DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20380

FOREWORD

This typescript, the transcribed memoir of Lieutenant General Victor M. Krulak, USMC (Retired) results from a series of tape-recorded interviews conducted with him at his office and his home in San Diego, California during 12, 15, 16, 20, 22, 23 June 1970 for the Marine Corps Oral History Program. As one facet of the Marine Corps historical collection effort, this program obtains, by means of tape-recorded interviews, primary source material to augment documentary evidence.

Oral History is essentially spoken history, the oral recall of eyewitness impressions and observations recorded accurately on tape in the course of an interview conducted by an historian or an individual employing historical methodology and possibly the techniques of a journalist. The final product is a verbatim transcript containing historically valuable personal narratives relating to noteworthy professional experiences and observations from active duty, reserve, and retired distinguished Marines.

General Krulak has read the transcript and made only minor corrections and emendations. The reader is asked to bear in mind, therefore, that he is reading a transcript of the spoken rather than the written word. General Krulak has placed a restriction of PERMISSION REQUIRED on the use of both his interview tapes and transcripts. This means that a potential user is required to obtain permission in writing from General Krulak, or his heirs, before examining the transcribed interviews or auditing the recordings. The 22 June session has been classified SECRET and is held in the Historical Reference Section. It is available only to individuals holding appropriate security clearance and a need to know.

Copies of this memoir are deposited in the Marine Corps Oral History Collection, Historical Division, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps, Washington, D. C; Special Collections, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York, N. Y.; Oral History Collection, United States Naval Institute, Annapolis, Maryland; and Manuscript Collection, Breckinridge Library, Marine Corps Development and Education Command, Quantico, Virginia.

E. H. SIMMONS

Brigadier General, U. S. Marine Corps (Retired)
Director of Marine Corps History and Museums

Signed:
17 September 1973

ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT

Lieutenant General
VICTOR H. KRULAK
U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)

Mr. Benis M. Frank, Interviewer

Historical Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps
Washington, D.C.

1973

LIEUTENANT GENERAL VICTOR H. KRULAK, USMC (RETIRED)

Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, who earned the Distinguished Service Medal for exceptionally meritorious service of great responsibility for service as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, pacific, from 1 March 1964 to 31 May 1958, was placed on the retired list 1 June 1958.

A ceremony, which marked the first time in Marine Corps history that all major Marine Corps commands on the West Coast have joined forces for one occasion, commemorated the general's colorful 34-year Marine Corps career which spanned three wars, was held at Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, California 14 May 1968.

General Krulak, a "paramarine" during World War II, earned the Navy Cross and Purple Heart as a lieutenant colonel on Choiseul Island, where his battalion staged a week-long diversionary raid to cover the Bougainville invasion. His citation states in part:

"Assigned the task of diverting hostile attention from the movements of our main attack force enroute to Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville Island, Lieutenant Colonel Krulak landed at Choiseul and daringly directed the attack of his battalion against the Japanese, destroying hundreds of tons of supplies and burning camps and landing barges. Although wounded during the assault on 30 October, he repeatedly refused to relinquish his command and with dauntless courage and tenacious devotion to duty, continued to lead his battalion against the numerically superior Japanese forces."

Victor Harold Krulak was born in Denver, Colorado, 7 January 1913, and was commissioned a Marine second lieutenant upon graduation from the U. S. Naval Academy, 31 May 1934. His first assignment after completing Basic School at the Philadelphia Navy Yard was with the Marine Detachment aboard the USS Arizona, followed by an assignment at the U. S. Naval Academy.

In July 1936, Lieutenant Krulak joined the 6th Marines at the Marine Corps Base, San Diego, California. The following March he sailed with his unit for Shanghai, China, where he served with the 4th Marines for two years as a company commander. While there, he was promoted to first lieutenant in July 1937.

Lieutenant Krulak departed China in May 1939. On his return to the United States, he completed the Junior Course at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, in June 1940, and was appointed Assistant to the Brigade Quartermaster, 1st Marine Brigade, Fleet Marine Force. He was promoted to captain in August 1940.

With the 1st Marine Brigade (later the 1st Marine Division), Captain Krulak embarked for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in October 1940, where he was a company commander. Returning to Quantico in April 1941, he served on the staff of General Holland M. Smith, then Commanding General of Amphibious Corps, Atlantic Fleet. He was serving in this capacity when World War II broke out. In May 1942, he was promoted to major.

Major Krulak moved with the staff of the Amphibious Corps to San Diego in September 1942 and continued as Aide to the Commanding General and as Assistant G-4 until January 1943, when he volunteered for parachute training. He completed training and was designated a parachutist on 15 February 1943. The following month he sailed for the Pacific area and at New Caledonia took command of the 2d Parachute Battalion, I ; Marine Amphibious Corps. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in April 1943, and went into action that September at Vella, Lavella with the Second New Zealand Brigade.

That October, Lieutenant Colonel Krulak commanded the diversionary landing on Choiseul to cover the Bougainville invasion, during which action he earned the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism and the Purple Heart for wounds received in combat. He returned to the United States in November 1943, served in the Division of Plans and Policies, Headquarters Marine Corps, until October 1944, then went overseas again.

Overseas, Lieutenant Colonel Krulak joined the newly formed 6th Marine Division as Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3 (Operations). For outstanding service in the planning and execution of the Okinawa campaign, he was awarded the Legion of Merit with Combat "V". He also received the Bronze Star Medal at the war's end for his part in negotiating the surrender of Japanese forces in the Tsingtao, China area.

Returning to this country in October 1945, Lieutenant Colonel Krulak reported to Quantico as Officer in Charge of the Research Section, and subsequently became Assistant Director of the Senior School. He left Quantico in June 1949 for Camp Pendleton, where he served as Regimental Commander of the 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. He was promoted to colonel in August 1949.

Ordered to Pearl Harbor in June 1950, Colonel Krulak was serving as Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, when the Korean conflict began. In the ensuing year, his duties took him many times to the battle-front, and during the latter half of 1951, he remained in Korea as Chief of Staff of the 1st Marine Division. He earned a second Legion of Merit with Combat "V" in

that capacity, and was awarded the Air Medal for reconnaissance and other flights in Korea between August 1950 and July 1951.

Colonel Krulak remained in Korea until November 1951, then returned to Washington for duty at Headquarters Marine Corps as Secretary of the General Staff, until 1955. In August 1955, he rejoined Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, at pearl Harbor, serving as Chief of Staff. He was promoted to brigadier general in July 1956, and at the same time assumed duties as Assistant Division Commander, 3d Marine Division, on Okinawa.

On his return to the United States in July 1957, General Krulak became Director of the Marine Corps Educational Center, Quantico. While at Quantico, he was promoted to major general in November 1959.

The following month, General Krulak assumed command of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, in San Diego. In February 1962, he relinquished his command in San Diego, and assumed duty as Special Assistant for Counterinsur-gency and Special Activities, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. For exceptionally meritorious service in this capacity from February 1962 until his detachment in February 1964, he was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of his third Legion of Merit.

General Krulak assumed command of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, with the rank of lieutenant general, at Camp H. M. Smith, Hawaii, 1 March 1964, and served in this capacity until he retired from active duty 31 May 1968.

The general's medals and decorations includes: the Navy Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" and two Gold Stars in lieu of second and third awards, the Bronze Star Medal, the Air Medal, the Purple Heart, the Presidential Unit Citation with three bronze stars indicative of second through fourth awards, the China Service Medal with one bronze star, the American Defense Service Medal with Base clasp, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with three bronze stars, the World War II Victory Medal, the Navy Occupation Service Medal with Asia clasp, the National Defense Service Medal with one bronze star, the Korean Service Medal with four bronze stars, the Korean Order of Service Merit second class, the Republic of Vietnam National Order Medal third class, the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Oak Leaf Cluster, two Korean Presidential Unit Citations, and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

CONTENTS

Interview with: Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Retired)

Interviewed by: Mr. Benis M. Frank

Date: 12 June 1970

Place: San Diego, California

Session I, Tape 1, Side 1

Q: You were talking, Sir, about your early days and why you ...

General Krulak: Oh, yes. My Naval Academy roommate, first one, was B. J. Semmes, who was not regarded as a great candidate for higher things because of a bit of academic disinterest and I even less because I was not well adjusted to the disciplinary life. It was recommended to both of us that we not regard the Navy as a career. It turned out as an ironic thing that I was the first flag officer in our Naval Academy class and Semmes was the second.

Q: Oh, really. Did they reach down for him, too?

General Krulak: Yes, and he has, of course, become a great success in the Navy.

Q: Did you like the Academy?

General Krulak: I was crazy about it. I loved it. I was too immature, I went there at the minimum age and less than the minimum education. But I adored it. I was in trouble

of one sort or another most of the time. But, I enjoyed it and it certainly did a great deal for me.

Q: Why did you decide to go to the Naval Academy?

General Krulak: I wanted to go to West Point, but I couldn't get an appointment. My father had a good friend, a senator, named Warren, who offered me an appointment — a principal appointment to Annapolis or an alternate to West Point. So, I took the principal appointment to Annapolis.

Q: You are originally a native of Colorado — Denver?

General Krulak: I was born in Denver, yes. I thought you were going to ask why I decided to be a Marine?

Q: Well, we haven't come to that yet. We're still at the Naval Academy. I think it was at the Naval Academy where you received your nickname which prevailed through the years.

General Krulak: There has been a lot of Apocrypha about that. It really was very simple — I was sixteen years old, weighed 113 pounds and was terrified and I looked like anything but what they called me. And that's just the way it goes and the name stuck with me, that's how I got it and it's very simple.

Q: And you've been known as the "Brute" ever since?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: Both affectionately and I think with some terror in some cases.

General Krulak: I wouldn't know.

Q: At what point did you decide that you wanted to go into the Marine Corps, General?

General Krulak: I decided I wanted to go into the Marine Corps my last year at the Academy. We were at that time, you may recall, in the depression years, confronted with a stagnate situation in the Navy and in the Marines, too, of course, where people of dubious quality, largely because of the inadequacy of the personnel laws simply stayed on and on in their careers. Some of the naval officers with whom I was thrown in contact, I would say, were in this category. I didn't like or respect them and I had the feeling, knowing nothing whatever about the Marines, that the Marines would be different. Also, there was the thought of Marines being involved in a more adventurous and, as I pictured it, less stultified life, and too, there was the competitive part of it. They would accept only 25 Marines out of any Naval Academy class. My class had 43 2 in it and my recollection is that 82 had applied for the Marines; taking out those who were former Marines and

Marine juniors, it probably left no more than 15, and ... I'm corrected, only former Marines not Marine juniors. But in any case there are probably about 15, so there is the competitive aspect to it.

Q: They wouldn't take Marine juniors?

General Krulak: At that time, I recall, that's correct, only former Marines got preference; Marine juniors just had to take their chances together with the others.

Q: They didn't exclude them?

General Krulak: No, no, no. So, all told, I was enough fascinated by the Marines to make my application.

Q: When was your first contact with the Marines? At the Academy?

General Krulak: Oh, yes. I'd seen Marines in parades and I think I met one once, but I knew nothing about them.

Q: Was Major Torrey still there?

General Krulak: When I was at the Naval Academy, the senior Marine officer was a captain named Goettge, Frank Goettge, who, as you know, distinguished himself later and died at

Guadalcanal. He and his wife were most attractive to everyone and made the prospect of a Marine career very exciting to me. Those are the reasons that I put in for it and because of my academic standing, which is how they judged it, I was able to get one of the Marine spots.

Q: Did your academic standing come up as the years transpired?

General Krulak: I stood high in my class from the beginning, I just don't know how because as a plebe (first year) I had no background but I studied hard and I graduated with what now in academic terms is characterized as cum laude. I was not a great brain but I stood high in the class.

Q: Which prep school did you go to — Severna Park or Jimmy Werntz' ?

General Krulak: No. I went to Bobby Werntz'

Q: Bobby Werntz'. He was still going strong then?

General Krulak: Yes, very. He prepared me well to pass the exam but not to do anything else.

Q: You were in the class of '34? And went to Basic School from there?

General Krulak: Philadelphia. It was a ten-month course and there I met Captain Gerald Thomas, whom I came to admire and respect increasingly as the years went on. I went from there, as did all the graduates, to duty at sea, all 25 — actually there were 31, because six came in from the ranks and were integrated into our Basic School class.

Q: May I ask you first, who were some of your classmates at the Naval Academy who went into the Marine Corps?

General Krulak: Oh yes, Buse, Tharin, Condon, Shaw, all of whom ...

Q: Sam Shaw?

General Krulak: Yes. All of whom became generals. Indeed the proportion of generals that came out of my Naval Academy class in the Marines was extraordinarily high. The others included Deakin, Butler, who was killed at Iwo; Parks, who was killed in the battle at Midway, Kleppinger, who left the Corps early because of deafness, he was deafened in a battle practice aboard ship when we were second lieutenants. Seeds, Elmore W. Seeds. All told, they were a fine group and they've served the Marines extremely well. I'm proud of them all.

Q: How about those who went to Basic School who came from civilian colleges?

General Krulak: There were none. There were only six who came from the ranks and they included Hutchinson, Hudson, McDougal, one of the sons of General McDougal, let me think... Q: Is that the one that was killed in Okinawa?

General Krulak: No, no. That was his younger son, this was his older one, Douglas. Parks? ...No, Parks was in the Naval Academy and I left out Nelson, Clyde R. Nelson and Ruffin. I can't recall who the others were. In any case, those who came in from the ranks fell by the wayside fairly early. Miller, Charles Miller, was at Guadalcanal, I recall and Hayden was the other.

Q: Was this Lewis Hudson...

General Krulak: No, no. This was William A. Hudson.

Q: How about Basic School, what was that like?

General Krulak: Basic School was easy. It was not intensive, the instructors were very practical. Their instruction was informal, it was quite retrospective. It looked back to the experience of the instructors "themselves, Nicaragua, China, and even World War I.

It helped us learn a bit about the Marine Corps, and a little bit about discipline, but I remember being offended by having to learn the 21 steps involved in the relief of the front line trenches.

Q: Who were some of the instructors that you mentioned, General Thomas and who else?

General Krulak: As I spoke, General Thomas was the outstanding one, there were other good ones. Batchelder, Merton J. Batchelder, Lee Hoxie Brown, William W. Orr, Nels H. Nelson, I believe that's about all. The head of the Basic School was a wonderful gentleman, Julian Smith, then a major.

Q: Of course it has been said that, by General Thomas and others, that yours was probably one of the outstanding basic classes ever to go through.

General Krulak: I find it hard to estimate, since I don't know anything about the others. I would say that we did not work hard, we were a cheerful, friendly, comradely, impoverished group at $124.80 a month.

Q: It's been said by, I think probably some of the earlier Basic School students, that the attitude of the staff was very much standoffish regarding these newly commissioned lieutenants.

General Krulak: Not at all. The group that worked with us were decent, interested, patient. Indeed, as I look back on the relatively poor performances which we sometimes gave them,

I would say that they were compassionate in the extreme.

Q: It was a good introduction into the Marine Corps then?

General Krulak: I liked it.

Q: And your next assignment was, of course, to go to sea.

General Krulak: Yes the USS Arizona.

Q: Who was your detachment commander?

General Krulak: My detachment commander was Theodore H. Cartwright, who incidentally lives in this town. My skipper of the ship was George M. Baum. He never got to be an admiral. We were a battleship division flag. The flag was then George M. Pettingill, who had gastric trouble and showed it. I began my series of unfortunate, in some respects but in others characteristic, experiences aboard that ship when I was officer of the deck when our mascot, which was a little mongrel terrier, decided that the admiral's bed in his cabin was a place to commit a nuisance. Being the officer of the deck, I apparently was responsible for the habits or behavior of the mascot and I suffered very gravely at the hand of the admiral. That was also the occasion of my bitter experience in San Francisco on the first time when I was permitted to stand a senior officer of the deck watch in port. My first watch, as you might expect, was the mid-watch. There is a

good tidal current which runs in San Francisco Bay and our ship was anchored not far, at least so it seemed to me,from Yerba Buena Island. As a matter of prudence, they would lower a second anchor underfoot; that is to say, drop it down from the hawse just to the water's edge, all ready to drop in the event that the first one dragged.

The technique was to put an enlisted man, a member of the watch, up on the foc's'le sitting on the anchor chain and he could feel if it rumbled, if it dragged. His task was to run back and advise the officer of the deck who then could take the emergency action. During my watch, the little lad on the anchor watch came back and said, "It's dragging." And I ran up and he was certainly correct, so I directed the Boatswain's Mate of the watch to drop the second anchor. He knocked the stopper off, stoppers——I guess there were a couple of them. Anyhow, from a very silent, middle of the black night, suddenly it was the noisiest place in the world, like a boiler factory. There were sparks flying from the chain as it went down the flash plates and we stood up at the head of the foc's'le near the superstructure and watched this terrifying thing.' I was transfixed. I looked up at the captain's veranda and my captain had run out of his cabin. He wore a nightshirt and I remember it flapping in the wind as his jaws were flapping, too, but I couldn't hear what he was saying. We stood there and suddenly were aghast to watch the bitter end of the anchor chain go whipping down the foc's'le.

Suddenly it was all silent, except for the captain and I could hear him. What I heard didn't sound very good. He spoke about several generations back of my patrimony and promised me that I would never occupy a position of any importance in that ship as long as he was captain. He would see what he could do to arrange for that to be perpetuated and of course my cue was to stand still. But the captain kept using the expression — "lost an anchor, lost an anchor, lost the anchor."

Q: Which is a cardinal sin in the Navy?

General Krulak: Yes, and I made the intemperate rejoinder, "Sir, it isn't lost at all, I know exactly where it is." Which of course, just put him into orbit again.

Meanwhile, there is the matter about the ship dragging. The Lord was on our side during all of this foolishness. It had stopped, and it dragged no further and the next day was spent in grousing and grumbling while the divers got down and got hold of the anchor chain and got it back up in the chain locker.

Q: Wasn't it fastened at the end?

General Krulak: It's not supposed to be.

Q: Oh, you're supposed to know to stop it——the winch should have...

General Krulak: But I was so fascinated with the racket that I forgot to tell the Boatswain's Mate of the watch to put on the brake and stop it.

Q: That was really something. Were you the only junior officer in the area?

General Krulak: No. I was the second lieutenant. There was a first lieutenant named Wilson A. Dodge, who was in the Naval Academy class of 1929. I stayed on the Arizona until the late winter of '35-36, but I was uprooted and sent back to Annapolis to help coach the Navy's Olympic crew of 1936.

Q: I might as well ask you that, at this time, I think it was 1934, that the selection system went into effect and you were mentioning that you had noticed during your days of the Academy, the nature of the types of naval officers they had. This same situation, I think, probably prevailed in the Marine Corps also.

General Krulak: Oh, much worse. You see we were behind the Navy. They had selection already, but it wasn't very effective. We had none; when I came into the Marines one of my Naval officer friends, one who felt that I had some promise, was trying to dissuade me from going into the Marines and he used this very prophetic observation: "You and your Naval

Academy classmates will be captains together," meaning our captains in the Marines and their captains in the Navy. The, of course, shortly after my commissioning, the selection system was applied to the Marine Corps. And I recall very well when it was passed, a captain who was about 58 or 60 years old, in the Philadelphia Navy Yard, said this to me, "If they want to kick somebody out,why don't they kick out some of you young guys who don't know nothing."

Q: That was quite a shock, I think it was more of a shock to...for instance, I was talking to someone the other day who was serving in the 4th Marines in China at this time, which is supposed to be a crack outfit to see that all the officers, who were hand selected (for the regiment), failed the first selection. For the young officers, apparently it was quite a shock to see the effectiveness of this selection system.

General Krulak: Yes, but it certainly worked. It revitalized the Marine Corps with all inequities it may have brought with it, it still revitalized the Corps and it was good. I came to understand it a little more as time went on and I'm just delighted that it happened 'and happened then.

Q: May I ask...you mentioned the fact that when you opted for the Marine Corps, that a Naval Academy friend tried to disuade you. Were any more quasi-official blocks put in your way?

General Krulak: Not at all. I would say that the naval officers nearest to me, for instance, I recall, I had a company officer named Swanston, I think he regarded it as a triumph that I elected to go into the Marines rather than the Navy, because he thought ill of me and I might say that the feeling was reciprocated and he never made lieutenant commander. However, they treated us very fairly in that respect.

Q: You went back to the USS Reina Mercedes, of historic note. I think we captured that ship in the Spanish-American War.

General Krulak: Yes. I was simply attached there for quarters and rations. I had no association with Reina, other than to be assigned to it officially. My job was to help coach the Olympic crew.

Q: Did you enjoy going back to the Naval Academy in an officer's status?

General Krulak: Oh, sure. I enjoyed it very much. It gave me a wonderful opportunity, among other - things, to study. We had probationary exams which we had to take. My recollection is about seven or eight of them——two years out of the Naval Academy, upon which our standing on the lineal list of the Marine Corps was readjusted and this gave me an

almost unfair advantage over my peers, because I could study. The crew coaching job took less than my whole day, and I did study — I studied very hard with the result that when the exams were published I benefited in that my standing on the lineal list of the Marine Corps was enhanced by one number.

