lot of engineering—I mean drainage, how you design things for drainage. Now it would be TO&E [table of organization and equipment] kind of construction, you know, construction for the theater of operations and that kind of thing. It

had bridge design. It was really preparing you for the theater of operations kind of construction.

It was a lot more engineering than what our course evolved to later, which was the engineers' contribution to combined arms and the overall theater. We had some of both in the more recent designed course. There was just no place that I ever learned civil works from the standpoint of designing dams. You might design buildings, but you wouldn't design dams. Nor did you talk about the planning process that we have now, or operating locks and dams in a system, or anything like that.

Q: I think I've read or heard people talk about there being some of that, but probably not a great deal, in the '30s, in the advanced course in the '30s. I haven't read directly about that, but I think that's interesting, an interesting difference that might be explained by the role of civil works in the Corps in the '30s as opposed to the role in the '60s.

You mentioned several of your classmates were there also in the advanced course?

A: My West Point classmates in that case, or—

Q: Yes. Sounds like there were several of you that were a little out of sync.

A: Yes, Ken Withers, Chris Allaire were both there. Well, you didn't have to go as long as I did. We had people there with four or five years of service. The big driver at that point, in '65, was that we were really starting the buildup in Vietnam, and so people were starting to go and return with the one-year change. So, you might have gone to the advanced course before you went to Vietnam or you might have been delayed going because you went to Vietnam and then came back.

Q: Were you one of the few of your classmates who'd been to Vietnam?

A: Yes. I was one of the few who had been there.

Q: So, you must have been consulted about those—

A: Consulted by a lot of folks who were going there.

Q: Because it's in the summer or fall '65 that some of the engineer units came through—

A: That's right, the big buildup was in '65. Before that time it had primarily been an advisory effort.

Q: I remember reading in some of the Vietnam engineer books about commanders looking around Belvoir for refrigerators to take over. They realized that they probably wouldn't go with enough refrigerators, so they were trying to see if they could find something.

A: Yes, well, when I was at Bragg later, when the engineering units were forming, or other units, they would pack all of those kinds of things in addition to the regular TO&E because

of their recognition that you had to take it when you could. You couldn't expect it at the end of the supply chain.

Q: Anything else about the advanced course that we should talk about here?

A: I was promoted to major there, and we finished up a very nice, but very quick, six months. In October '65 I then went off to the 82d Airborne Division.

### **307th Engineer Battalion, 82d Airborne Division**

Q: How did that assignment come about?

A: Well, my old friend, Jim Ellis, as you recognize by now, had gone back and forth with me here and there. I was before him in Vietnam, then he came in. When I went to the district, he went to company command, then went to the advanced course and then to the 307th Engineers where he was the S-3. He was now selected for Leavenworth because he had done those things and was moving off in the summer of '65 to go to Fort Leavenworth for Command and General Staff College. He gave my name to the battalion commander, who had asked for me as a by-name select to the Office of Personnel Operations. They saw fit to give me that assignment.

So, I went down to be the S-3 of the 307th. That was my supposed assignment. Max Noah was to be the exec. The 82d had deployed to the Dominican Republic, and Jim Ellis had been down there with them, had deployed with them. When I arrived in October they were still there, so I processed in at Fort Bragg and then flew on down to join the 307th in Santo Domingo. I was assigned initially as the assistant division engineer.

That's where I've been so very helpful to—I say in jest, and keep reminding him all the time—to Barry Frankel in the real estate business because my duties at that time were with the Real Estate Office of Jacksonville District. That was headed by Dave Gray, who later was our Chief of Real Estate here in USACE headquarters. I didn't know him at that time, but when I went back as the Ohio River Division Engineer, he was Chief of Real Estate before he moved up here to the headquarters.

As assistant division engineer, one of my duties was to be the point of contact to Jacksonville's Real Estate Office. As real estate requirements came up, we would turn to that office for accomplishment.

When I arrived, there was still a no man's land with barbed wire, sandbags, weapons pointed in anger on both sides, and sniping rounds across the divide in the center of Santo Domingo.

Our 82d Airborne Division headquarters was located at the Dominican Military Academy. The engineer battalion headquarters was in the Trujillo estate, a small villa outside of Santo