Q: Oh, really. What were the subjects that you were required to study and prepare for?

General Krulak: Oh, I've forgotten now, but they were just basic military subjects. Map reading, basic tactics, communications, I can't remember the others.

Q: There was a requirement before selection, for officers to study for exams also?

General Krulak: Every promotion, theoretically, involved an examination before promotion. Now it seemed that war caused this often to be waived, but that was the formula. I took probationary exams for promotion; no...probationary exams at the end of two years. I took examination for promotion to first lieutenant. I took an examination for the promotion to captain. I didn't take one for promotion to major because World War II was on the horizon. I didn't take one for promotion to lieutenant colonel, but I did take a promotion exam for promotion to colonel. So, I think I got

more than my share of that rule.

Q: You were at the Academy for approximately seven months and I think I recall reading the transcript of the interview that you conducted with Dr. Mason at the Naval Institute, that you were married in Annapolis at this time.

General Krulak: We were married in Washington, actually, but at that time in 1936.

Q: And then took off for the 6th Marines on the West Coast.

General Krulak: Yes. I came here to the Marine Corps Base, as it was called——and joined the 6th Marines where I was in a company commanded by a captain named Martinstein, who also lives here in San Diego. Then I was transferred to the Engineer Company; they had one Engineer Company in the 2d Brigade. I remained in that company until I went to China and my prime function in that company oddly enough had nothing to do with engineering. It had to do with boats.

Q: I noticed you had two days temporary duty at the San Francisco division of the Coast Guard inspecting a boat.

General Krulak: My job had -- the brigade at that time -- had a half a dozen Navy boats which were used for amphibious purposes. The boats were just the simple 33, 36, and 40, and 50-foot motor launches, but that's all there was.

We had certain adaptations with ramps on the bow, that was self-contained. We had one experimental landing craft and they wanted somebody to interest themselves in this amphibious business. I was fascinated with it so they gave me the job. The trip to San Francisco was quite apart from all this. General McDougal had made a deal with the Commandant of the 12th Coast Guard District to give him a captured rum runner as a barge and they sent me up to select one of two, which I did.

Q: Aside from the military aspects the rum runners were rather fast...

General Krulak: Yes. It was a. handsome, mahogany boat. We brought it down here and it remained for many years. I don't know what ever happened to it.

Q: Of course, one thinks of the rum running as strictly on the east coast. It's hard to recognize that they also had rum running out here.

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: What was the nature of your operations and your training here during this period of time? Of course, back on the East Coast in the Schools, the amphibious warfare doctrine was being developed, the tentative landing party manual had been written, and the forerunner of FTP-167. Had this pervaded out

to the West Coast?

General Krulak: Oh, yes. Sure. As a matter of fact, in the early spring of '37, they had what was then a very large maneuver, in which the 1st Brigade came from the east coast through the canal and joined the 2d Brigade here on the west coast. We had a great landing exercise at San Clemente Island.

Q: This is FLEX #3?

General Krulak: That's exactly right. I remember having a whole array of very interesting tasks; experimental tasks relating to landing craft. I had to do experiments that involved firing machine guns and mortars from boats. I was given a boat to expend if we could figure out how to make it remain on a course, without anybody aboard. It would then be used for a practice target for antiboat weaponry. Then my boats, all six of our great little fleet, participated with the fleet boats in the landing exercises. This was quite a task with the old motor launch to get in through the surf and back out without destroying it. That was the general nature of my activity. I devoted myself primarily to things involved in the amphibious business from the time I moved in the 2nd Engineer Company.

Q: These landings, of course, at San Clemente were rather rudimentary in the sense that there were no proper landing craft that...

General Krulak: Not at all.

Q: ...having you go over the side, over the gunnels with pack howitzers, which I think had been brought in at this time.

End Session I, Tape 1, Side 1

Session I, Tape 1, Side 2

Q: Was there anything unusual about this tour on the West Coast?

General Krulak: Yes, there certainly was. The thing that I have alluded to already, it was my first real fascination with the amphibious business. It had been simply an academic matter before, not important at all. But I became fascinated with it here and with the technique of getting from a ship to the shore. In that sense it was meaningful to me.

Q: Of course, this was something that fermented within your mind and germinated over a period of time.

General Krulak: Beginning then.

Q: Beginning then. And of course, this was your first real experience with the Fleet Marine Force.

General Krulak: Absolutely.

Q: It must have been rather exciting for a young lieutenant. How about the old timers, your commanders that we're out there. Any of the famous names, Marine Corps famous names, characters in the Corps?

General Krulak: General Moses, McDougal, Torrey. Those are the names that come to mind at once.

Q: Who had the 6th Marines?

General Krulak: Torrey.

Q: Torrey had them. He must have been either lieutenant colonel or colonel.

General Krulak: He was a colonel. My battalion commander, initially, was Oscar Cauldwell. And subsequently, the commander of my engineer company was Robert E. Fojt.

Q: Who later became a Commander of the 19th Marines.

General Krulak: That's right, became a very successful and a very respected engineer.

Q: Well, we go to China, to the 4th Marines.

General Krulak: Went to China, started off by missing the ship. We were supposed to go on the President Polk from the port of Los Angeles. It was scheduled to sail at 12 o'clock on a certain morning and we got there about 0930 and it was gone. There had been a threat of a strike and the ship attempted to contact the passengers; we being en-route were not contactable and they sailed early at 6 o'clock the night before. Fortunately, they had a port call, San Francisco, and the Dollar Line sent us to San Francisco by air and we joined the ship there. We went to China in the Polk, eleven knots all the way, and during the voyage,

one of the passengers, a Navy doctor named Workman, jumped over the side of the ship and was lost. Aside from that it was an uneventful trip and when we got to Shanghai, we were met by a sort of "sea daddy," a friend who was to look out for us in the strange environment. Lieutenant Nicholas Ballard, who got us into a French pension and began our very exciting 2 1/2 years in China.

Q: You made some very good friends out there, I think.

General Krulak: I would like to think so. I certainly enjoyed the people, both the Chinese and the foreign community. I was in the Intelligence, the "two" section of the 4th Regiment for my first year or year and a half, and Colonel Price, our Commanding Officer...

Q: Charles F. B. Price?

General Krulak: Yes...made me Liaison Officer with the French garrison and I formed some warm friendships with my French counterparts. Friendships which endured up until now. Likewise, being in the Intelligence, I had relations with the intelligence elements of the Shanghai Municipal Police and with the British garrison. And I formed some warm friendships there. Those of the British" have endured, those of the police have disappeared. Partly, as a matter of fact, because my most intimate friend turned out to be a Japanese agent after

World War II had advanced. His name was Ross, he was an awfully nice guy, I thought.

Q: Britisher?

General Krulak: Yes, Scot. In any case, I did make a lot of friends there and among the Chinese community, too. Indeed one of my friends I still see in Hong Kong and one I still see in Japan. We knew his father and him too. So, all told, that experience was a great one, and of course, it was my first exposure to war. The Sino-Japanese War, which began in its second image in August of 1937 at Shanghai, actually August 13th, with the most terrible devastation, bombs which were aimed at the Japanese flagship by the Chinese Air Force, dropping in the most populous part of the most concentrated cities in all the world, killing literally thousands, and of course, that was my first experience seeing mass bloodshed. Then I had the opportunity of watching the Chinese and Japanese fight and I had the extraordinary opportunity of getting aboard a U. S. tug and going out and watching the Japanese conduct their amphibious operations at Woosung, the mouth of the Whangapoo River. For the first time, I saw an amphibious operation undertaken on a "for keeps" basis, got to see the Japanese technique and their equipment. Indeed I prepared a report based on what I saw, and what I was able to discern subsequently, regarding Japanese landing craft. They had a ramp-bow landing craft

and an excellent one, it was the predecessor of our own LCM. It was fully six years ahead of us, it was sea worthy, it was powerful; it was stable. I didn't even realize then how good it was. But I did prepare this report: I got some telephoto photographs of them at a distance and I was able to get some dimensions. I prepared this report and sent it in to Washington, hopeful that it would stimulate our own landing craft development.

Q: To whom did you send it?

General Krulak: Well, it went through the usual channels and finally ended up in what is now the Bureau of Ships. I will jump ahead only to tell you what happened to the report. When I got back from China, I went to Washington to see what effect it had had. You'll discern that at this time, I was already deeply bitten by the amphibious bug. And I went to Washington to find out what happened to my report. I ran it down into one of the small cubby-holes in the Bureau of Ships. No one seemed to quite remember it until finally some civilian employee said, "Oh, yes. I do remember that report, some crank out in China sent in a report about Japanese landing craft and it was obvious from the pictures, that he didn't know the bow from the stern." You see what happened, the stern was a conventional life boat stern, came to a point in other words. The bow was squared off, it was a ramp bow. Now this individual, knowing precious little about it,

thought that I didn't know the bow from the stern. All right. Finally I said, "Could you find the report?" And he said, "Oh, I guess so." They did, they produced it, they exhumed it. It had been sort of filed and we opened it up and I said, "This is the bow and this is the stern. You're wrong." I explained it to him and finally they began to react. As I got ready to leave, the fellow who had described the crank in China asked me what my name was and I told him. At this point, the report was closed and my name was on the front of it. Of course, he was very much embarrassed. The Japanese did do well in the amphibious business as early as August of 1937.

Q: I had talked to General Hogaboom about this and as a matter of fact, he showed me a picture which may very well have been a copy of the picture that you had sent back. There was a "A" marked on it, does this strike...

General Krulak: Yes. I could show you the report— I could dig it out.

Q: I'd like to see it or,at least, make a copy for our records. The point was, were you at Quantico at the time that Major Linsert was involved...

General Krulak: Yes, I was. But this was later, much later.

Q: Because General Hogaboom said that he was at Major

Linsert's house and Mr. Higgins, Andrew Jackson...

General Krulak: Oh, this was much, much later.

Q: They showed the picture of this ramp file, and he immediately got on the phone and called his engineers down in New Orleans and this may have...

General Krulak: Well, that's not exactly the way it happened but it's close enough. Higgins, as I will tell you as we get to it chronologically, Higgins certainly did more for the ship to shore movement so far as we're concerned in World War II, than any other single individual with the possible exception of Donald Roebling. Back to China—the opportunity to watch people fight and to see what a battle really looks like, to go and be with the Chinese or to be with the Japanese and to observe their confused functioning, which is just like ours subsequently turned out to be.

Q: Would the Japanese allow you to observe...

General Krulak: The Japanese were far more restrained than the Chinese, although, through two friends in the intelligence I was able to get to several of their headquarters and actually to watch them operate but they were very wary about what we saw. The Chinese much less so, but you see, much of the fighting you could observe from where we were. It was almost like a panorama.

Q: You were right down the Soochow Creek?

General Krulak: Soochow Creek. And you could actually watch during the climatic part of the battle, which was in the area of the city on the other side of the Soochow Creek, Chinese, could actually watch the conflict. I have a picture in my den taken which will portray to you how dramatic this was.

Q: There was a flour mill which you could use as an observation post.

General Krulak: There were two actually. There was one called the Foofoone Flour Mill and another the Fo Hsing and we had observation posts in both. They were right on the creek; you were looking down on the battle during the time the battle was there. Of course, it moved across, east to west, and it took about a dozen days.

Q: What was the nature of the operations of the Marines, the 4th Marines, at this time — perfunctroy guards?

General Krulak: Well, first their function was to provide for the integrity of a sector of the International Settlement, to maintain its neutrality. This meant from the

Japanese and Chinese, and this brought on several climaxes when the Japanese wanted to move convoys through our area, and they were arbitrarily stopped, and the general matter of insuring that it was maintained as a sanctuary. This involved manning the Soochow Creek to insure that the battle didn't slop over by someone attempting to make an envelopment by going around through the sanctuary. And, of course, it involved security of the rest of the perimeter of the assigned sector——other nations had it too—— Italians, British, had it and the French in their own concession. They were all faced with same problems.

Q: Your social relations within the Settlement were quite interesting, were they not?

General Krulak: Social relations?

Q: The other VIP foreign nationals.

General Krulak: Yes. There was a good deal of social life and we found ourselves attending parties given by the French on Bastille Day, by the British on St. George's Day, and by the Italians at the advent of the arrival of the 11th Savoia Grenadiers fresh from Ethiopia. Very interesting group— all about six feet tall, handsome, wore sun helmets with goggles on the side of them. They were the most impressive

looking soldiers I have ever seen. I didn't see them do any fighting, but they were certainly handsome to look at. Their colonel was a big, tall fellow named Andreini, who was a great Mussolini fan. And I recall first attending the reception where I came down the receiving line. I put out my hand, along with everybody else and he invariably, instead of shaking hands, raised his fist in the Fascist salute.

Q: How about the Shanghai Volunteer Corps? That was a very interesting group.

General Krulak: That was sort of a Coxey's Army. It really didn't amount to much. During the crisis of 1937, they provided a little security, but their equipment was very old and very modest. Their officers and men were really volunteers in the grossest sense of the word. They were nice people and they did a lot of social activity. But I don't believe they were very substantial in the military sense.

Q: They were members of the Shanghai international community in many cases for a long time.

General Krulak: Yes, Oh, yes. They were local citizens.

Q: Were you able to develop any intelligence sources from these...

General Krulak: Nothing of any great note. No. The best intellignece, in my judgment that we in the Marines got, during all the time I was in China was from the Catholic church. The French had a wonderful network of intelligence sources throughout the church communtiy woven into the hinterland of China. They exploited it and through our relations with the French, we got a lot of good information this way.

Q: General Worton came out on a special ONI mission, I think, about this time. Were you involved with this at all?

General Krulak: Very slightly. Very slightly. I would suggest that if you want to talk about it substantively, talk to him.

Q: I have. He has given us material and I was just wondering whether or not you became involved or knew exactly what his assignment was.

General Krulak: I knew what he was doing, but I was not involved. My immediate superior, Captain Ronald Boone, was more closely related to it than I. Captain Boone was a professional intelligence officer, a Chinese linguist, with a tremendous knowledge of China, and a tremendous reservoir of intelligence resources among the Chinese people.

Q: It's been said, of course, I've always gotten this impression from reading all of John Thomason's stories, that the real milieu, Golden Age of the Marine Corps, was China in the '30s. Do you think this is valid observation?

General Krulak: No, I don't. But, I must say that the portrait painted by Thomason is a very accurate one in terms of the tremendous cosmopotitan life that we lived there, the exciting things that we did there, the exposure to the way other people thought, and, of course, China is itself a real adventure. I think what he was trying to say is that the most exciting and rewarding duty, short of combat, that the Marines had had in the modern era was China in the '30s. And everyone who had the opportunity to be there, I think would agree. It was indeed exciting.

Q: Was it a disappointment when you went back to Tsingtao in '45, just to skip ahead? Things, of course, had changed condiderably because of the war, but did you get any of the flavor, were there any recall sensations, so to speak?

General Krulak: Oh, some, yes. But Tsingtao, to begin with, had a tremendous German influence. Then, in the war, the Japanese moved in and took it over. The conflict in that area was between the Japanese and the Communists— although I didn't realize it then. There was little of

the feeling of old China left in Tsingtao. I went down to Shanghai and tried to run down various of my old friends and acquaintances. I found one here and there but Shanghai, too, had become terribly seedy and worn. There was some evidence though, the old cosmopolitan city still there. I think the Communists very quickly destroyed that, but in '45 it was still there.

Q: During your early tour, did you get to Tsingtao or Peking?

General Krulak: Yes, yes. I went also up the river to Nanking, to Wuhu actually, above Nanking...

Q: That's right, I think you made a trip with General Hogaboom and General Cates.

General Krulak: No. I went with Hogaboom and Karl K. Louther — and Greene.

Q: Oh, he was there. He had one of the companies there at the time.

General Krulak: I was Assistant Two, at the same time Greene was Assistant Three. Then we were both transferred and he had a company in the 2d Battalion and I had a company in the 1st Battalion.

Q: Who were the battalion commanders?

General Krulak: My battalion commander was Harold C. Pierce and the 2d Battalion commander was Cates.

Q: I understand General Cates was a very jealous and very hard driving battalion commander. He wanted to excel in sports, and military matters and everything else.

General Krulak: He was a very proud battalion commander. Looking back, I would say, a very good one. He did have determination to excel. As a matter of fact, I got in trouble with him innocently. My father-in-law commanded the USS Chaumont and when he came to Shanghai, my wife and I wanted to show him his first grandchild. So we got permission to go down the river on the tender and ride up the river on the ship with my wife's father. We went down, and". of course he had great fun seeing his first grandchild, and when we got back I learned to my despair that a pitcher, a baseball pitcher, by the name of "Fireball" Fuller had been sought after by Colonel Cates. He had been assigned to the 1st Battalion, my battalion. Colonel Cates could not be persuaded that my trip down the river to see my father-in-law was not also involved in somehow managing to get "Fire-ball" Fuller, the pitcher. And I don't believe that he ever changed his mind about that, although I tried to assure him

that it wasn't true.

Q: This trip up to Wuhu was quite interesting, I understand.

General Krulak: Yes. The Japanese and Chinese fought on the axis of the Yangtze River. After Shanghai the Japanese attempted to seize control of the Yangtze Basin by attacking up the Yangtze River with it as its axis, using it for supply. The Chinese sought to prevent this by establishing booms, sunken ships, mines, and every other impediment that they could think of, and they were eminently successful, forcing the Japanese to use the land and making the river a barrier. After the river was cracked open, as soon as the United States could navigate it again, they started going up the river in gunboats. The four of us, of whom I've mentioned— Louther, Greene—I guess there were just three of us, Louther, Greene and I, that's right. Did I say there were four? We got aboard this gunboat, the Luzon, I guess, and went up to Wuhu beyond where the Panay had been sunk. We stopped at Nanking and we stopped at Kiukiang got a look at the countryside; got a chance to talk to the people. When we were in Nanking the Japanese were there; they were in charge as a matter of fact. The U.S. Embassy was empty, it had been moved away——I guess it had moved to Peking, and we went to the U.S. Embassy, walked around it and it was undisturbed. But there was nobody there. The Japanese really didn't know what

to do with Nanking. It was more of a plum than they had expected, I suppose, ever to get without a fight.

Q: Had the rape of Nanking already transpired?

General Krulak: Yes. They had done all the things that conquerors do. I suspect that their actions were somewhat exaggerated and in the context of today, it wouldn't be regarded as too extraordinary.

Q: Did you ever make the trip all the way up through the Gorges to Chungking.

General Krulak: No. And I very much regret that. I wanted very much to do it, but it was a time consuming thing.

Q: Nearly 2,000 miles up the Yangtze.

General Krulak: 1,800 miles, yes. And it was a six weeks' effort.

Q: I think the gunboats used to make the trip —— or was it commercial?

General Krulak: Gunboats did it. There were commercial vessels that could navigate.

Q: Was it at this time that Marines were detailed on the commercial vessels?

General Krulak: No. That began much earlier and continued. It stopped in the mid '30s, but they protected those, particularly those that carried bullion.

Q: Considerable banditry was still in evidence?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: I suppose we should get on to Quantico. March 1939 is when you went up to Wuhu in the Luzon. What is fixed in your mind particularly about this tour in China? What lessons learned?

General Krulak: I've given you the two. First, a chance to see war. Some Marines in those days went well through their career without a good look at war, and this was a great opportunity. Second, a chance to learn something more about the amphibious art and then, of course, there was the bonus of a wonderful cosmopolitan existence.

Q: Was there a feeling at that time that the United States was going to become involved in the war and that Japan was to be our enemy?

General Krulak: Well, as you know, it was very common that the Japanese were even then very intransigent where we were concerned. The Panay incident crystalized in the minds of even the most immature military people, such as I, that we were in for it with the Japanese.

Q: There was no question about it?

General Krulak: None whatever.

Q: In the relationships with the Japanese, with the exception of a few incidents in the American settlement, the International Settlement, they were proper...

General Krulak: They were very chilly, they were proper, they were proper. I remember being in Colonel Price's office when the Japanese commander, his counterpart, came to see him—to express his regret at the Panay incident. Colonel Price got to his feet behind his desk and leaned over and shook his finger in this Japanese's face. Incidently, this Japanese had gone to school in the United States and was fluent in our language. Colonel Price said, "You sons-of-bitches will never get away with this." This was in 1937.

Q: No reaction from the Japanese?

General Krulak: No. Very proper.

Q: Then you were detached in May of '39 to go to the Marine Corps Schools Detachment at the Marine Barracks in Quantico. You went through Junior Course at this period.

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: Did it seem to you that the curriculum represented new

concepts, that the Marine Corps was entering a whole new era?

General Krulak: You must remember that an individual with as little background as I had, really had no basis for judging. I went to the school delighted to go there, prepared to accept whatever they gave me as being of high quality because I didn't know any better. I think my counterparts felt the same way. Here and there the low quality of instruction shown through. I think this is particularly true in their logistics instructions which was elemental in the extreme. However, the tactical instruction, particularly that that related to amphibious warfare, I enjoyed very much. As time went on, I came to realize it, too, was pretty elemental. But at least they were trying and I feel that, taken all in all that it was a first-rate course, even then.

Q: This business about the logistics end being weak is a problem the Marine Corps faced throughout the war. As a matter of fact, I recall that when FTP-167 was published, and earlier The Landing Party Manual, they talked about the shore party, that the shore party would be composed of certain troops, such as military police, hospital corpsmen, motor transport, and other working details, as designated. And of course, they never said where these working details would come from.

General Krulak: That's quite true. But our weaknesses particularly as reflected in the instruction there were that it was not specific enough. It didn't come to grips with the requirements in terms of either organizations or procedures. This showed through. It worried me then and it worried a lot of others. But again we are talking about young people who are prepared to accept the views of their superiors with a great deal of creditability.

End Session I, Side 2, Tape 1

Session II, dated 15 June 1970, Side 1, Tape 1

Q: We left off last time, General, talking about the Junior Course and we had just gotten into it. We want to talk a little about the curriculum, about the instructors. I think you indicated last time that it was a real experience, since you had nothing else to judge it by.

General Krulak: That's exactly right. And in retrospect, you recall, I commented that I sensed some weakness in the logistics instruction. By the same token, I was tremendously impressed with what they called the Advanced Base Problem, where they showed us how an amphibious operation really worked. We went to Guam and they showed us how an operation would take place landing at Talafofo Bay. I was tremendously impressed by this; it was exciting.

Q: These were all initial studies actually based on Earl Ellis' early plans for Micronesia.

General Krulak: Oh, I guess the Ellis effort had something to do with it, yes. But mainly the staff at the Marine Corps Schools put it together and it was an exciting thing. And I enjoyed it. Another thing I enjoyed was an almost incredibly detailed presentation on Gallipoli, run by General Thomas.

Q: That was his favorite lecture. I understand he did considerable study...

General Krulak: It was first-rate.

Q: There was something very interesting, I think, about the Schools in this period, which I think they haven't carried on, that's considerable military history in the curriculm. I think the Gallipoli problem is where military history took about 50-hours of the course. Is this correct?

General Krulak: I don't remember. But I should say that their dedication to military history was minimal. They could have done a great deal more.

Q: Except for Gallipoli?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: What else did they emphasize, General?

General Krulak: That's about it.

Q: Did you stay on at the Schools? You went to the FMF.

General Krulak: No. I went to the FMF. To the 1st Marine Brigade where I became the Assistant Four of the Brigade. I had the job until sometime after we went to Cuba. We went to Cuba for the purpose of providing "growing room" for the brigade to become the 1st Marine Division. On the day that the brigade became the 1st Marine Division I had two jobs -- I was the Assistant Four and incidnetly Brigade Supply Officer; and second, I was aide to General Smith. After

the division was formed, I was placed in command of the newly organized unit called the 1st Antiaircraft Machine-gun Battery, which was a .50 caliber batter, a part of the original division Table of Organization. So I was in the division on the day that it was created and that's the job I had the company.

Q: February 1st, 1941, I believe.

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: Were you present on board the ship when General Smith read the Organization Orders?

General Krulak: Yes. As a matter of fact, I was there. I was his aide at that time.

Q: The thing that strikes me, if you will recall... I have a picture of General Smith reading the Organizational Orders in dress whites and he had on an overseas cap.

General Krulak: I remember it very well. I was there and had one, too.

Q: This is an interesting uniform, something that I had not run across before.

General Krulak: It was General Smith's own idea. Although

it was officially accepted, its purpose was to make it a little

bit easier for you to wear whites in the tropics and still not have to carry a cap around.

Q: Good thinking. But it didn't go to well I'm afraid.

General Krulak: No. It didn't.

Q: This Antiaircraft Machine gun outfit was something apart from the Defense Battalion Antiaircraft.

General Krulak: Oh, absolutely. It was a divisional organization -— an element of what they then called Division Special Troops.

Q: That was under the "D" Tables of Organization?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: Was there anything unique about the preparations at this time of the division and the brigade and the change over to division status? This was something that, the idea of a Marine division was a concept that not many officers -— not many people thought of, certainly, in the '30s.

General Krulak: No. When it was decided that there were to be Marine divisions and the Table of Organization was established, the system really worked quite well. The Recruit Depots turned out a large number of recruit graduates and remember, there was no such thing as ITR. The boys came from Parris Island to Cuba. They were organized in company-sized

increments. They were absorbed and somehow it worked. Meanwhile, of course, the Basic School had expanded production and the ROTC was becoming fruitful. No, it worked and it was only a brief moment after the division was formed that we went to Culebra for a maneuver. I wouldn't say that the maneuver was the smoothest thing that ever took place but it was indeed a maneuver.

Q: Before we get into your duty as officer in charge of Amphibious tractor Training because this is certainly a major element, I'd like to ask you to comb your memory for ' some personal insights, personal recollections of Holland Smith, for instance.

General Krulak: Oh, sure. We'll have to digress in terms of time. I first came to know him when I was a midshipman. His son and I were good friends; we were on the Naval Academy crew together. I met Major and Mrs. Smith when they came down from Philadelphia to see their son my second year at the Naval Academy. We gradually became friends. They moved to Washington and my girlfriend lived in Washington. I had a chance to see them occasionally and the more I saw General Smith, the more I was able to compare and contrast him and his very practical approach to the affairs of being a public servant with those of the Navy company officers of whom I spoke earlier.

I admired him because I could understand him. I became a Marine largely because of his quiet effort to make his son become a Marine. He fired sort of a scattergun attack and more of the pellets got in my blood stream than in his son's. I saw relatively little of General Smith until after I had graduated from the Basic School and gone to sea and come back to Annapolis as a crew coach. I saw him occasionally then. He was then stationed in Washington at Marine Corps Headquarters. Then, when I returned from China he was the man I went to to get help with my ideas about boats. I don't know whether this is the time,to talk about my venture into model building, but I had such a keen idea of what I wanted in a landing boat that even with my very clumsy hands I felt I simply had to build a model. And I did. I built a model and I showed it to him. He immediately saw that, while it probably wasn't a wholly practical idea, at least here was a Marine who was thinking about a serious problem. He took me by the hand into General Holcomb—model and all -— and he was my spokesman. He was the one who got General Holcomb interested. General Holcomb then became fascinated and I'm sure at General Smith's instance took me to the Navy Department. I sold my ideas about boat armor and antigas protection and boat armament to anyone who would listen. This never would have taken place had not Holland Smith been an active participant. As to personal things, I spoke about being his aide, I found him, of course

to be a tremendously spiritual man, willing to be regarded as a practicing Christian and anxious to do the things that a practicing Christian is supposed to do. He had a warm feel for everyone around him. Whether it was his clerk or his orderly, or his aide or his cook; we all had the same attitude for him. Yet he was a terrifying man if he elected to be mad and he never lost his temper. He just elected to be mad. Once he told me that the greatest weapon that one can have is controlled anger, and the greatest defect that one can have is uncontrolled anger. Everyone around him adored him because they knew where they stood with him. I don't know what to say farther than that right now. I can get later on into the specific war. I don't think we ought to talk about that.

Q: How about the other members of the staff? There were some pretty prestigious individuals who had...

General Krulak: Now we're back in Cuba. Other members of the staff. There were indeed, some great men -- Selden, was his G-l and he was bright, agressive and resolute. The Chief of Staff was Brewster, one of the most warmest, most gentle individuals one could ever see. Also on the staff were people like Verne McCaul, a tremendous professional in the aviation business. The G-3 for most of the time was -- Nimmer, a man of almost boundless energy, a sort of a McNamara type. The supply officer was Leonard Rea; he was my boss, and a more

practical, down-to-earth man you could never find. He just was first-rate. And here I am against the backdrop of a great deal of experience now. Looking back on these people and measuring them against what I know and I say they were good men. Schrider, another aviator, a top-notch fellow; Weller, a distinguished pioneer in the area of naval gunfire and who by his determination and warm personality, almost single-handedly, was able to seduce the Navy into paying attention to the need for effective shore fire control. They were good people; just no question about it -- every one of them.

Q: The people you named came into the Marine Corps, with the exception of Selden, after World War I?

General Krulak: Yes. That's right.

Q: The thing that strikes me...

General Krulak: Maybe Nimmer. I'm not sure.

Q: Nimmer possibly came in early. But the thing that strikes me, for instance, your regimental commanders were very senior men with well over 20 years...

General Krulak: They were real professionals in the measure of that day, but they were too old to be regimental commanders in the bitter war that we ran into in the South Pacific. That's

the simple fact of it. Noble, as an example, a real pro, he knew what he was doing. He'd been around the track, but the demands of that jungle war were too great for an individual of his years.

Q: You had Cates, a Hunt, a Sims (Amor Leroy)...

General Krulak: For a while, yes. No, Sims was a battalion commander.

Q: Some of these people certainly had considerable time in the Marine Corps. And yet I marvel at a man like Cates, who was a well-decorated World War I hero, went on to run a regiment in a very fine fashion.

General Krulak: Yes he did. As a matter of fact, they measured up very well. The real problem, of course is in endurance and it took a bite out of them.

Q: Suppose we talk about your tour as an officer in charge of amphibian tractor training...

General Krulak: We're back in Cuba. It came about this way. Recall that I told you that General Smith was very mindful of my interest in amphibious matters. And that he had helped me when I came back from China to build a boat and to sell some ideas. That, incidentally, was when I was a student at Quantico. I did that on my own. When we were in Cuba, he was notified that the Marine Corps had procured an experimental

aluminum amphibian vehicle from Donald Roebling, and that had gone through some dubious tests in Quantico where it had come a cropper a couple of times. Not because it was conceptually bad, but because no one knew what its threshold of performance was. This was going to be sent to Cuba for practical field tests. Well, they sent the LVT aboard a Navy ship with two men -- two corporals, their names were Raper and Gibson. When General Smith heard they were on their way, he turned to me. At this time I was the Assistant Four, the Brigade Supply Officer and his Aide. And he said,"You are really interested in this thing; I'm going to designate you as the officer in charge of these tests." When the ship arrived, I went aboard and we took the amphibian off. I had not seen it before; I was as strange to it as everyone else.

Q: You hadn't seen the pictures in Life?

General Krulak: Oh, I'd seen photographs, but I had not seen the vehicle. Raper and Gibson gave me a very quick rundown on its strengths and weaknesses and I spent about a week or ten days establishing in my own mind the parameters of a proper test, trying to determine what we should try to do with it and what we should not try to do with it. Then we laid out a program and this involved taking it with us when we went on maneuvers to Culebra. As is usually the case, when you are involved in something experimental, you become instinctively

enthusiastic. I began to fall into the same entrapment as had my predecessors, and there were only a couple of them in the amphibian tractor business, contending it could do things that it couldn't do. What I was really contending was that some day it could do these things, but this one couldn't do much. It had a Lincoln Zephyr engine in it, automobile engine, it was steered by friction on the two tracks; you stopped one by a brake, while the other one spun in the water. It had a very complex transmission and the final drive system that over-heated as a way of life. But worst of all was the track. The track had a series of neoprene sealed bearings, bearings sealed with something, maybe it wasn't neoprene. But it was something like that. They wore quickly; the sand would get into them and that would simply accelerate the wearing and then you would have two dissimilar metals in salt water, and overnight you'd have an electrolytic situation which would cause them to freeze up. I soon found that the track was no good. Colonel W. W. Rogers came to Cuba after I had been working on this thing for about a month and on his agenda this appeared as one thing -- check up on the test of the amphibian vehicles. He sent for me and he said, "Can you tell me what you found wrong with the -- amphibian tractor?" And I gave him a very brash answer; which I've regretted ever since. I remember it exactly. I said, "Do you have several hours?", which was a rude thing to say. And my recollection is he let me know it.

In any case, there were many things wrong with it. I put the amphibian over sand, over rough beach. We gave it tests in rough water. We then took it to Culebra where we could do a little bit more with coral. I was keenly interested in seeing what it could do on the coral.

Q: This is an outgrowth of the Guam problem, is it not?

General Krulak: Yes. I suppose so. I never thought of it, but you're probably right. We were getting along making our records -- Raper, Gibson, and Krulak, which were the total test crew, when Admiral King came down. We were aboard the Wyoming and I persuaded -- and it wasn't difficult -- General Smith to ask Admiral King if he wouldn't like to see this new vehicle. He said he was sort of busy, but yes he would. We just happened to have it afloat right near the Wyoming and we ran it about the ship a little bit. I came up the accommodation ladder then to answer questions of the Admiral. He asked several and I said, "Sir, I'd like very much to give you a ride." He said he was pressed for time and I leaned on him and said, "Well, it will just be a short ride." So he came aboard and no one else volunteered to "come and he didn't ask anyone else. It was just Smith, an aide, Raper, Gibson, and in the LVT...

Q: King.

General Krulak: King. Not Smith. So we cruised about a little bit and I said, "Now, let me show you what it can do on this coral, Admiral." He looked at his wrist-watch and said, "I don't have very long." He was in his whites, incidently, "I don't have very long." And I said, "It will just be a minute." I was just going to show him how we got right over this coral. Well, we didn't. The track broke and we were in water about 4, 3 1/2 or 4 feet deep and there we were. We weren't going to get -- off and no boat could get to us. He was looking at his wristwatch and some of the things he was saying to me were not print -able. Finally, we were only about 50 yards from the beach, so he clambered over the side of that LVT and with his aide, waded ashore and was picked up in a vehicle and taken over to Dewey and went about his business. I'm sure he. never forgot me and he never forgot what the word, the letters LVT meant either. We finished the test. The vehicle was packed up and returned to Quantico and we outlined all of the things we thought needed to be done to improve and of course, most of them were obvious. I'm sure some of these tests were helpful and from then certain benefits accrued to the fabrication of the first production model.

Q: I think Walter Rogers at this time was head of Plans and Policies.

General Krulak: That's right.

Q: So he would have a natural interest in the tests.

General Krulak: That's right.

Q: Fortunately, for the Marine Corps,in the American war effort, the disabilities could be overcome as far as the fabrication...

General Krulak: Not entirely overcome,but they could be diminished greatly. A better engine -— the first LVT had a better engine, the first LVT had a somewhat better track, had a better suspension, had a better final drive, its water-tight integrity was far improved. All told, it was a pretty good vehicle considering the brief time of experimentation and development.

Q: You went back to Quantico in April and I notice that in mid-April of 1941 you were on special temporary duty in connection with conferring with CinCLant regarding transports and floating equipment for the FMF. Do you happen to recall this offhand?

General Krulak: This was after we returned. Yes, and it didn't amount to a great deal. What we were -- doing at this time was wrestling with LCM problem. At this time, there were in existence when we went to Cuba and about the time we

returned, only three tank-carrying landing craft in our Navy. Q: That's all?

General Krulak: Yes. Three. My recollection is one was forty feet long and the other two were forty-five. They didn't amount to much. A large contract had been let for the production of some 1,100 LCMs by the American Car and Foundry Company of a design developed by the Bureau of Ships.

Q: These were the Eureka boats?

General Krulak: No, this was not. The Eureka boat was a 30 or 36 foot spoonbill Higgins landing craft. No, we're talking about a steel tank-carrying landing craft. There were two basic philosophical differences in tank-carrying landing craft at this period in history, which was mostly experimental. One was a self-bailing type,known as a deck type, where the tank sat above the water line. The other was the well-deck type, where the tank sat below the water line. The benefits of each are manifest. The first type, more likely to survive if -- there were a hole shot through it. The second type, more stable because the load is much lower. The Bureau design was a deck-type where the tank sat high in the air. At this time, Mr. Higgins had developed a type of his won, which was the reverse -— a well-type. There was a big competition because Higgins had a good friend, named Harry

Truman, who was the head of the Truman Committee in the Senate, and he told Truman that things weren't going well on this American Car and Foundry Company contract and that he would like to see a competitive test. The test was conducted off Fort Story near Norfolk. The boats each carrying a full load, I think the full load was 12-15 tons, maybe 20, I don't remember, went from inside Norfolk harbour, out around Cape Henry Light and landed on the Camp Pendleton beaches. This was the deal. The bureau-type design, the American Car and Foundry Company boat, never even got to the test site. It upset. The Higgins boat, Higgins landing craft went on and conducted its landings and retractions successfully a couple or three times. This caused tremendous consternation. The design was changed forthwith and for this we owe a great debt of gratitude to the stubborness of Higgins and the confidence of Truman in what Higgins said. That's what that little entry in the book means.

Q: This was before the ramp bow had been set into the Higgins-type craft?

General Krulak: No. It was about the same time. We asked Mr. Higgins—I asked Mr. Higgins—if he could chop that spoon-bill off and put a ramp in the 36-foot boat. Higgins was really a "can do" personality, but in this case he said, "The spoon bill is really the gut of "this design.

And I'm not sure I can do it. It would mean an entirely different boat, but if you need a ramp-type boat, I'll build one." So he built some; all somewhat different from the other, but, by George, they looked like the LCVPs of the current era. Not much difference. Higgins did it and he did it not based on experimentation, but based on just instinct. Those we used, the few we had, in the maneuver at New River in 1941 and a few -- my recollection is maybe four, five or six of the tank carriers also, which he built and each one of those were different because he was learning. He built them in the street, City Park Avenue in New Orleans because he had no other place to build them. To get the shafting for the propeller shaft for them, he had none and brass was rationed, his people went over into Mississippi and stole it from the Standard Oil Company.

Q: Two things. Of course, the Navy's BuShips was all up in arras or all up in ferment because their design had been shot down. Did they readily accept the Marine Corps tested and approved...

General Krulak: It wasn't Marine Corps-tested and approved, at all. The Navy did all the testing. Totally a Navy thing and all decisions were Navy decisions." I should say, of course, that we sought to influence them by our conversation, but no, they were Navy decisions.

Q: The other thing is -- was there any acceptance on the part of old Marines? Was there an old school who was in power or in relatively high rank that didn't accept this new concept, this new amphibious warfare, doctrine and these techniques?

General Krulak: To the contrary, the old breed in the Marine Corps, where amphibious matters were concerned, had been so starved for a decent ship-to-shore conveyance that they saw this as just a very great development indeed. If you will look over there on the wall, there is a picture of the real predecessor of our landing craft of this era. That boat was built in the '20s, and experimental landing craft. The boat was actually lost between San Diego and San Clemente in 1937 in the spring.

Q: That's one of those that sunk going to San Clemente?

General Krulak: Yes. There was only one and that's it. But that had a bow ramp and it had protection. You see the steel canopy, that was the idea of the day. It was a metal boat throughout, turn screw; two engines; 8 knot speed; very heavy-perhaps 35 tons. No, the old breed saw every desirability in what was going on.

Q: This time you were quite busy in '41 and I noticed that General Smith's Amphibious Training Corps supervised the I Corps, Provisional, training program on the east coast. Landing exercises, landing training, is that correct?

General Krulak: This is actually referring to the Onslow Beach maneuver.

Q: General Smith's command, if I recall, underwent many changes -- the name changed.

General Krulak: You're quite right. And it underwent changes in composition, of course, too, because from time to time he had certain authorities respecting the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Devens and, of course, our own forces on the east coast. The landing at New River embodied both the 1st Marine Division and the 1st Infantry Division. Neither one of them were at full strength and we had many coordination problems because — let's face it — we did not talk the same language. They had no amphibious background whatever. They were completely oblivious to the terrors of amphibious warfare under circumstances where you were incorrectly equipped. They were enthusiastic enough and they were keenly interested in not letting the Marines realize how ignorant they were, but their ignorance was quite visible. I might say we had our share of ignorance, too.

Q: I didn't know until now that you went to Iceland to arrange for the 1st Provisional Brigade to go up there.

General Krulak: Yes. That was another "wet-wash job" that

General Smith gave me. When it was determined that the Marines were to put a brigade into Iceland, General Smith was asked to put together a group to go up and lay on the arrangements. The group he selected consisted of Lieutenant Colonel Linscott, who was on his staff; Captain Dean Roberts, an aviator; Bob Bare; and me. Our purpose was to lay the ground work in terms of what supplies, equipment and facilities we would take over from the British. Would their 50 octane fuel be suitable for our vehicles? Did we want their food? What did they have in the way of accommodations? Housing? And just otherwise lay the groundwork for an orderly transition, which we did. We flew up -- we went by train to New York from Washington, I found to my utter despair, that I had forgotten my overseas cap. It was all very secret. We were traveling in civilian clothes to New York, so I called a friend, Major Edson. I said, "Would you bring me an overseas cap to the train station as fast as you can; the train leaves at such and such a time." And Edson said, "Sure." Well, two things turned out to be wrong with that deal. First, Edson had a small head, smaller even than mine. Second, I didn't specify a winter hat and this was in early summer -- May is my recollection. So he brought me a summer overseas cap, too small. I went without until we got to New York, where at the Marine Corps Barracks at the Naval Air Station, Floyd Bennett; I got an

enlisted man's cap. We flew up in a PBY at about 110 miles an hour, stopping once at Argentia, for a little rest, a few hours rest and to draw cold weather clothing for the flight, since the airplane is not heated. Then we flew another 15 hours or so, landing in Reykjavik, and we went aboard an AVD, which is a converted destroyer, converted as a tanker for fuel for the patrol planes. That was our base during the time we were there. We were there about a week or so and we got a good look at the Iceland situation. We came back with recommendations which I think, were reasonably sufficient for the Marine forces that were then marshalling to go.

We found the British in pitiable condition; food of the worse humble sort-built around canned Argentine beef, tea, gray flour and jam. Their Nissen hut quarters were poorly heated. The soldiers did not even have bunks. I was the G-4 representator, I recommended that "we take none of their supplies.

Q: Why did you go up to New York by train?

General Krulak: I don't know.

Q: Was it sort of a covert-type operation?

General Krulak: Yes. I just don't remember why we went by train, but we did.

Q: When you returned you reported back to take up your duties as Assistant Four and Aide.

General Krulak: Yes. This was the time that General Smith was operating -- I've forgotten whether it was Amphibious Corps, Atlantic, or Amphibious Force, Atlantic, or I Corps Provisional, or 1st Joint Training Force. The names were all descriptive of about the same job.

Q: He reported to whom? The Atlantic Fleet Commander? Was this still King? And his headquarters were in Washington?

General Krulak: Yes. At Norfolk.

Q: There was a considerable relationship or constant referring with Admiral King's staff, was there not at this time?

General Krulak: A great deal. Mostly our relationships turned upon doctrinal matters. You see really we were getting down to the guts of how to do it. We had a lot of doctrinal problems -- many times turning upon the touchy question of command relations. Who was responsible at what moment and in what degree for what task and project? The interface between the shore and the beach parties -- great trouble here, in terms of competing responsibilities and authorities. General Erskine's resolution shows through very often in these deliberative periods. He was tough, he knew his business, and he wasn't to be dissuaded.

Q: Didn't FTP 167, which after all was the Bible for conduct of amphibious operations, spell our specifically at what point the landing force command would take over.

General Krulak: Well, FTP-167 was fine. But we found that FTP-167 wasn't sufficiently detailed. There is where the whole thing turned.

Q: This is the area which caused such great consternation, so many problems between General Vandergrift and Admiral Turner later at Guadalcanal?

General Krulak: Oh, I think so. We had nothing but FTP-167 at that period. It was good, but it was insufficiently detailed.

Q: Instead of my asking questions, why don't you relate, Sir, what happened during the rest of '41.

General Krulak: If I recall, in September of '41 we moved to the west coast. Would that be correct by the chronology?

Q: No, sir. I don't think. You were still east in '42. You didn't move until much later. You had the designation changed monthly almost. In July you became the 1st Joint Training Force. Then in August it became Atlantic Amphi-bious Force. And you had the Joint Training Exercise at New River in August, which you had already mentioned. Then you went up to Washington in September to work with new ships on the Auxiliary Vessels Board.

General Krulak: Yes, but that was sort of a temporary duty thing. I didn't stay there long.

Q: And then you had temporary duty with the Army in October --a conference of some sort.

General Krulak: With the Army?

Q: Yes, sir. In October and again in November.

General Krulak: Oh, yes. These were routine things in Norfolk where we just again got together and talked about the detailed application of the principles and they were little more than educational for the Army.

Q: And, of course, war borke out in December. For a matter of history, where were you and what were the circumstances that you learned, into which you learned that...

General Krulak: I was in Quantico, at home, and my wife's uncle, who was a lieutenant colonel in the Army just happened to be visiting us, when we heard it on the radio, just as everyone else did. And my instinct was just the same as any other professional's. I went to my headquarters. I found that everyone else had the same reaction and there we were.

Q: As I recall, as General Berkeley told me, I think he was Communications Officer at Quantico at the time; all communications were cut off shortly after as a security cover for Winston Churchill's visit to this country. Do you recall that?

General Krulak: Yes, I do, but it doesn't impress me. I don't recall having done anything about it. The days immediately following Pearl Harbor couldn't have accelerated what we were

doing in any case. We were running as hard as we could already.

Q: Working hard?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: The move to the west coast took place in September of '42. The division had mounted out from Norfolk and from Wilmington and how did the staff feel all of a sudden that here the organization which they were nourishing or working with so closely all of a sudden had gone?

General Krulak: Well, you know how they felt. They felt very saddened. Remember, many of the staff, such as I, had been in the 1st Marine Division the day it was born in Cuba and felt a very warm and close relationship with it. We had gone through all of this training period, New River, Solomon's Island, and Fort Story in the winter. We had a feeling that here was a fine group of people and we want to be part of then and I'm sure that, like myself, everybody else went to see General Smith. We all got the same response. In my case, Edson went to General Smith and asked if he could have my services in the 1st Raider Battalion. General Smith said, "No." Well, we went to the west coast, many of us with heavy hearts, feeling that the war had passed us by already and that we'd never recover. We all had tremendous loyalty for General Smith. When we got to the west coast, we set

about working hard; we had plenty to do. My recollection is that very shortly after we arrived there, about Thanksgiving time, I was sent to Hawaii to work for "Lightning Joe" Collins in the 25th Infantry Division, to go around the track again like we did with the 1st Infantry Division, to put on a series of presentations of the realities of amphibious war. In charge of my detail was Colonel Hunt, LeRoy P. Hunt; there also were Lieutenant Colonel Bare and Captain Rex Stilwell, who was a communicator. We put on a series of presentations for the 25th Division, which was to prepare them for their subsequent commitment at Guadalcanal. I enjoyed this very much. Collins staff were throughgoing professionals. Every single "G" member of his staff was a West point graduate. They were serious, sober, two-fisted people and I enjoyed being with them. We helped them with two landing exercises on Oahu and in preparing SOPs. After we returned from this adventure in Hawaii, I began to harass General Smith about going to war. Finally, I had a brilliant thought that if I could get involved in some area of the Marine Corps where the requirement was great and the supply was slim, that perhaps circumstancss would press me into the war. So I asked General Smith if he would let me go to parachute training, which he agreed to do after Christmas, after the first of the year. I went to parachute training somehwere around February, I think.

Q: No, sir. January 9th, you went to Camp Gillespie.

General Krulak: Yes. January 9th. And when I finished parachute training, I went back to him and said, "Now I have something that's important and needed and I'd like to go out and join one of the parachute units in the Pacific." With considerable reluctance, he said, "All right, go ahead." That's when I took off aboard the Mount Vernon from the pier down here for Noumea.

End of Session II, Tape 1, Side 1

Session III, dated 16 June 1970. Tape 1, Side 1

Q: Last time, General, you had several matters on amphibious development you wanted to recall and put on at this time.

General Krulak: Yes. I spoke to you, as I recall, about the observation of the Japanese landing operations at Woosung, - and about the design of their landing craft which had efficiently adapted the ramp bow configuration. I thought I'd better speak briefly to the Higgins era and Higgins' contributions as a separate entity. The Marines became acquainted with Higgins as did the Navy, in the late '30s, perhaps '39, when he offered his '30-foot spoon-billed shallow-draft boat as a possible troop conveyance. In the maneuvers in the West Indies in 1939 and '40, several examples of his spoon-billed design as well as several of the Bureau of Ships' designs were used experimentally. His were obviously superior. To begin with, they were of plywood and lighter; they were more stable and more powerful, and they had far better beaching characteristics than any of the others. It was not until '41 that Higgins became interested in the ramp-bow type. He had no knowledge of ramp-bow design, but he was brave enough to say that he would try. He made numerous attempts and finally produced several 36 feet in length with a steel ramp bow. These are the ones which we took to the Onslow Beach maneuvers in '41. That was the first time that they got a real test in terms of variety of equipment, and troop loading. We learned a qreat deal about them and mainly we learned that they were good. It's interesting to know

that the LCVP of World War II and later years was essentially the boat that we saw at Onslow Beach in 1941 -- changes in motive power, perhaps, not much else; the same LCVP. Higgins had an effect on amphibious development far out of proportion to the credit which he ever received. I believe out of proportion to the compensation, too. He was a very patriotic man and one who was quite willing to risk his own capital.

One day I went to him and said that I was dissatisfied with the way we were trending in the LVT area. This was after we had returned from Cuba and after the Onslow Beach maneuvers, during the time when I was serving on Holland Smith's staff.

I told Higgins that I felt that there could never be a good LVT as long as it had a track; that the incompatibility of san and dirt and salt water and motion and metal would always make a track the weakest part of the LVT. I suggested to him what we needed was a vehicle that had a series of big wide wheels or drums with grousers on them on either side. He understood this at once. Incidentally, now you see something like this in the swamp buggies that have the big rubber wheels. Actually my idea involved metal rather than rubber wheels. With his own money, he built one. He "borrowed", if that's the correct word, an engine from a Navy contract which he was fulfilling at the time for some kind of boat or other, and he put it in this amphibian and designed the transmission and had it

built. I went to Louisiana when this vehicle was nearing completing and took part in some interesting experiments with it. It actually worked very well. It wroked better than any LVT that we had at the time, substantially better. But it had weaknesses, its carrying capacity was not very great and it was not too controllable when ashore. But none of the problems were insoluble. He never was able to interest our people in it, but he did interest the Dutch in this design, and he actually conveyed the design to them. Whether they ever built any, I don't know. I think that's all I want to say about Higgins now.

Q: You mentioned that Lieutenant Colonel Edson had asked for you to join his Raiders and what I'd like to tie down, what we've tried to do in our History, but perhaps talking to you first hand, and some other people, we are trying to tie down who developed, who pushed for this Raider concept and who pushed for this paratrooper concept? What was the genesis of these special troops?

General Krulak: I don't think I'm going to be a good witness for you here. I don't know. I just know that there was a moment in the expansive period of Marine Corps History immediately preceding Pearl Harbor Day and immediately following Pearl Harbor Day, where every idea had appeal to us. When you look at our overall FMF T/O of

early or mid-World War II, you see the almost incredible array that we threw into the Marine Corps. Somebody mentioned gliders, so we had them. Somebody mentioned barrage ballons and we had them. In addition, we had war dogs and in addition, we had paratroopers and Raiders, and I'm sure other things that I just don't bring to mind now. We didn't miss getting a foot on any train that came down the track. Now, the idea of the Raider -- I just don't want to estimate. I know that Carlson was keen on the matter of lightly armed troops of this sort. Although I've always felt that Carlson's approach was more on the guerrilla-type operation than upon the commando-type operation. It was a free-wheeling matter where the 1st and 2d Raider Battalions were quite dissimilar in concept, quite dissimilar in makeup, quite dissimilar in philosophy. These were factors responsive to the leadership. Edson on one hand; Carlson on the other. But, just where the Raider idea had its first origin in the Marine Corps, I can't say. Nor can I, with respects to the parachute troops. Parachute troops were just one more war-like fascination that we seized upon because people and money were free.

Q: Of course, some of the old timers, the more senior officers, I guess, senior field grade officers and some of the commanders themselves were very unhappy with this, were they not? Especially when they saw a drain in their unit strength?

General Krulak: Oh, absolutely. I can recall when I was in the parachute troops, meeting very substantial resistance from the school of thought that said, "A Marine is a Marine. And that's good enough." Looking back on it I can see that, they had a great deal going for them. I was never a great protagonist of parachute units in the Marine Corps or Raider units either. I was a great believer in reconnaissance units, the use of those same techniques for reconnaissance purposes.

Q: The point you bring up about the dissimilarity between Edson's battalion and Carlson's battalion is, I think, pretty soundly based. As a matter of fact, Carlson took quite a deal of criticism about his operation. Some pretty wild accusations were made against the man. I was just wondering whether the Edson battalion was organized as a counter-balance to the Carlson battalion?

General Krulak: I don't think so.

Q: Had you ever heard this?

General Krulak: No. I believe it's just like I described it. Those two battalion commanders were aggressive, dynamic; it was a fast moving era and they advanced concepts that were not necessarily refutable and they were given pretty much of a

free hand -- even in terms of equipment. As you know, Carlson had bows and arrows. He even had a special kind of boot.

Q: This was the counter-balance concept that Edson's organization was formed, utilizing standard equipment, training...

General Krulak: I think this was because of Edson, not because of someone wanting to counter-balance it.

Q: Let's get down to your parachute training at Camp Gillespie. What was that like?

General Krulak: It was unremarkable. It was about a six-weeks course; very intensive, like boot training. Tremendous emphasis on physical fitness. I was 26 or 27 years old and my contemporaries were 18 or 19. I found that I was a far better physical candidate than they because most of them went on liberty and I didn't. It was fun. I enjoyed it very much, and, of course, there is a certain exhilira-tion to parachute jumping, as exemplified by the number of people who do it. It was done under laboratory conditions where no one got hurt, I enjoyed that training very much.

Q: You were 26 years old and a lieutenant colonel by now?

General Krulak: No. I was a major.

Q: You had reached a...

General Krulak: I made lieutenant colonel the following March.

Q: Of '44?

General Krulak: Of '43.

Q: Did you take the battalion overseas?

General Krulak: No. I went overseas as a casual aboard the USS Mount Vernon from San Diego to Noumea. There I joined the 2d Parachute Battalion and relieved Major Richard Hayward as battalion commander and was almost concurrently promoted to lieutenant colonel.

Q: What was the battalion doing?

General Krulak: Training in New Caledonia.

Q: At Tontouta?

General Krulak: Yes. At Tontouta. We trained there. My recollection is I got there in March and we trained there vigorously until late summer. During that time, we jumped whenever we could get airplanes. Marine Aircraft Group 25 was based at Tontouta along with some Army Air Corps, DC-3s and we jumped whenever we could. But, in addition, I began to fear the nature of the Pacific terrain as being an impediment to our commitment as paratroopers. So I undertook

a vigorous course of Raider training using rubber boats for amphibious purposes, thinking in terms of small unit action, of reconnaissance in an attempt to establish our ability to do something beside enter combat through the air. I was afraid we would not get in the fight if it just depended on jumping. "We did as much amphibious training as we could. In about August I was sent for to go to Noumea where they told me that my battalion was about to be committed in operation against the Japanese garrisons on the island of, a small island in the Solomons chain, a seaplane base, I'll think of it. In any case, we studied the island very carefully; had many good large scale photos and maps; prepared a tactical plan. The purpose was to land, destroy the communication facilities, destroy the seaplane base, and any seaplanes that were there and withdraw. These seaplanes were the float-plane type, not the big transport seaplanes. We were all set to make the operation, which, incidently, was to be in four APDs.

Q: You said -- pardon me for just a minute General, you said "they" sent for you. Who was...

General Krulak: 1st Marine Amphibious Corps. General Vandegrift.

Q: You were directly under IMAC?

General Krulak: Yes. Just before we were to embark for the operation, aerial reconnaissance disclosed the enemy to be withdrawing from the island. They withdrew and we didn't have

to go as a result. At about this time, there were apparently questions as far back as the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the adaptability of the LVT to a combination of coral and high surf. I learned subsequently that they were thinking of Tarawa. I was sent for to come to Noumea and at IMAC was shown a message which said I was to be given the responsibility for conducting tests on the reef at New Caledonia of LVTs in surf over coral. They wanted tests that included surf up to ten feet and, for this purpose, I was authorized to expend three LVTs. It didn't say anything about the expendi-ture of people. I learned later that I was singled out for the assignment because I had run the earlier tests in Cuba.

. I turned over my battalion to my executive officer, Major Warner T. Bigger, and went down to the base depot at Noumea and got some LVTs. My recollection is I never used more than two at a time. We loaded them up with ballast and worked out some tables of tests, details, and then went to the reef. "We experimented day after day on the behavior of the LVT through surf and over coral reef.

There was plenty of surf and plenty of coral and no problem excepting the inevitable damage to the LVTs. We only destroyed one, actually, and destroyed only meant that it couldn't be salvaged because there was no- salvage equipment.

We got the answers that they wanted. The vehicle would take a great deal of punishment and it was a practical vehicle so long as skillfully operated through the surf and over the coral. I submitted a report and then went back to my

parachute battalion, not realizing that this was one of the factors that they were considering in deciding on a tactical plan for Tarawa.

Q: It would have been about this time anyway?

General Krulak: Yes. Later General Nimmer told me that he was in Washington and had been the architect of this idea for the tests and had named me because of his knowledge of my experience in the West Indies.

So we went back to Tontouta and continued in our training, which I might add was as intensive and vigorous as I could make it. The men were of the very highest quality. They exemplified that very dissatisfaction which many of the senior officers held and to which you referred that we were skimming the cream off the Marine Corps by double volunteers. I've never seen such wonderful Marines. They were brave; they were certainly dedicated. They had certain deficiencies in the area of discipline and obedience. They'd been given the idea that they were something in the way of superior beings and this caused me some trouble. We gradually got them under control.

Q: Is this the time they fired a mortar over the officer's club down there?

General Krulak: Oh, I don't know about that; but they did worse things than that. They did far worse things than that. I found, on one occasion, them putting grenades in the head,

rolling grenades down the company street. Tremendous hazard involved; the damn fools did it nevertheless. I found, when I took over the battalion, there was a liquor industry in the battalion; making booze out of a mixture of raisins and pineapple juice and grapefruit juice and sugar called Yakidak, which they sold. Basically there was nothing wrong with them that a little hard work and discipline couldn't cure. When they told us that we were going to go to Vella Lavella with the New Zealanders, the troops were just uniformly enthusiastic, they couldn't wait. Oh, excuse me. It wasn't to go to Vella Lavella, it was to go to Guadalcanal, first. We were to go to Guadalcanal as a staging area to go elsewhere, but they weren't sure just where that would be. I can't think of the name of the island where the seaplane base was. I was about to say Kieta but that isn't it. I'll think of it. It was an Anglicism, an English name. We embarked to go to Guadalcanal; we went there in a Dutch ship, the Noordam, which was under charter to the United States.

Q: In September of '43?

General Krulak: Yes. This ship was utilized also for the transfer of two Army antiaircraft battalions to Guadalcanal. We got to Guadalcanal, disembarked at Tassafaronga and were there only a very brief time, just a matter of a week or so, before I was told that we were to go to Vella Lavella with the New Zealnders; 8th New Zealand brigade. We were to go

in an LST and three APDs, so we quickly made our plans and embarked in the ships and went to Vella Lavella. On the morning of our landing there, the Japanese had acquired air superiority over that area and there were no U. S. planes immediately available to protect us, but there were plenty of Japanese planes. They attacked our ships; hit none of the APDs but did hit and sink the LST. The LST had all of our heavy gear, such transportation as we owned and much of the material that went to make it possible to sustain ourselves, spare ammunition, and other reserve supplies; and it all went down. Our casualties were not heavy; we had about 14 killed and 30 of 40 wounded in this attack on the LST. It subsequently burned up -- set afire and grounded and part of it was sticking out of the water bruning.

The Japanese continued to attack our troops as we were landing and then were chased away by the arrival of U. S. planes. We never had much more trouble with Japanese aircraft other than the individual raids at night.

We established ourselves and patrolled in accordance with instructions from the New Zealanders, who were our bosses. There were not many Japanese on the island and the activity of the two weeks after we landed was unremarkable. The outstanding recollection I have of this period when we were under the New Zealanders was that they provided our food. While my Marines were not about to lose their stomach for combat, they lost their stomach for the food immediately

when they began to be issued this New Zealand ration. Canned mutton, flour, tea, jam -- that's it, and no cooking facilities. The men had to make do themselves. Teh New Zea-landers, of course, carried a billy can on their belts and they would get together in little groups of two or three, heat up a rock and make some dough out of water and flour and throw it on the hot rock, then make tea in the billy can, and eat that cold mangy mutton out of the tin. They did it meal after meal. The Marines wouldn't do this and they got restive about it very quickly.

After we had been in Vella Lavella for about a week or two with the New Zealanders, the beginnings of the influx of U. S. base forces began to arrive and with them some U. S. rations. Presently the circumstances were reversed. We were feeding the New Zealanders, that is to say the United States was feeding the New Zealanders. They were almost as bad off as we were because all of our food was designed for mess distribution. They had no messes; they couldn't break the food down for individual distribution. I recall very, well a New Zealand commander asking me if we could cook for them so that their men could eat.

Vella Lavella didn't involve very much in the way of combat operations, just a little patrolling against Japanese who weren't anxious to fight very much.

It was fortunate that we had been there only ten days or two weeks, when I was sent for to go to Guadalcanal and told about the Choiseul operation by General Vandegrift.

Q: He was, of course, IMAC commander at this time?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: He was at Guadalcanal instead of Noumea?

General Krulak: He was at Guadalcanal.

Q: IMAC Headquarters was in Noumea?

General Krulak: Yes. Vandegrift moved it to Guadalcanal when he took over from General Vogel. The message just said for me to come to Guadalcanal and I arrived and reported to General Thomas, who took me into their planning tent and had Major Jim Murray brief me. He, as the representative of the Three section and the architect of the idea, supported by Coleman the representative of the Two section —— I guess he was the G-2 —— told me everything they knew about Choiseul, where the enemy was, how many there were. Murray outlined Vandegrift's idea that since Choiseul had been the source, the initial object of our main effort in that area of the Solomons and since there had been an awful lot of aerial photographic effort, the enemy might very well conclude that we were going to land there. They wanted to encourage the Japanese in the thought that we would land there. The way to do this was to actually land a force, designed to exhibit the characteristics of a much larger force, and thus to get the enemy off balance; seize his attention at the least, and perhaps cause him to redeploy forces at the most. It was a straight-forward and understandable

thing.

I asked a lot of questions about the intelligence and hydrography because this made a great deal of difference. I was told that I could select the landing area. The Navy didn't have any interest in selecting it; they were just going to haul us over there. So I had to make that decision and I made it in Guadalcanal in talking to the intelligence people there based on their idea of where the enemy was and wasn't. I proposed to land where the enemy wasn't, if possible. I made some notes and felt I had best get back to Vella Lavella as quickly as possible because I had only four or five days to prepare the operation, stage the supplies, and be prepared to embark.

Q: You mentioned that this was the diversion to Bougainville?

General Krulak: Yes. I went back to the airfield, Henderson Field, to fly back to Vella Lavella and while waiting for an airplane ride, I sat down and wrote the operation order on the back of a set of travel orders. I flew up to Vella, got my staff together and set the wheels in motion. We had about 72 hours to do it. Fortunately, they had arranged at Guadalcanal for a submarine to bring out a coast watcher and two native guides, and to drop them off at Vella Lavella, which they did the next day. We had about 36 hours with the coast watcher, a man named Seton, and the two guides, who could only speak a tiny bit of pidgin, but they were useful to answer the very questions that you wanted to know. The result

was, that while their information was a little stale because Choiseul was a great big island—forty miles long, and they couldn't go everywhere. They did know a lot. They answered my questions, as it turned out, very accurately.

We embarked on the night of the 27th of October and one of the requirements was that the APDs which hauled us there, four of them, could not show up to load until after dark because there were too many Japanese eyes around to see them. That meant all embarkation had to be done in the dark. It had to be done very quickly because they had to sail by about 11 p.m. in order to make it across Vella Gulf and conduct the landing under cover of darkness. Embarkation had to take place very quickly. We had staged all of our materials over the preceding night or two, concealed it at the embarkation beaches. So, it was easy to embark, and the four ships got underway in plenty of time.

On the way over, it just happened to be a very still night, in which phosphorescene from the ship's wake was very visible. The Japanese snopperplanes found us and fropped some bombs, but hit nothing. We got to the place where we were supposed to go: a place called Voza, and the plan was to send a small reconnaissance detachment ashore to scout out the landing area and determine if there was any enemy, and report on the hydrography. They did it successfully and we got ashore all right. Now at

this point I raise a question of whether I should attempt to extemporize here beyond the contents of the rather extensive histories that have already been written on the Choiseul Raid.

Q: You've commented quite considerably on our various histories, its appeared in the monograph and its also appeared in Volume I and we also picked your brains for my book. Outside of anything that may have come to mind...

General Krulak: I don't think of a single thing.

Q: It was a successful diversion. You got wounded?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: It wasn't successful in that sense.

General Krulak: In retrospect, I think it was a success and I must say, although I don't believe I was asked specifically about it — the Marines really behaved professionally. They were awfully, awfully good. Looking back on it in comparing them with the competence of many, many other Marines, whom I've seen in many other circumstances, they certainly did stand up well. They did a fine job.

Q: You had some good officers, too, in the battalion.

General Krulak: Very fine officers. Men who distinguished themselves, subsequently. All told the thing moved very well and it was because of the extraordinary professionalism, a level of professionalism which I didn't really quite appreciate then. I didn't realize how awfully good these boys were, but they were. They did a fine job for their country there. Beyond that I don't see any reason to go any further into Choiseul, although I must say, in all of my experience, there was never a more rewarding period than my service with that battalion. I hated to leave them.

Q: You had to leave because of your wound?

General Krulak: Yes. Actually for two reasons—I was wounded and I had been injured in a training parachute jump • in New Caledonia. The combination was making me a little bit ineffective. I'd come down in a parachute jump backwards astride a log and had crushed my sciatic nerve and I wasn't about to let it be known as long as I could conceal it. My left leg began to lose its strength and to get smaller and to lose its feeling. My doctor in the parachute battalion finally told my regimental commander, who made me go into the hospital at Guadalcanal and they recommended an operation to save the use of my leg. I put that off, but it was greatly irritated in Choiseul by virtue of the fact that everywhere we went we had to walk and I did an awful lot of walking to the extent that I wasn't

able to move about very well and I had to have an operation. That, combined with my wound, resulted in my being sent back to the States where I was operated on at Bethesda.

Q: That was about November of '43?

General Krulak: I was evacuated in November of '43, and was operated on at Bethesda around Christmas, I guess.

Q: You didn't stay in the hospital very long, did you?

General Krulak: No. First, I went to the dispensary at the Navy Department, where they performed a series of tests. Then they put me in the hospital, and Doctor Craig of Mayo Brothers operated on my nerve. I wasn't there very long. I don't recall how long.

Q: You were back at...the first two weeks in December and then the 15th of December you were back at Headquarters.

General Krulak: That was probably a matter of administration because I was stove-up for about a little over a month or six weeks, first on crutches and then with a cane for a month or so. But the operation was successful.

Q: And then you went back to the Division of Plans and Policies.

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: First, you were in the Preparedness Section, is that right?

General Krulak: I don't remember.

Q: But I know that you became officer in charge of the M-4 section.

General Krulak: That was the G-4 of that era.

Q: Of course, by this time, General Thomas was back and Director of Plans and Policies.

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: What did you do back there at this time?

General Krulak: I just did the usual G-4 business. I was interested in the development, procurement, and distribution of material. Among the great adventures then, were LVTs, the LVT-4, and -3. The development of an abortive deal on an amphibian trailer.

Q: The Athey trailer?

General Krulak: No. This was a floating trailer designed to be towed by LVTs. It was, a two-wheel affair and the idea was to preload it with cargo, close it-it was water tight,-and tow it ashore by LVT. I don't know why it really

never worked. We bought a lot of them, largely because of my conviction. But it never contributed much.

I was involved with the reexamination of the effectiveness of our equipment. The evaluation of things like the Reising submachine gun, the Johnson automatic rifle, the Johnson light machine gun, jungle hammocks, all those things were dramatically important then. That consumed about eight months of my time, give or take a little.

I was finally back on my feet and my leg was operating satisfactory. I had an opportunity to go back to the Pacific, and General Thomas turned me loose. I came to Pearl Harbor where General del Valle asked me if I would come with him to be G-3 of the 1st Marine Division. General Shepherd, there about the same time, asked me if I'd be interested in being G-3 of the 6th Marine Division. I've just forgotten how the decision was made. I didn't make it, of course, I guess General Smith did. But I ended up going to the 6th Division at Guadalcana.

Q: Getting back to the evaluation of this equipment—of course you hear all sorts of things about the Reising, mostly bad. It was made out of razor blades and old beer cans. But I'm curious why the Johnson light machine gun wasn't accepted? I think the Paramarines had them, and I think the Raiders may have had them, too.

General Krulak: I had both Johnson automatic rifles and

Johnson light machine guns in my battalion, as well as BARs and M-ls. There wasn't any question, the Johnson weapon was better. It was better in every department—more reliable, lighter, the men liked it better. The answer to the question why it wasn't adopted is that it was not a standard Army weapon. The Army had literally millions of M-ls and BARs and it was an uphill pull. The Johnson was designed by a private corporation, it wasn't designed by the Army Ordnance and that made it hard too, for it to get a favorable hearing. In any case, it didn't make it.

Q: Johnson was a Marine reserve lieutenant colonel, I believe, too.

General Krulak: He was a captain, then. But it was a fine weapon, just outstanding.

Q: When you went back, you must have joined General Shepherd just shortly after the 6th Division was formed in September of '45...

General Krulak: '44. He had been home on leave and he picked me up in Honolulu on his way through. We flew out in an airplane with several other people who were joining the Division, Louther, Clement—I've forgotten, maybe a couple of others. We joined the division in Guadalcanal, where we were bivouacked on the coast near Tassafaronga Point. Thereafter we went through just the usual intensive training

that all Marine units saw at that time. We were busy doing all the things that you have to do with a new outfit. We brought together some considerable experience in the 4th Marines, which were primarily Raiders, with the 22d Marines, that had a long history already going back as far as the Marshalls.

Q: The 4th Marines had been revitalized or revised, as a matter of fact, basically as a result of the disbandment of the Raiders.

General Krulak: Exactly.

Q: What happened to the parachute regiment when it was disbanded? They all went to the 5th Division?

General Krulak: The parachute regiment went to the 5th Division. They formed the nucleus of two regiments of the 5th Division— the 28th and the 27th. Our 29th Marines in the 6th Division were also a pretty substantial outfit in terms of experience. The real problem was to bring them together—they had all been RLTs and they had to be broken down and made part of a greater team. This took some time and effort, but the division was in good shape when time for Okinawa came along. We embarked at Tassafaronga, sailed up to Ulithi, and then to Okinawa. I'm not going into details of Okinawa. You've got that throughly

chronicled. Beyond a thing or two that is not in history that I think you might be interested in.

First, on D minus 2 we were advised that the UDTs had explored the Yontan beaches and had found them heavily defended and covered with antiboat obstacles. It was arranged for representatives of the UDT to be brought aboard the ship in which we were embarked to tell what they saw.

Two ensigns came aboard and with them a Marine lieutenant, who had accompanied the UDT. He was from the Two Section of the 6th Division. The ensigns made their report. They contradicted our earlier reports, saying that they saw no troops occupying the beaches, the defenses on the beaches didn't seem to be formidable, and that there were no anti-boat obstacles, they were just a lot of fishsticks.

The Marine lieutenant said this was not correct, that there were defenders on the beaches. This, of course, upset us because we were more likely to give our credence to the Marines who would know what defenses were. The ensigns were very humble; they weren't hot soldiers and weren't prepared to fight and die for what they saw.

This left us in the most uncomfortable condition. This was D minus 1—the day before D-Day. Of course, we just determined that we would assume the worst. Then the meeting broke up, one of the ensigns walked out the door of General Shepherd's cabin. He was sort of mumbling something and I said, "What is the problem?" He said, "Well, you

know, I swam in there, and I walked on that beach and that fellow who was doing all the talking never got any farther in than the destroyer. He did his reconnaissance with field glasses."

So I went back and stopped the group as it was disbanding and I told General Shepherd and the commodore Knowles was his name, I'd like them to listen to what this ensign had to say. The ensign repeated his speech. Well, of course, he was precisely correct and the Marine was precisely wrong.

I forgot all about this until after Okinawa was over and we were back in Guam and there was one of these decoration ceremonies, when a lot of people were lined up to get their Good Conduct Medals. I was getting one and I looked down the line and so help me here was the lieutenant. I thought, well,he did some heroic thing. I listened to them read his citation and his citation was for his pre-D-Day reconnaissance!

Q: Tell me something, in talking with General Shepherd and General del Valle, I found that there was competition between the 1st and 6th Divisions, there was real competition?

General Krulak: There was a very great competition and the competition was precisely reflective of the pride and the personal characteristics of the individual division commanders. They both were instinctive winners and they were instinctive competitors, not with one another but with anybody. They

wanted to excel; they were professionals. And I must say they were competitors. This went all the way back to Guadalcanal during the training period. Yes. I remember an instance. The 6th Engineer Battalion built a bridge— do you know the story?

Q: Yes, but you tell it.

General Krulak: ...across the Kokuba estuary. They put a sign on it—'"The Longest Bailey Bridge in the World."

Q: Built by the 6th Engineer Battalion?

General Krulak: Built by the 6th Engineer Battalion. One day someone gave me a photograph of a Bailey Bridge model about six or eight inches long. It had a sign on it—"The Smallest Bailey Bridge in the World Built by the 1st Engineer Battalion." It was quite a competition.

Q: When it came down to real cases where the requirements for support from one of the other divisions in the drive south there wasn't any...

General Krulak: It is my recollection that you couldn't have asked for more aggressive team work. They were, during the period, moving south from the Asa Kawa River, south of Mavhinato Airfield. The two divisions were side by side all the way through the Shuri line and down to the southern tip

of the island. "While there was constant competition, their support was good.

Q: Is there anything that sticks out in your mind particularly about the training phase or out of the actual combat? As you said this has been chronicled many times but I was just wondering...

General Krulak: Of all the things that I would like to remember about Okinawa, the one that stands out the most is not Sugar Loaf Hill, which was just a slugging match to see whose guts held out the longest—ours or the Japanese, but the landing on Oroku Penninsula, which was prepared under the most bitter of circumstances where there was so much mud that nothing would move on the road except a tractor, where the LVTs were exhausted and the planning time was brief (13 days) and the rain was incessant and yet it went off just as planned. It was a fine professional undertaking, involving two regiments.

Q: That was a good shore to shore operation.

General Krulak: First rate.

Q: Despite the problems with the landing of the LVT?

General Krulak: Very good. "

Q: Why did you—did you go to Guam in May of '45?

General Krulak: Yes. Right after Okinawa we went back to Guam.

Q: In May of '45? The operation wasn't over until June.

General Krulak: No. I left Okinawa about the time—lets see. The operation was over on the 21st of June?

Q: Yes, sir.

General Krulak: Okay. I left a day or two after that, about the 23d. My father had a heart attack and I flew back to Denver, saw my father before he died, came back to Guam, and was there a couple of days before the ships arrived.

Q: I wanted to ask you about your concept regarding the use of the 2d Division to make a landing on the Minatogawa Beaches on the southeastern coast at the time that the 10th Army drive bogged down in mid-April. Actually those southeastern beaches, as you recall, were the primary beaches. I've heard all sorts of rationale from the Army history, the fact that the beaches wouldn't support a landing, also the fact that most of the Japanese strength was down there. I think the 5th Artillery Command was down there. At the point that the Army was just butting its head outside the other gates of the Shuri defenses, it seems to me the use of a fully loaded, combat-ready division could have played an important part. Does this—did you

discuss this—did you discuss this at all?

General Krulak: Yes. "When General Smith came to Okinawa...

Q: General Smith? Vandegrift and Thomas came.

General Krulak: Yes, that's right. When General Vandegrift came I talked to General Thomas about it. He felt exactly the way you have described. General Shepherd spoke to him the same way and I believe General del Valle did, also. I besought them, if they wouldn't land the 2d Division, to reembark some of us because, while there was great enemy strength down there, they were faced perforce in the other direction and they weren't having an easy time. And the pressure of the 10th Army was very great. It would have collapsed them. It would have collapsed them just over night. It would have had to.

Q: Geiger wasn't too hot for it though, as it appears. He gave it some lip service, but when it came down to case points and he discussed it with Buckner...

General Krulak: I was at a meeting at his headquarters attended by his division commanders and I recall General Shepherd speaking strongly for it and I'm just not sure but it was either Geiger or Silverthorn who arrayed some of the disadvantages of it. I felt that the advantages far out— weighed them.

End Tape 1, Side 1

Session III, Tape 1, Side 2

Q: How about your relations with the Army files? How did that go? Pretty well?

General Krulak: In Okinawa?

Q: Yes, sir.

General Krulak: If you'd look at the tactical map, you'd see that the 6th Marine Division had almost nothing to do with the Army from the day the operation began until the day it was over with certain supportive exceptions. For instance, we had a wonderful relationship between the 15th Marines and the Corps and Army Artillery. That was because of the personality of Luckey. We just had wonderful relationships. We had some help from Army DUKWs a couple of times and that's the size of it with the exception of one inci— dent, when we had gone to the northern tip of the island, and had cleaned out Motobu Penninsula.

We were brought south to assume the coastal zone of action on the attack southward. To take over the responsibilities for northern Okinawa, they pulled out the 27th Division. We were moving south in bulk as they were moving north in bulk. There had been reconnaissance—advanced elements of both already moved. We were on one road and it was a constant re-enactment of the Army-Marine bickering and yapping and smart cracking that came to the notice of

people all the way up to Buckner and we heard about it. Except for that our relationships were straightforword and minimal, actually.

Q: Did General Buckner pay any liaison visits?

General Krulak: Yes. He came occasionally and saw what we were doing. My recollection is that when he was killed he had left the 6th Division Headquarters just shortly before and had gone forward. He was in our zone of action when he was killed.

Q: The 8th Marines OP was in your zone of action?

General Krulak: 8th Marines OP?

Q: Yes sir.

General Krulak: Well, then I'm wrong. I thought he was killed at an OP occupied by Colonel Roberts. Bob Roberts, who was later killed himself. This was the 22d Marines.

Q: I think he may have gone up—actually it was right on the boundary because he went up to observe, this was the first day of operations of the 8th Marines. He had been very much impressed by the 8th Marines when he made his liaison visit prior to the operation. General 0. P. Smith had been the Marine Deputy Chief of Staff at 10th Army

Headquarters, and had gone on these trips with him and said that for some reason the 8th Marines just caught his fancy.

General Krulak: Well, I don't know about that. I thought it was at Bob Roberts' OP, but I'm probably wrong. In any case, he had been visiting our division not long before he went forward and was killed.

Q: Were there any problems embarking the division from Okinawa for Guam?

General Krulak: No.

Q: You had been on leave anyway?

General Krulak: But I know there were none.

Q: How soon after you arrived at Guam did you get the warning order for China?

General Krulak: The warning order for China came shortly after the surrender, very shortly. I don't recall how long we had to prepare, maybe ten days, not much more than that.

Q: It wasn't much more than that because on the 28th you embarked aboard the Dade and the surrender ceremony had been 2 September.

General Krulak: Dade?

Q: No. The APA. For Tsingtao?

General Krulak: No. I didn't go to Tsingtao in an APA. I went to Okinawa, as far as Okinawa, in an APA and off the coast of Okinawa shifted to a DE. Doesn't that appear there?

Q: No sir.

General Krulak: I went aboard an APA in Guam and went as far as Okinawa. Then transferred to a DE and went with General Shepherd and Lieutenant Colonel Tom Williams to Tsingtao and made the advance arrangements for the arrival of the division.

Q: Had you been required to make any preparations for either Operations OLYMPIC or CORONET?

General Krulak: Not beyond seeing a copy of the plan of campaign.

Q: But there was no requirement for the division?

General Krulak: Not yet.

Q: You didn't stay in China very long, did you?

General Krulak: I got there in early September. Well, I could tell you, if you know what date we left Guam, we sailed to Okinawa, which probably took a week or so. Then I went on the destroyer which took another 48 hours.

Q: October?

General Krulak: No. It was before October. "We were there in September. I remained in Tsingtao until November, I guess, and then I received orders to Marine Corps Headquarters.

Q: Was there anything unusual during this brief time in China during the occupation?

General Krulak: Well, there were several things. First there was the matter of the Communists. "We hadn't been there for as much as a week before the Communists came to us and declared that they were the legitimate force in that area, and we should deal with them and not with the Nationalists Chinese. Second, the episode of the Japanese commanding general, of which General Shepherd has probably told you. I'll recite my view because he and I don't remember it the same.

We had no experience in managing the surrender of large numbers of forces. We discussed it and concluded that General Shepherd should get the commanding general in and give him his instructions. These instructions were to provide us within 72 hours an original and five copies of an inventory of everything they had, and to be prepared to lay down their arms at a certain time and place. This was done. At the end of the 72 hours he delivered the inventory. They were in English and they were precise.

He then asked if he had permission to speak and General

Shepherd said, "Sure." I remember very well watching the Japanese general's knees were knocking—he was frightened.

He said, "We're prepared to do all the things you've said, but I would warn you if you oblige us to lay down our arms, which to us means everything, these Communists will kill us. I ask you to leave each man his rifle, each officer his pistol, and each individual with five rounds. Now, we can't do much to you with that small amount of ammunition, but it will save our lives."

General Shepherd, without the modern day reference to higher authority (Joint Chiefs of Staff or the White House or Mr. Kissinger) said, "Okay, that's a deal."

About two weeks later the Japanese General asked for another audience. They were waiting to be repatriated by LSTs to Japan. He came in and his knees knocking again as he said, "I've been watching things here. I know you've got a little problem because its beginning to get chilly. Pretty soon you're going to need coal and your coal has to come down the Tsingtao-Tsinan Railroad. It's the only way it can come. I don't see that you have enough troops to protect that railroad from the Communists; protect this perimeter and still do all the reat of the things. So I'll tell you what I'll do; if you give me back our artillery, I'll contribute to the railroad defense."

General Shepherd thought it over and said, "Yes." So there we were, allied with the Japanese against the Red Chinese

in the autumn of 1945. That's the truth of it.

Q: Did the Japanese have any incidents with the Chinese Communists?

General Krulak: No. If they did, they were insignificant; not enough to stick in my memory now.

Q: The division didn't have any until later?

General Krulak: Later, yes. On that railroad is where they occured, but they were later in the winter.

Q: Meanwhile you received orders to go to Headquarters.

General Krulak: I received orders to go to Headquarters and I went to Shanghai. I stayed in Shanghai awhile and tried to find some old friends, looked the city over where I'd lived before. Then flew back by increments.to Guam and Hawaii and the States where I reported for duty to Marine Corps Headquarters.

Q: But you didn't stay there?

General Krulak: I stayed at Marine Corps Headquarters for a brief time, but they felt that what I had to do was better done in Quantico.

Q: What was that?

General Krulak: To work on the unification business. That's really what I was there for—that's what I was sent for to do.

Q: Had Jim Murray been out of the hospital and placed in General Thomas' office yet?

General Krulak: Yes. He was there.

Q: He was working in the southwest corner up there in General Thomas' office.

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: What group was working on the unification business at Headquarter s ?

General Krulak: Well, there really wasn't an organized group. People who were interested in it were Thomas, Edson, Murray;. shortly later, Shaw; later Heinl and Hittle; but at this time Hunter Hurst. They decided that I was to go to Quantico and I had working for me two people—Hunter Hurst and Lyford Hutchins.

Q: Who is now back in the Department of the Navy as a lawyer.

General Krulak: Yes. We went to Quantico to work on merger matters.

Q: Under what guise?

General Krulak: I was designated as the head of the Research Section of the Marine Corps Schools, and we researched. I don't know if there is much I could add to chronicle of the merger fight.

Q: I think there is a lot. You can add a lot because there really hasn't been much published other than what Bob Heinl has written.

General Krulak: Well, then I can tell you a lot. Have you never talked to Twining?

Q: Yes, but General Twining still has, his transcript and I think his will probably be closed. I don't know. And General Thomas gave his side of it. What I am trying to do is to get a good all-round picture.

General Krulak: What is the reason for putting constraints on them? I don't care if people know...

Q: "We put no constraints on the transcript.

General Krulak: General Vandegrift and General Thomas did not ask me if I wanted to involve myself in this matter of action which was aimed at preserving the Marine Corps' right to be an element of our national security. They simply told me, and I think this is important in the context of the tune of times where some members of our Corps were concerned as to

whether this was an appropriate thing to do. Had they asked me, I would have volunteered. I wouldn't be deceptive about it, but they didn't ask me. They told me and I went to work.

Q: Well, they knew their man.

General Krulak: Maybe so, but in any case, it was hard work. It was desperately hard work. It involved original thinking and composition. I'm not particularly good at either one, but I got a lot of experience at it there. The conception of how best to help the Commandant of the Marine Corps; what he ought to say and when and where. And how about other people, like Geiger. Twining is a real prime source of all this. Twining's strategic hand was dominant. There's no question about it. The real pipe line into the sensibilities of then-commandant— General Vandegrift—was Thomas. But, Twining was the great mind involved in it. He was the strategist. I would characterize myself at the same time as more of a tactician. I did what I could to help, but Twining was more mature; he was just better at it than the rest of us.

Q: He was working under the guise of the Marine Corps Board.

General Krulak: Yes, the Marine Corps Board. Well, we did a lot, when General Geiger made a dramatic speech based on the great qualities which he exhibited, we prepared the speech.

Q: When was this?

General Krulak: This was in '46. I have just forgotten exactly when.

Q: This was not the "Bended Knee" speech?

General Krulak: No. That was Vandegrift.

Q: That was about the same time, was it not?

General Krulak: Yes. Very nearly the same time. That speech, I'm convinced, was one of the most powerful addresses ever given by a military man before a Senate committee, was the source of great pride to Twining and me. We worked long—long and hard on its content and it was irrefutable. Our sources were accurate and really put the Army back on their heels in terms of their Collins Plan.

Q: When did Don Hittle get involved with this, much later?

General Krulak: I don't remember just when he first entered the scene.

Q: I think maybe it might have been about the time Heinl...

General Krulak: I was about to say Hittle and Heinl came a bit later, and Edson became active a bit later. Twining and I were in it from the beginning and we were there right through the passage of the National Security Act of 1947.

Q: Lyford Hutchins is sort of a shadowy figure, a gray eminence in a sense...

General Krulak: Lyford Hutchins is one of the greatest researchers I have ever known. He has a real penchant for it. He had entree into the offices in the Congress, into the Library of Congress. He produced some very interesting things which helped us greatly. At the same time, concurrently, I was given the job of writing the history of the performance of Marine aviation in terms of the evolution of close-air support.

Q: Were you involved with that study, I think some of the aviation general officers...

General Krulak: We may be talking about two different studies. The one to which I refer is a gray book, which actually I wrote. It's not the history of Marine aviation in World War II. This is another—a gray book with gold wings on it.

Q: I haven't seen that one, but I know that there had been a board...

General Krulak: This was not a board. I was told by General Thomas we need a book to exhibit what our aviation did and we need it quick, and without Hutchins' help, I couldn't have done it.

Q: General Twining told me—and he couldn't pinpoint the incidents or events—that Lyford Hutchins would appear out of the night, so to speak, with the documents he had purloined or had borrowed.

General Krulak: Oh, I don't know about that. I do know that he had many friends in the Congress and in the offices of Congressmen. He was a great procurer of information. I don't know about purloining documents.

Q: There was a point made that General Vandegrift put up a very valiant fight dutifully as Commandant. He made his presentations to Congress of the material you prepared. There came a time when he balked just before General Thomas left Headquarters. He didn't want anymore part of it and it was a crucial point. I don't recall the incident. Do you have any knowledge of this?

General Krulak: I ought to have, but I don't. I just don't. I spent a good deal of time with him during this National Security Act period and I know there were great pressures brought to bear on him to not be over vocal, but I don't recall his ever setting his heel. It may be. Thomas would know. He would be the best witness on this.

Q: How about this man Buddy Knighton? Was he the fly in your soup at times up there or did he...

General Krulak: Knighton was a lawyer and his knowledge related to personnel law. He never did anything that, to my recollection, either helped or hindered us in the merger business except occasionally to caution prudence when our determination was to be a little more headlong.

Q: Bob Heinl has said and I don't know whether he was gainsaying his own problems and position in his later career, that a lot of people involved with the unification fight, he said that he found a lot of people who were involved or a number of people who have found their careers blighted because of their involvement with the unification fight.

General Krulak: Nobody was more involved that I was. My career wasn't blighted or if it was blighted it wasn't because of that. His might have been but I don't think so.

Q: This concept of "Wheel within wheels" only pertained to one individual who made the statement.

General Krulak: I only heard O. P. Smith make the statement, but I'm sure that that was a natural reaction for many people whose concept of duty was a straightforward one not to be distorted or in any way altered by current circumstances.

Q: There were a number of senior officers who had been very close to General Vandegrift prior to World War I, as a matter

of fact, and there were new teams, the 1st Division Team and the Unification Team. Did you find any of this static as far as any of your other later assignments were concerned?

General Krulak: No. I must say there were some of the more pragmatic or simplistic officers senior to me, who I know looked askance on me because of what they suspected regarding the unification business, and therefore, characterized me along with Bill Twining—as a sort of Machiavellian personality. You had to live with that—it never bothered me.

Q: Like the old Stimson concept—"Gentlemen don't read other gentlemen's mail"—serving officers don't get involved with surreptitious sorts of things.

General Krulak: However, this was just a part of the job and it didn't bother me.

<Q: You were supervisory-instructor of the Amphibious Warfare School and Senior School. Was this at the same time you were still involved...

General Krulak: Yes. The Research Section function was not particularly an important one. I found somebody else to take that over, a boy named Shisler.

Q: Clair Shisler?

General Krulak: Yes. Then I moved on to do what I felt was more meaningful, to work hard on unification and to get involved in teaching. I became a supervisory-instructor in the Senior School—working for Bobby Hogaboom. This was logical because the National Security Act was passed and it was a matter of cleaning up loose ends. I wanted to get into the educational process and to be more meaningfully employed.

Q: How much involvement did you have with the editing of USF 63 and USF 66?

General Krulak: I was one of the team which did just that.

End Session III, Tape 1, Side 2

Session IV, dated 20 June 1970, Tape 1, Side 1

Q: Last time, General, we were back at (Quantico after the war and talking about your special research project and the "Chowder Program." I think, unless you want to go into that a bit more, I don't know that we've exhausted it completely...

General Krulak: There is something that needs saying—I suspect that from the other of your interviews that you may have gotten this point—but I will say it dogmatically. The National Security Act of 1947 has turned out to be a very substantial piece of legislation so far as the Marines are concerned. From 1947 until today, 23 years later, that law has preserved and sustained the Marines. The functions of the Marine Corps as they relate to other services, its position in the military establishment, the prescription that it shall be a Fleet Marine Force, that it shall be a force of combined arms, air-ground, three wings, three divisions, have risen to our defense in many arenas since and there should be no doubt in anybody's mind that it was a small group of people that brought that about. They did so in the face of some derision, much misunderstanding, and, occasionally, unthinking hostility by their peers and often their superiors, which made it worse.

Certainly the prime movers in this area were Thomas and Twining and the great mind was Twining's. There were a few others, but I would not wish to go beyond those two men. I'm not prepared to take an over-humble attitude about my

own part. I know I did my best and it took a certain self-sacrificial, almost fearless attitude to do so in view of the fact that among your own peers you couldn't talk freely about what you were doing.

I look back on this as certainly one of the most productive periods of my military service, one least discussed, but nevertheless, as I read certain words in section 206C of the National Security Act, I remember where they came from. This was an important era in our history and I believe one which, lamentably will have to be repeated.

Q: I think this is very true. We can discuss this later as we get into Vietnam because I feel that the genesis of a pos Vietnamese unification fight will be solved in the roles and missions of the Marine Corps.

General Krulak: Unquestionably.

C: Would you care to discuss what you think the motivations were of the so-called enemy. After all, we're all,—the armed services had the same mission, the defense of this country.

General Krulak: Sure. I think its very simple. In time of peace the armed services compete for dollars, in time of war they compete for military tasks and for material priority. We find ourselves in competition all the time. Add to this the leavening of pride in your uniform and your service and

you can see at once that there are the ingredients of a constant conflict. Now this conflict need not take virulent form, but when the dollars are hard to get or the tasks are the subject of great competition it can become virulent as it has in the past. And I'm sure it will in the future.

Q: Certainly, in the review of the post-World War II unification fight; I can't recall any other time in our history, the history of this country, where it was so knock down, drag out, and dirty.

General Krulak: This isn't entirely so. As you know, there was a period when the Navy and the Marines were at a sword's point and the Navy was determined to see the Marines abolished or absorbed into the Navy structure. And this took the most acrimonious possible form; it couldn't have been worse.

Q: During this period of time at Quantico, you were also doing some instructing. I think the genesis of Vertical Envelopment appeared at this time. Did it not? I believe you are the author of it.

General Krulak: It did occur at this time, but I'm not the author of it. I was the co-author of the first book. I came about like this. We were determined in light of the onrush of the atom, in the military spectrum, to see what we could do

about rationalizing landing operations in light of the bomb. This immediately brought about the idea of accelerating the ship to shore movement. I remember the first lecture I gave on it, I had a silhouette sketch of a LVT, just like that. I asked the listeners if they would envision elevating that LVT ten feet and increasing its speed 20 times, and that that was a helicopter.

We talked about this and we talked about the overseas movement in the large transport seaplane, both of which we pursued with great sincerity. As you know some R&D money and some construction money went into both. A total of eleven large transport seaplanes, thirty thousand pounds net payload seaplanes, were built. They were built right here in San Diego by Convair. Ramp bow like an LST, four engines, stern anchor. They were used in exercises here and they were used, on the Salton Sea.

At the same time that we were developing thoughts about the large [transport seaplanes, we went into the helicopter and it wasn't a question of much research, we got Igor Sikorsky to come to Quantico and we picked his brain. After you picked his brain there was no place else to go. It was like going to the very oracle and that's all there was. Sikorsky knew surprisingly little about helicopters and he said so. He just knew more than anybody else.

We began to talk about concepts and to risk thinking about helicopter, perish the thought, that could carry 15

people, which seemed way off the drawing board.

Then we realized that we needed textbooks. So, the two most enthusiastic people in the helicopter business in Quantico sat down and with no knowledge, nothing to inhibit us whatever, we wrote the book. The other fellow was Colston Dyer. We prepared the book, and I will never forget it. I wrote the introductory section and not knowing very much, I was decribing the unique qualities of a helicopter. I said, "The precious ability to rise and descend vertically and to hover." I will always remember on the manu-script, Dyer, much more pragamatic than I, inserted the word "almost vertically" and crossed off "hover." We've come a long way since then, but there is no doubt that that was the genesis of our doctrinal approach to helicopters.

Q: The acceptance or insertion of the helicopter into the Marine Corps aviation arsenal created quite a bit of con-sternation and not some little unhappiness. They weren't too happy—the aviators weren't too happy about...

General Krulak: There was a very substantial schism created by the helicopter. As you know, the Marines have operated for many many years under a total air frame limitation as a part of the naval establishment. Whether it was a liaison airplane, a fighter airplane, a helicopter, or a transport airplane, an air frame was an air frame. This seemed like

a "jack-ass" way to do it, but that's the way its been done, not related to dollars, not related to people, just related to air frames. It wasn't hard to perceive that for every helicopter we had, unless that relationship was changed, something else was going to give. Well, this generated an awful lot of dissension. I can remember General Brice, who was my boss at FMFPac, as late as 1955 was still saying that the helicopter wasn't the way to go. He didn't decry the helicopter, he simply said it wasn't the way to go. I've heard other, very able, aviators say the same thing and I think they were partly motivated by the fact that this is a hell of a way to expend an air frame. So we did have our troubles and then, of course, there was this very practical thing: they were very costly, that they were a new technique, someone had to learn how to do it, it invaded the training cycles of the aviators. All told, it was an uphill fight.

Q: Nonetheless, we finally did get them?

General Krulak: Oh, sure.

Q: Who were the strong protagonists?

General Krulak: McCutcheon, Herring, Dyer—they come to mind immediately.

Q: Did the Schools begin teaching this technique concerning...

General Krulak: Immediately. We included it in our instructions for the first time in 1947. A little in '46 but '47 practically. Each year, as you know, the Schools students went off somewhere on an exercise toward the end of their session. In their Packard Exercises, let's see, Packard I was in '46, Packard II was '47; we had a couple of helicopters, the old HO2s helicopter, which didn't amount to a thing. We used it; we went from a ship to the beach just to say we had done it. We included them in growing measure in each subsequent Packard Exercise pretending that there were a lot more helicopters and a lot more platforms, and so on.

Q: This new doctrine, was it received with any enthusiasm or interest by the students?

General Krulak: I think, in the main, the students were glad to accept it and to try and extrapolate it because it represented the wave of the future.

Q: During the same period while you were instructing down at Quantico, the unification fight continued, did it not?

General Krulak: Well, no. After the passage of the National Secutity Act of 1947, there was a hiatus, things quieted down. There was the flurry related to the modifications to the law, which occured in '49, but they represented nothing

like conflict that the '47 law involved. Nothing like it.

Q: "Was there a new team involved later with this unification business, such as Heinl...

General Krulak: The 1949 Marine Corps effort, which was smaller, by let's say a factor of 1-100, in terms of importance, included people who were not deeply involved in the '47. Heinl is one, Hurst, who took only a little part in the '47 run, a good deal more. Schatzel and Hittle. They performed a very useful function.

Q: The massive effort was in '46. Who composed the "Bended Knee" speech?

General Krulak: Twining and I. I give him the prime credit.

Q: Did you have much trouble getting your material from Quantico directly to the Commandant or General Thomas?

General Krulak: No.

Q: You had direct lines?

General Krulak: No problem at all.

Q: Did you go through normal channels or did you just go directly?

General Krulak: Directly. This caused some trouble with General 0. P. Smith. We tried to keep him informed and I think he was patient and compassionate, and understanding, but he was sort of rubbed raw by it, too. He did not like that sort of activity, either. It ran counter to his nature.

Q: It was very interesting that a gentleman—and I don't mean to draw particular attention to General O. P. Smith, for whom I have the most tremendous and highest respect; but here in the Marine Corps, more so than any other service facing the fight for life, it would seem that it would behoove every senior officer to really get in there and pitch.

General Krulak: The great bulk of them did not and would not; some because they were afraid because of the possible effect on their own career. Some would not because they did not believe that it was serious, and others would not because it was repugnant to them to behave the way we had to behave.

Q: Was it your impression that in this fight the Navy would have sold the Marine Corps down the river?

General Krulak: It's not fair to speak of the Navy. It's more correct to speak of the people who were carrying the Navy share of the unification load. I believe that Admiral Forrest Sherman would have willingly, not because of any animosity for the Marine Corps, but because of his sagacity realizing that the Marine Corps was a very big blue chip

that he could use. Admiral Burke would not, nor would Radford .

Q: How long was it before the Navy awakened to its own imminent peril? Because, apparently, the powers that were, were not aware that the Navy was in danger.

General Krulak: Some were. Radford was very much. Burke, who then was junior was quite aware. Sherman, in my judgement, never felt that the situation was beyond his ability to control or influence decisively. He had an extraordinary egotism in this regard.

Q: While you were at the Schools, until '49, you made a number of trips. I think you became Assistant Director of The Amphibious Warfare School at one time. What was the nature of your duty in this billet?

General Krulak: It was just school teaching billet. I ran the instructors, helped work up the curriculum. The director

of the school was Hogaboom, who was very much a participant. I was just actually what the title described, an assistant. I had a major part in the composition and presentation of the advanced base problems each year. All in all it was just a schoolteaching job.

Q: Was much of this instruction based on lessons learned as a result of World War II or was the curriculum looking forward as well?

General Krulak: Too much of it was based on World War II. Much too much. Now and then we would break out of that shell with such things as helicopters, or big seaplanes. Some other aspects would suggest possible improvement, but as I look back now I insisted that we have a complete new family of textbooks. We wrote them, we called them the "Blue Books" because they had a blue cover. As I reflect on them now a lot of it was retrospective. We didn't look ahead enough.

Q: Was there any particular reason for this?

General Krulak: That's just the way people are. You're likely to talk about what you know about, and the problem of prospective thinking was very difficult to get under your belt; these are the things that kept us from looking ahead anymore.

Q: The National Defense Act of 1947 has set up certain roles and missions for the Marine Corps and I think the functions

paper was completed not long after this. Wouldn't this have set some sort of guidelines...

General Krulak: Oh, no. It didn't help in terms of making us look ahead. Those were very basic documents about the roles and functions in the most general terms that related to amphibious warfare and the seizure and defense of advanced naval bases. They, on their own, could not make us look ahead.

The amount of prospective thinking that we did was based on the personalities of the people involved in the Schools. Remember we never got any instructions from the Marine Corps Headquarters at that time and I doubt since that it ever caused the Schools to do any prospective thinking. The reverse has always been the case. The intellectual heart of the Marine Corps should reside at Quantico and they should lead the way and should goad and prod Marine Corps Headquarters because, after all, what goes on at Marine Corps Headquarters? They're slaves to the calendar, the clock, the telephone, the incoming basket. Their eyes are turned not towards the Marine Corps, not towards battle—but towards the Pentagon. That's all.

They can't have a quiet reflective moment. There isn't an officer that serves in the Marine Corps Headquarters—and I've had my share of it and can say it dogmatically—there's not an officer who serves Marine Corps Headquarters who really has the opportunity to reflect on his profession. He runs

around putting out fires created by someone else. He spends a good deal of his time reading other people's mail. So, if Quantico is not to be the intellectual heart of the Marine Corps, it's not going to have one.

Q: You feel this situation prevails even today?

General Krulak: Oh, of course, it does. It's worse today than ever before. The Pentagon is an absolute behemoth; now it's an umbrella over everything. Did you read the article I wrote for Navy Magazine last month?

Q: No, sir. I didn't.

General Krulak: It's worse now than ever before. The Pentagon is gargantuan in its size. Nobody knows how many people work in the Pentagon. I would estimate 35,000 in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, which James Forrestal said he could run with 100 people; and he meant it—he was sincere. The number of assistant secretaries and deputy assistant secretaries has grown astronomically. They dabble into the affairs of the military services to the point where the secretary of a military department is a nonentity. He's sort of an assistant for the Air Force to some assistant secretary of defense. This is really contrary to the National Security Act. The law does not provide for that. The law provides very plainly that the military department shall be separately administered. And

I'll leave it to you if such things as having uniform criteria for the manufacture of a nightstick or the collection of garbage gives any implication of separately administered.

No, this is bad. As far as I can see, the people who are titular heads of the military services have precious little opportunity to look to their service's affairs and mostly they are responding to questions and harassments from the Department of Defense. And when I say harassment, I say it advisedly because that's what an awful lot of it is.

Q: To what do you attribute this tremendous "snow balling" of people and of involvement?

General Krulak: Parkinson.

Q: Parkinson?

General Krulak: Certainly, nothing more. It's just the way it has to be. Allowed to go unchecked, it will continue to feed on itself and nourish itself. It will never get smaller, it will always get bigger. There's no way out. There is no one I can think of who would oblige them to obey the law. When Nixon was elected, I went back to New York and he asked me, "What one thing ought I to do with respects to the Defense Department? If I could do one thing—what should it be?" And I said, "One thing—establish a Blue Ribbon Panel, mainly of civilians, and oblige them to answer just one question,

What is being done by the Office of the Secretary of Defense that should not be done at all, by anybody?" Don't worry about redistribution of functions, because that's a booby trap that won't help at all. Just make them tell you what they're doing that nobody should be doing, and if you are successful in this you'll find that you can fire a lot of people." I thought it was going to happen, but it hasn't happened. I've brought it up several times, to Laird in this panel which the President has underway now—I've forgotten the name of it.

Q: It's called the Blue Ribbon Panel of some sort.

General Krulak: Yes. I testified. The Chairman of the panel, at the suggestion of McNamara, of all people, came all the way San Diego to talk to me, and we had a great discussion. I frustrated him by simply hewing to this one point, "Don't try and do the impossible, just go back and figure out what OSD is doing that nobody should do, that would be better left undone." You'll find an awful lot of things, for example, garbage and nightsticks are just dramatic. But there are thousands just like that and what do they mean? People, dollars, time, questions, questionnaires, procedures, studies, Parkinson!

Q: I'm surprised about that, but I had always assumed that you worked very closely with Mr. McNamara. As a matter of fact, that you and he were of the same mind about many things.

General Krulak: That's correct. That's correct. McNamara is an odd guy. (Reading from memo) 9 February 1968, 1150, that was the date McNamara left his office. McNamara called me at 1150. He said that he could not leave his office without telling me how grateful he is for what I had done for my country and for the loyalty which I showed him personally. He said, "You are one of the very few officers whom I would call great, with wisdom, courage and ability to influence others that exceeds any description. I will never forget you."

I thanked him, making particular point of my gratitude for his thinking of me on such a busy day and only an hour before he left Washington. I was then in Honolulu. He ended by saying that he hoped that we would remain in touch and finally said, "Now that I'm not Secretary of Defense, let me say that the outcome of the Commandant matter was not of my making. It was a sad moment for the country." (Don Weller happened to be in my office at the time and heard my side of the conversation.) That's neither here nor there and I have no unhappiness about the Commandant business, but...McNamara did have.

Q: The reason I asked you about McNamara is that you made the statement, that the President of the new panel came out to speak to you at McNamara's instance, much to your surprise.

General Krulak: Oh, no. I was surprised because I didn't even know that they had consulted him.

Q: Oh, I see. I'm sorry. I misinterpreted that.

General Krulak: No. McNamara and I got on very well. There were areas in which we did not agree. I had the wit to make ray points and, when he made his decision, did not harass him about it, but basically I am convinced that, he, left to his own devices, would have done a great deal better than he did under the stultifying influence of LBJ. While McNamara was extraordinarily immature in some of his behavior and in others was unduly opinionated, he was a very bright man and if he had one weakness, and I'm sure he had many, the dominant one would be one which we treasure in the military, his extraordinary enthusiasm. Then the President said he wanted something, McNamara saw to it that he got it, if he could. If it didn't work out right, he was happy to take the responsibility and the blame himself. In this respect, he was quite different from most of the civilian executives. He took responsibilities for acts which were generated by the President's decisions and he did it well, and I admire that.

Q: Unfortunately, he didn't have as much power or say in the circles that one would hope the Secretary of Defense would have.

General Krulak: He was certainly undercut by McGeorge Bundy, and probably others about whom I don't even know, And certainly LBJ was anxious to relate every act to the politi-cal future of his party and of himself. I wouldn't say to the extent that I'm indicting him for any form of disloyalty— I'm only saying it the way I think it is. I believe that our country did not benefit at all by LBJ looking at his problems through political eyes.

Q: I'd like to expand on it but I think I'd like to cut this off and save it for a later discussion with your permission. I have a number of questions that have generated themselves. Just recalling your period of time of four years at the Schools at Quantico, outside of the things we have discussed so far, is there anything that sticks out of your mind—primarily as the real highlight?

General Krulak: No.

Q: We've pretty well covered everything?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: You were detached in June of '49—May of '49 and you went out first as executive officer and commanding officer of 1st Combat Service Group at Pendleton?

General Krulak: Yes. Actually, I was to be the CO and the

then CO was about to be transferred and he was shortly after I arrived. 1st Combat Service Group was 2200-man composite. A relic, of course, of the World War II ideas of combined logistic support and we had both supply and maintenance. It was a depot of sorts—a mobile depot like FSR, Force Service Regiment, was supposed to be in the Vietnam War although it became very fixed unintentionally. I found the outfit busy and in good shape, with the exception of its records and I found them in very bad shape. An incident occured that was historic with regard to the 1st Combat Service Group and the Marine Corps. We had a Depot Company. They were all Negroes. Conversely, all Negroes in the 1st Combat Service Group were in the Depot Company. It made no difference that they had other skills, such as one noncom, I remember, was an electronics technician and worked in electronics maintenance, but he was in the Depot Company too. We were segregated like crazy and that's the simple fact of it. We were.

Q: President Truman's order for desegregation had already come out?

General Krulak: No.

Q: Oh, it hadn't.

General Krulak: President Truman's order for desegregation

if I recall correctly, found its way into a Navy Department General Order in August of 1949. I read it. It was one of the finest written bureaucratic instruments I've read in a long time. It was good. The fellow who wrote it understood English. It said, with respect to this problem, that no member of the Naval Service shall be quartered, messed, promoted, disciplined, or otherwise administered with respect to race, creed, or color.

I read it through carefully and I sent for my executive officer and said, "Reduce the Depot Company to the strength of one man, a 1st Sergeant; transfer all the men in the Depot Company to the places where they belong in the 1st Combat Service Group by virtue of their skills; and if it turns out that some belong in the Depot Company, build its strength up only to that extent but the rest must go where they're supposed to go.

Move them from the barracks where they are now segregated to live in the places where they belong, and when its done let me know; today."

Which he did. It was simple. They all had an MOS and it was easy. They just worked it out on paper and then told them to move. These men in the Depot Company were not unhappy, they were not militant. Indeed, we had a drill team so good that it was sought after in places as far away as San Diego for football games and all.

They were proud; they were good men. But this was the wave of the present so, that's what we did. I knew what we

were up against. We had to comply at once.

Having done it, I then wrote my commanding general, the Division Commander, Erskine, a memorandum and had it delivered to him that day saying, "Having read the Navy Department General Order number so and so, here are the actions which I have taken." He sent for me and he just gave me hell, unshirted hell. He said, "Are you aware of the document that I have..here in my safe on the matter of the treatment of Negroes?" I said, "No, of course I have no knowledge of it." And he said, "Well, what you have done is not consistent with General Cates' orders."

I said, "Well, what I've done is consistent with the Secretary of Navy's orders and I felt I had done the right thing and I'll await your instructions."

Well, General Erskine was and is a very smart guy. As soon as I left, and I learned this from Larry Hayes, who was his G-1, he wrote a memorandum to the Commandant of the Marine Corps and told him what he had done, which was what I had done.

Why he gave me such a fit, I don't know. I suspect he did it because I had not come and consulted with him first, but I didn't think I had to and, as events turned out, I certainly didn't. I don't know what the dialogue was between him and the Commandant, but my guess is the Commandant, went along with it and that was desegregation in the Marine Corps as I saw it.

Q: I think that's a very good story. That's the only way it

could have been done.

General Krulak: It worked out all right.

Q: There was no static as far as you know from the barracks or the men?

General Krulak: Oh, not a bit. The troops were disinterested. Utterly disinterested. It didn't mean anything to the Negroes and it didn't mean anything to the white Marines in the Combat Service Group because they still had not lost that aspect of being Marines first. Now when I say lost it, you may feel that I'm implying that we have lost it now. This is all a matter of degree. I think in a very large sense we have lost it and I would be a hypocrite if I did not say so, but I don't mean lost in the sense that is not susceptible of being recaptured. I would only say that its an entirely different ballgame now.

Q: Carrying this on a little bit further, do you feel that the problem of militants being...the race problem per se had been handled better by the Marine Corps than any of the services?

General Krulak: I'm not sure that I'm a good witness as to how its been handled by the other services. My inclination would be that we have probably handled it better than the Army by a substantial measure, that we have probably handled

it in a different way but about as well as the Air Force and the Navy.

But all put together, all of us, and I'll speak only to the Marines because that's what I know about, I think we have handled it badly. You simply cannot compromise with principles. Principle ought to be immutable and yet we have compromised its principle. We have contended, we have pretended, we have sought to persuade ourselves and those around us that we have not compromised. But I'm convinced that we have and that we are reaping misery as a result.

Q: Is this the only thing that the Marine Corps is reaping misery from? I think primarily the situations, the things that are going on in Vietnam, not in a combat situation, this so-called fragging business where some unhappy individual would throw a grenade under someone's tent, which has happened much too often. I've never heard of such a thing.

General Krulak: I remember my first experience with an enlisted man behaving in this way. It was shortly before I was retired, two years ago, I was inspecting in Vietnam and I knew about a situation where a captain had lost an arm because of a grenade. The whole of our outfit was aghast at this and the individual was very quickly surfaced by his peers. I was inspecting the brig at Danang and I went into the maximum security area talking to, of course they were

manifestly real miscreants, asking them what they did and why they were there and just satisfying myself to what the score was.

I came to this fellow and he was very reticent. He said, "Well, I'm in here for some little difficulty with my captain." The turnkey took me aside and spoke of him in very bad words and said, "This is the fellow that threw the grenade."

I could tell that he was a pariah, that the rest of the Marines — and this is just 1968 mark you — that the rest of the Marines would have nothing to do with him. I was so emotional about being confronted with a man that would do this that I'm sure I violated the UCMJ and a lot of other things when I said, "I've found out who you are, you son-of-a-bitch, and I'll see you on the gallows."

Well, gee, I don't know what ever happened to him, but there was a good defense for him right there. But this was an emotional thing and I just represented the attitude of the Marines at large.

It has changed kaleidoscopically. My two sons, both recently returned from Vietnam, one of them in the 3d Division, felt this more than the one in the 1st Division. He told me about these instances of fragging, as you described it. Now, of course, its a more racial thing, a Negro Marine who feels that he is put upon. Maybe he is and if so, I'm saddened, but whether he is or he's not, he's guilty of this

sort of business. My youngest son told me that shortly after he took over his company, up near the Rock Pile, that

that he was a little rough on the troops in terms of their day to day activity. A young Negro PFC observed to him that this wasn't the way to help in longevity. He said, not knowing any better, "I grabbed him by the shirt and hit him and then said, "you son-of-a-bitch, if you ever say anything like this again to me or to anybody else around here, I'll kill you."

He said "I didn't mean it" but the man collapsed and I did not send him back to his — to our rear echelon which was the common thing to do to get him out of your hair. I kept him there and watched him and he was not only obedient, he was terrified."

Now I give you this as a second hand, perhaps incorrectly related example of one thing — there is not a double standard, there can be no double standard in a Corps that deserves to be called the U. S. Marines. They've got to look at it through one single set of eyes.

Now I don't mean they can say they're looking at it through one set of eyes and then go about assuaging the desires and aspirations of every amateur in the Pentagon and still say, "We're the Marines and we're for Green Power." You have got to behave that way, too. You can't just talk the game.

My contention is that the Marines lost something when they started talking the game instead of acting the game. You may say, well you can't shovel it up stream. This is the wave of the future, everybody has to be allowed to have long

hair or what not, because that's the way it is. Okay. It's easy to say that that's an escape hatch, but the escape hatch' is sort of like the Dutch boy's thumb in the dike — the hole gets bigger and bigger. You've got to plant your heels. There I feel is where we failed.

Q: I think its quite true and I agree with you and I think that you told me one time in a discussion, I asked you something about integrating and you came up with the statement — this was 20 years or more ago — you said, "Frank, it depends on how badly you want to be a Marine," which I think is pretty good summation of what a man's attitude should be in the Marine Corps.

General Krulak: Now the Marines are doing a good thing. I applaud them. But I don't greatly admire them. I applaud them because its wise and I don't admire them particularly because its made easy for them. They're culling out the Group Fours and the Project 100,000s and the dissidents and recalcitrants because, poor fellows, its the only thing left to them, administrative separation. This is so belated, so after the fact.

Attrition down here at MCRD, God Bless the Marine Corps, is somewhere around 11% now. Great, I'm delighted to hear it. When I had this same job we had to struggle, we were ashamed if it was much more than 4%. Well, what's an additional seven? All Project 100,000? No. It's the dissidents, the guys who don't belong in the Marine Corps because of the way

they think. I think that they are doing a fine thing, but as I say, I don't admire them particularly for it because its the only way to go.

Q: Easy way out.

General Krulak: Yes. Its the only thing left to them.

Q: It would be a nice thing if the Marine Corps could do something to rehabilitate or to make solid citizens out of these people.

General Krulak: It would indeed. But its asking a great deal. But it would.

Q: This would be at the expense of the over all morale.

Well, to get back to the Combat Service Group — this was

a unique assignment for you. You had generally been doing...

General Krulak: I had no experience with it at all. I enjoyed it. I was sent back to Quantico, as you may see on that list of transfers, on temporary duty to give a little counsel on another little merger flap, which was brewing and I was there for a week or ten days. While I was there I received a telephone call from Larry Hayes saying hurry back, General Erskine — I'll go back — we were shifting from the BLT system, the J Tables, to the next tables, whatever the hell it was...

Q: I think it was the King Table.

General Krulak: Yes. They were going to put four BLTs together, the 7th Marines, the 4th Marines, I've forgotten what they were, and make the 5th Regiment, and I was to be the Commanding Officer. So, he said get back here as soon as you can. I did and when I returned to Pendleton it was time to go and we put the 5th Marines together in September of '49. Our last battalion was Jimmy Blais' BLT which he brought back from Guam. We integrated them and we literally moved into the field and lived there.

End Session IV, Tape 1, Side 1

Session IV, Tape 1, Side 2

Q: You had been selected for colonel or made your number in August of '49.

General Krulak: I was selected when I was in Quantico and I took the promotion examination there and then made my number about the time the 5th Marines was organized.

Q: Your's was a deep selection wasn't it?

General Krulak: There were no deep selections for the rank of colonel until much later. In World War II there were a couple. Shapley was one, but this was a routine affair.

Q: So you took over the 5th Marines as a colonel?

General Krulak: Yes. For the next period of time we just went through the most intensive training that we could generate, including airlift operations. We had an interesting operation, the only one of its kind ever before or since, where we took the bulk of our regiment, got all the transport aircraft that the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing had, borrowed one of the three existing Mars seaplanes from the Naval Air Transport Service, put 120 Marines in it with rubber boats and we had a combined air-landed seaplane-borne (amphibious operation) on San Nicholas island off the west coast here. The seaplane-borne

force landed in rubber boats in the dark. I remember the commanding officer of the Mars squadron when we went up and made this proposition to him. He said, "Well, there's one thing I don't know about, we've never landed one of these airplanes in the open sea. But I think it could be done.

We practiced it and found that it could be done very well. We had a lot of training right here in San Diego with the Mars. We landed at night, at San Nicholas in the seaplanes, paddled ashore, did their part of the exercise, while the major force landed by air on the airfield.

In addition to that exercise we had one that was called Demon III, which was put on for the Army Command and General Staff College — a fine, realistic amphibious exercise at Aliso Beach. An interesting bit of history. I borrowed a Navy Ho35 helicopter and moved my command group (2 at a time) ashore from the AGC in it.

We had just no sooner finished Demon III in June, the 1st of June, when I got orders to Honolulu. General Shepherd was designated CG FMFPac and he wanted me to be his G-3. We saddled up and left on the 22nd and we were at sea on the 26th when the Korean War broke out. I sent a message and requested that I be permitted to return to the 1st Division because I felt sure that the 5th Marines were going to be involved and it would be better to be involved at that level — the division level in my old regiment than at the FMF level.

Well, they said, "no," which sort of disappointed me, We arrived and General Shepherd hadn't arrived yet. He was

on his way, also. General Watson was the force commander.

Q: He had gone already, hadn't he?

General Krulak: That's right. The senior person present was the Chief of Staff, Gregon Williams. I reported, relieved Al Bowser, and this was all in the matter of a day — Colonel Williams sent for me after I had been there a few hours and said with much, much agitation, emotion, "We'll have to answer this message," and he handed me a message. The message was very simple. It was from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I don't know how come we got it, maybe we were a joint action addressee, but I know we were the action addressee. "How soon can you sail for Korea: (a) a BLT (b) a RLT?"

So, I took it and went back to my office and sat down and looked at it for a couple of minutes and took a pencil and wrote a message, "Your so and so: (a) 48 hours, (b) five days." I typed it up and took it into Williams. He said, "How do you know this?" It had only been ten minutes. I said, "I don't. I don't know it but we can't afford to say anything else." Of course he was persuaded by that simple logic and he sent the message off. And that set the Marines in motion to Korea because of the answer came back immediately, "we opt for B, and let's see you do it." General Shepherd arrived about that time. The next thing I knew I was back on the west coast with General Shepherd and

General Smith, O. P., and General Cates, everybody supervising the poor 5th Marines getting ready to go. Thank God they were ready to go.

Q: Ray Murray had the 5th Marines?

General Krulak: Yes. He had been my executive officer and he succeeded to command. They were ready to go. I didn't have any worry about them, but they had to constitute a brigade headquarters and they had to provide the third platoon of each rifle company, which we didn't have. Lots of others.

There was really no great problem getting the 5th Marines underway. No problem. They took off. General Shepherd and I went to Japan to look into the matter of their reception and how they would participate in the operation because at this time, the Army forces that had already been committed and the fighting up around Taegu and tumbling southward at a rapid rate in the face of a very powerful North Lorean advance. It was quite evident that the Marines were going to be desperately needed.

Q: From my point of view in analyzing the action of the Army on the early days of Korea, it's a shock and a shame that the powers that be in the Army, General MacArthur certainly, would have allowed the state to exist in which the Army forces in Japan held no major exercises and maneuvers from the time of the occupation until Korea broke out.

General Krulak: The poor Army! They got caught in the boobytrap that has hurt them often before. The maintenance of the basic structure absorbs so much of their strength, during times of austerity that the people who really do the fighting have to suffer. This is the way it was in Japan on the 25th of June 1950. They had the basic structure — the headquarters of this and the headquarters of that, but when you got right down to the gut units, they were thin; the emphasis on training and readiness, expenditure of ammunition and travel and all the costly things that go with it, suffered.

When they flew those lads over to Korea, I'm sure that as individuals they acquitted themselves very well. But the simple fact is they got the hell kicked out of them and they would be the first to acknowledge it. Not because they were not brave or willing, but because they were not ready. They just took an awful shellacking.

When the 5th Marines landed in Pusan, they put them on the trains and sent them out to Masan. The Pusan perimeter was in real hazard. And I'll only make this comment about the 5th Marines, because you can get far more explicit information from other sources, Craig, for instance. When they were given an order to attack the first time, nobody expected anything to happen. They took off and they just beat the hell out of everything in front of them and the next thing they knew they had to stop them because they had nobody on their flanks.

It was a different state of mind. They were ready. They could fight. It didn't take them very long. All the way from Walton Walker on down they knew that if they said to this outfit — "go fight" — they'd go fight. At the Naktong they did a great thing to help stabilize the Pusan Perimeter.

Q: Before we get involved in discussion of your staff duties, or your liason duties and trips to the Far East for preparation for Inchon, I'd like to talk a little about your G-3 section, which I recall had some very fine men in it.

General Krulak: Yes. My deputy was Henderson. Real good. One of my captains was Jimmy Ord. A real good captain. For awhile, my across the street neighbor here — Lowell Reed...

Q: Oh, is he over here?

General Krulak: Yes, he lives across the street.

Q: The aviator?

General Krulak: Yes. He was an aviator. For awhile we had Bob Little, who was a flyer.

Q: Jow Missar?

General Krulak: Jow Missar. A real hard worker. He did a fine job.

Q: Spencer Pratt?

General Krulak: Pratt. Amos, the administrative officer of the G-3 section was Amos; who later became a lieutenant colonel. He was warrant officer then. All told, a very aggressive, hard working outfit.

Q: Who was your Naval Gunfire Officer? I've been trying to remember who he was.

General Krulak: I'll think of it. We won't — I'll think of it.

Q: A lieutenant commander.

General Krulak: I just can't recall now.

Q: One thing that surprised me as a real junior officer, the "juniorest" officer on the staff, was your relationship with General Shepherd. I've talked to him about this and also to General Burger, who was Chief of Staff, the fact that you had complete entree to General Shepherd almost at any time, that you two worked very, very closely. Was this at the exclusion of the rest of the staff or was this a particular relationship that you had?

General Krulak: Well, there are two elements to it. General Shepherd came from an era when the operations officer was the most important officer on the staff. I don't regard that as in any sense true. Now, particularly. He behaved that way and so did many of his contemporaries. General Watson had a

similar relationship with Greene. And you found it elsewhere Vandegrift with Thomas at Guadalcanal. So, in this sense, his behavior, where his G-3 was concerned, was classic. It didn't relate to me as an individual.

Beyond this, we did have a good professional rapport and I found this sometimes to be a bad point. It exacerbated my and his relationships with the Chief of Staff, occasionally. The two Chiefs of Staff with whom I operated in this connection Burger at FMFPac and McQueen in the 6th Division. Both of them were good men and they rode with it and did their best to help. But, it was complicated. In addition, it occassionally affected my relationship with my peers in the staff. The G-2 and G-4 particularly, because General Shepherd would not be unlikely to say do so and so and I might not behave correctly. Instead of saying to him — now this is really G-2's business; I'd go to the G-2 or go to the Chief of Staff, or I'd do it myself. But I'd make some mistake and occasionally find this to be a normal human failing but one which, in retrospect, I should have gotten around one way or other. I felt that I did have his confidence and that if I made a recommendation to him that it had better be right because he would be more likely to accept it than not. That made the job in some respects even more -difficult.

Q: I know you worked long hard hours, there's no question about that. That was a hard working staff certainly at this

period of time and a hard working G-3 section.

General Krulak: Yes it was and they were good people.

Q: You made a number of trips back and forth to...

General Krulak: Japan and Korea. Perhaps the most significant of them were those that related to Inchon and to the Hungnam withdrawal. The most important ones that related to Inchon were, first, the famous session with MacArthur with which I think General Shepherd has probably familarized you. I'll tell you my story because maybe it will supplement his.

Each time we went to Tokyo, General Shepherd would go and see General MacArthur. In July we went over to Masan to see the 1st Brigade. We came back and MacArthur said, "The way to do this deal is to envelop the whole thing, to make a landing." I don't know if he said Inchon or not, "To make an amphibious landing. But I can't do it without a division of Marines." And he said, "Do you think you could provide a division of Marines?" General Shepherd said, "Yes. MacArthur said, "You really could?" And General Shepherd said, "Yes." He said, "What I need is a message that lays this out." General Shepherd- came out of MacArthur's office and he and I sat down at the desk of one of MacArthur's aides and wrote a message to the Joint Chiefs of Staff describing the need and saying that it just couldn't be done without a special amphibious assault force and he

requested a division of Marines. He took it in and MacArthur then and there just released it. He scribbled on it, "Send this out;" it was in longhand. I wrote it; General Shepherd probably dictated nine out of ten of the words.

That hit Washington with a prodigious thud where the Marines are concerned, because there were a few little unhurdled hurdles such as there wasn't any division of Marines. There was just a great big shell and that's all. The 5th Marines were in Korea and that was the only regiment in the 1st Division. They had taken something out of the 1st Division to provide it. This hit Washington very hard. General Shepherd took off and went back to Honolulu and had some rather spirited exchanges with General Cates on this subject. General Cates, seeing the thing from a more pragmatic point of view and less emotional one, was not prepared to say that we could provide it. But he was instinctively a fighter and he didn't want to say that we couldn't.

Q: Did you feel that to be an historic moment?

General Krulak: In MacArthur's office? You're damned right and so did General Shepherd and so did MacArthur. He got some sort of a qualified response quickly from the JCS, saying something to the effect of the Marines are not sure but General Cates had not told them no. Well, he went about producing a

division as quickly as he could by simply transferring the whole of the 2d Division — what little there was of it — all but 500 people across the continent.

We went back to Camp Pendleton and did what we could to support the creation of the 1st Division minus; - that is the organization of the 7th and 1st Regiments. As you know the elements of it came from many sources; for instance there was a BLT in the Med. Hell, it came around the other way and joined at the beach at Inchon, we were that thin. It got there on time, too.

I remember there was pretty spirited dialogue at Camp Pendleton between General Cates and General Shepherd and to a lesser extent General Smith, who was the division commander, about what we could and couldn't do. Neither General Shepherd nor I were very popular at that time because we had obviously overextended. We talked pretty big. I know he'd do it again and so would I. We did exactly the right thing. We marched to the sound of the guns and the proof of the pudding is in the eating, D-Day at Inchon was met and met with dramatic success.

Of course, it was the tremendous professionalism of the Marine Corps Reserve that did it. That's the thing that did it. These guys just fell into their old slots and the next thing you know they were fighting again. Inchon was a great success and that's the reason.

There was much debate about whether Inchon was the place and I had many opportunites to talk to the key participants

and even to try and persuade MacArthur that Inchon was not the place. I did not believe it was. Now General Shepherd didn't feel as I did, he was not so conditioned as I against the hydrography of Inchon. I wanted to land a little farther south. I've just forgotten the name of the place, where the hydrography was somewhat better. We didn't get involved with islands and so on.

We went to the meeting in Toyko about which much has been written. Heinl has written about it in great detail. He and I disagree on a couple of minor points but his recital of it is pretty accurate, I believe, and it puts Admiral Doyle in his correct perspective as a very brave man indeed. He stood up to Admiral Sherman and even stood up to MacArthur in terms of his estimate of the difficulty of the Inchon operation. But they couldn't have had a better man.

We did have problems in terms of command. MacArthur was committed to Almond and he gave Almond this job. "But," he said to General Shepherd, "I understand the great complexity of this amphibious business and I would like you to come out and join my staff and be my personal advisor and mentor on the essence of what we are doing here. I'll make you any sort of a plenipotentiary you want, but I want you to come."

General Shepherd asked if he could bring me and General MacArthur said, "Sure." That's how we got involved in Mac-Arthur's headquarters in the pre-Inchon period. This made for trouble, because General Shepherd knows how to do it, and furthermore he was determined the way he wanted it done

was the way it was going to be done. He occasionally looked over O. P. Smith's shoulder, particularly during the late planning stage at Kobe. He and I went out there and I'd say we were about as popular as a skunk at a family reunion because the 1st Division staff were busy and they were doing the best they could. Their plans were the best they could produce at the time.

Well, General Shepherd looked at the tactical plan and I looked at it. He and I talked about it and we both concluded that something or other should be different. I've forgotten what.

Then General Shepherd went to tell O. P. Smith and this didn't go down very well. But I must say that General Shepherd's tactical judgement was outstanding and I'm sure he didn't do them any harm, he just caused a little bit of temperature. The Inchon plan finally made its way out although the over-larding of Almond and his headquarters didn't make it any easier. They really didn't know much about this business.

I'll give you an example. We went to Inchon and on the morning of D-Day when the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, was being launched from its LSTs in LVTs to land on Wolmi-do, Almond and I were standing on the bridge of the Mount Mckinley. It was a dramatic moment—airplanes were bombing the island and the smoke was coming up and things were burning—a standard pre-H-Hour deal.

Just to be saying something, I said to Almond, "You know, that LVT is really a wonderful machine." And here is what

he said, I give you my solemn word, "Yeah, can those things float?" Now that's true, that's true. I immediately went and told about ten people because I didn't want it forgotten. "Can those things float?" Here is the fellow who is commanding the landing force, technically, at Inchon. "Can those things float?"

Well, Inchon was a real tribute to everything that ever made the word "professional" meaningful. Its a tribute to the tremendously long heads of some fine people. The subsequent few days, the operation within the beachhead, the crossing of the Han River; General Shepherd and I watched them. I remember he had one very sharp dialogue with 0. P. Smith in terms of aggressiveness and I think this made for unhappiness. General Shepherd was a really tremendously aggressive, almost headlong, fighter. General Smith was a very sober and analytical fighter and they didn't jibe. Shepherd felt that they were moving ahead slowly and they were, as a matter of fact. When you have a fellow on the run, as they did, you can take all sorts of chances. We finally returned to Honolulu and the Marines reembarked. They went around, as you know, to Hamhung and then got involved with the move north to the Reservoir.

Q: You were back in Washington at the time of the Reservoir.

General Krulak: Oh, yes. I had...

Q: I followed you out that day.

General Krulak: Oh, yes. I had been asked to go back and

make a talk to the Marine Corps Schools on Inchon. See, it was just over and they wanted to know about it. So General Shepherd sent me back there. We had just come back from Inchon and I saddled up in a few days and went back to Washington, to Quantico. I arrived in Washington and went to my family's house. I was in the shower, I'd been there just 30 minutes, when my mother-in-law knocked on the bath-room door and said, "Colonel Rydalch wants to talk to you and its urgent."

So I quickly ran to the telephone and Ed said, "I'm welcoming you and I'm telling you I just bought you an airplane ticket to go back to Honolulu. We have a message from General Shepherd saying that he is on his way to the Reservoir and wants you to join him there at the earliest moment."

Q: That was on a Friday?

General Krulak: I've forgotten.

Q: 1 December.

General Krulak: That's about right. I got my clothes on and just in time to get to the airport. Remember, I had just arrived. Came all the way from Honolulu and turned right around, flew back to Honolulu. I was utterly exhausted by then and got there just in time to get a kit of field clothes and got on a charter DC-4 that was absolutely full of soldiers being flown out there.

I'll never forget it if I live to be a thousand. They had come from the west coast, just stopped for fuel and the soldiers had only been off the airplanes a little bit. They got back aboard and I was the last one to board. Boy! The smell of feet just about chased me out of there.

Jim Shaw, who was the FMFPac Rep in Toyko met me at Haneda and he said, "We don't have time to bring you into town because there's a plane leaving." This was about ten o'clock at night. "There is a plane leaving but I brought you your winter clothing. We can go into the men's room here and you can change."

And I did. I put on my parka and my boots and all my clothes. Right in the head at Haneda, where Japanese were wandering in and out wondering what the heck was going on. I went out and got in this DC-4 and we flew to Hamhung and landed there in the snow. It was just cold as sin. My resistence was way down anyhow. I got there, we got off, there was no place to go, no place to sleep. It was just a big turmoil. I dragged my parachute bag over to the air terminal and I ran into somebody I knew — Max Volcanesk.

Q: The aviator?

General Krulak: Yes. He had a squadron, an F-9 squadron, and he gave me someplace to sleep. It was very late, I slept the rest of that night and I got up the next morning to go and join

General Shepherd. I finally made contact with him, I guess, at Koto-ri.

Q: I think we ought to add, for the record, that the time you made these flights back and forth across the Pacific was still in the day of the prop-driven airplanes.

General Krulak: I'll say it was.

Q: It was what, twelve hours from Pearl Harbor to the coast and another thirteen hours across country?

General Krulak: Yes. About that. Twelve and twelve, we'll say. Then I turned around and came back. My recollection is it was 80 flying hours from Honolulu to Hamhung. 80 hours of flying. Then I made contact with General Shepherd and things were pretty grim.

The withdrawal from the Reservoir was about to begin, and we stayed there for that, and did what little we could, which wasn't a great deal, and then participated in the planning for the Hungnam evacuation. I will only insert here at this time a comment about Hungnam and the Hungnam evacuation. As General Shepherd will tell you, we both opposed this evacuation, for the simple reason that we were not convinced that if there were a million Chinese that they could sustain themselves and chase everybody off the wonderful hill positions around Hungnam and that great port.

But MacArthur's headquarters and MacArthur, too, had

the wind up. They really did have the wind up. The reverses had apparently traumatized them to the point where they were unable to detach themselves. And, of course, the Joint Chiefs of Staff too; in its wisdom, they have only one job — the strategic direction of the armed forces of the United States. On this occasion there should have been some sobriety in their appraisal of the great stakes involved in our abandoning a position north of the 38th parallel. It just shocked me to see that there was the "bug-out" philosophy throughout MacArthur's headquarters, throughout Almond's headquarters.

I didn't see any of that in the Marines I must say, and, in retrospect it makes me so proud. The Marines were so puzzled by the whole thing. Of course they were exhausted, the fighting that went all the way from Yudam-ni to Hagaru-ri to Koto-ri and southward took an awful lot out of them and the weather took an awful lot out of them. But except for shaking their heads and saying how tired they were there was not any essence of defeatism, and I wasn't alone on commenting that the hills and the artillery and the naval gunfire really looked good and I'd be damned if I thought that the Chinamen could chase our people off the hills.

I'm sure there were some soldiers who have felt the same way. But the evacuation took place and it was efficient and the sight of our burning piles of our equipment is still etched in my memory. I'll never forget it. General Shepherd and I were vocal — very much so — with MacArthur's staff,

but they were so terrified from their own reports that they could not hear.

At the very climactic time, unfortunately, both General Shepherd and I got pneumonia. Probably both for the same reason, the combination of exhaustion and exposure. We were in a cruddy old schoolhouse in Hungnam. Just sick as pups unable to get out of the cots. That's sort of a blank period of about four days where we had no influence on the affairs and not even an opportunity to see what was going on. We got back to Honolulu in a fairly exhausted shape, having seen the Marines squared away, reasonably so. But, of course, they went to the area around Pohang and spent the rest of the winter beating the bushes for guerrillas.

Q: Did you have any personal confrontation with any of Almond's staff because, apparently from what General 0. P. Smith told me and from what General Smith said, that this was a real weird man and a real weird set up?

General Krulak: Oh. We had lots of interface with Almond and the staff too. I'm not sure you'd call it confrontation. Let's face it, they were working as hard as they could. Largely they were spinning their wheels particularly where amphibious matters were concerned. But Almond was a man of extraordinary self-confidence and no one told him much. He had a lot of sycophants around him who made life of the subordinate units even more difficult. His immediate supporter, Ruffner, who was his Chief of Staff and subsequently became

commanding general of one of his divisions, was not a powerful personality.

Q: But O. P. Smith certainly had his problems with Almond?

General Krulak: It's quite obvious that their personalities didn't jibe, that there was no real communication between the two. Smith is a man of considerable patience but it's obvious that he lost most of it and he didn't have the suave manner which would permit him to get around Almond, either.

Q: The fact that Almond had been assigned as the landing force commander was rather ridiculous, it seems to me, in view of the fact that General Shepherd was the senior Marine in the Pacific.

General Krulak: Well, MacArthur was a little apologetic about that. He said to General Shepherd, "I've already promised this landing force commander job to Almond, but I'd like you to come and advise him."

Q: Almond, at the same time, was Chief of Staff, was he not?

General Krulak: Anomalously he was Chief of Staff of MacArthur's Supreme Headquarters and Commanding General of the 10th Corps.

Q: Which would have been quite a job for anybody even with confidence.

General Krulak: Even if he were good at it. Yes, sure.

Q: What took place after this very dramatic period at the end

of the year as far as your G-3 duties at FMFPac were concerned?

General Krulak: The most important thing that took place then is that I went to Korea.

Q: In June?

General Krulak: Yes. It was about four months and nothing of great importance took place. I went to Korea in June, arrived just after the division had finished its second north-south/ south-north vibration in that yo-yo period. I joined-the division during the time when they had a few days of rest fortunately and when I arrived, General Thomas, in his characteristic way, instead of saying cruise around and see what you want to learn before you relieve — McAlister, — he said, "You're Chief of Staff." I arrived in the middle of the afternoon and I was busy at once.

Then, of course, the affairs at that time are pretty well chronicled and if I had to describe any of it as being of personal importance it's these things: Operations Wind-mill I and II and Operation Blackbird, the first three tactical helicopter operations in the history of the world. We planned, then we executed,- them and they were satisfactory. What did we have? One squadron of 15 HRS helicopters, little fellows that were supposed to carry about 6 or 8 troops, and I guess the second operation, which was conducted at an

altitude of about 2,000 feet, the load was reduced to 3. But, nevertheless, they were successful, the planning, the general tactics were not inconsistent with what we do today. That was history.

Unquestionably they have been well chronicled. But I would only say that was a moment in history. Blackbird was, of course, a nighttime helicopter operation. Unbelievable that we should even try it. We had none of the operational aids deserving of the name that we have now. And the helicopter wasn't any good anyhow; but they did it.

The second thing about which little has been said, in the late September I guess it was, we proposed to the Commanding General of the 10th Corps, who was General Clovis Byers, that the way to handle our tactical problem, which had become very stablized just after the capture of the "Punch Bowl," was to conduct an amphibious envelopment; to embark rapidly from embarkation points on the east coast and land at Kojo, getting behind the forces that were causing so much trouble clear across the front.

Byers was most enthusastic. He took this to the Eighth Army and the Eighth Army liked it too. They took it to the Navy and we heard nothing about it for several days until we were summoned to a conference in Seoul, Eighth Army Head-quarters.

General Thomas and our G-2, Tom Williams and our G-4, Custis Burton, and I went over there, and, of course, we

were current on what we wanted to do. We knew how many LCUs and LSTs, we needed — it was to be a very short shore-to-shore affair. The distance was no more than 40 miles or so.

We knew about Kojo, many of us had been to Kojo, actually been there. Elements of the 7th Marines went to Kojo from Hamhung after we landed there the year before so it was not a mystery; we knew about Kojo. It was a piece of cake, just a piece of cake. Our logistics were already in place, we had supplies. It was no strain. We were going to embark just go around the enemy's exposed flank and land at Kojo.

So we went to the conference at Seoul with great enthusiasm. The presentation was first made by the Eighth Army and they were followed by the Navy. We were just listening and, between the two of them, they had a lot of. discussion. It was laid out in terms of a planning-marshall-ing period of six weeks and when it was all over they asked for any questions or comments.

I said, "I just have one observation and it has to do with the planning and marshalling time which you have characterized as being six weeks. I would feel that's a little long." This Army general said, "What would you reckon is an appropriate time?" And I said, "72 hours." And boy, you could have heard a pin drop. You look around the room and the Marines were just elated; you could tell that this is what they wanted to hear.

Well, it blew up the conference; the conference ended

right then. When it was over, General Thomas commented, "That was just fine. That was the thing to do." General Byers had a couple of people there, too. One of them was his Chief of Staff, a fellow named John Guthrie. He came up and said, "By George, that really blew them up!"

We really could have gone to Kojo and felt that the idea would be approved. Why it was vetoed by MacArthur, I'll never know. But that would have again cracked it open and we would have been in a good position. Those are the things which I regard as important at that period.

Q: A thing that comes to mind, as I recall, based on looking at some of the personnel that we had, officers that we had after Korea, the effect of something like four years plus in Korea, fighting under those conditions that we did in Korea had a bad effect on the Marine Corps, in the sense that you had a lot of junior officers and even junior field grade officers who had been in combat for the first time who, while supposedly being experts in the conduct of amphibious operations, their only combat experience had been static ground warfare. Did you find this sort of deleterious later?

General Krulak: Yes, a little. But isn't it so that the experience of each war rises to haunt you as you fight the next one?

Q: An aphorism that holds true in all cases.

General Krulak: Sure. The experience in Korea certainly influenced our thinking in the 1954-1962 period. But, it also gave us something. It gave us battle experience. It may not have been the precise kind of battle, but it gave us battle experience. So it was not all lost by a long sight.

Q: I think that this is a good time to turn the tape over and discuss your assignment as Secretary of the General Staff. Had you known, or at what point did you know that General Shepherd was to be the Commandant?

General Krulak: He came to Korea on an inspection, he was CGFMFPac. He came in October and he told us in confidence that he was going to be Commandant and it was subsequently announced shortly after that. He told General Thomas and me that he wanted us both to be in his staff in Washington. He didn't say exactly what to me, but he did tell General Thomas that he wanted him to be his Chief of Staff. And then later that year I was ordered back to Washington and when I got there he told me that he wanted to make a reorganization and wanted to create this system and wanted to make me Secretary of the General Staff.

Q: This was the first one at Headquarters.

General Krulak: Yes.

End Session IV, Tape 1, Side 2

Session IV, Tape 2, Side 1

Q: To Headquarters Marine Corps now, and as Secretary of the General Staff.

General Krulak: There were not too many things of real significance in that period. Those which were, were the 1952 alterations in the National Security Act and I participated in the Marine Corps part of that. The development of the Marine Corps' functional participation in the Joint Chiefs of Staff which came about at this time and I participated in working this out with General Bradley's staff group and our first liaison officer, who was Gus Larson.

By all odds, the most important, from my point of view, was the revision of General Order #5. This was, I guess, my most important job. I was a one-man task force.

It was a real climax because Forrest Sherman wanted the Marines' shirt. It was just that simple. He discerned that the way to get it was first through the matter of requirements; who establishes the Marine Corps; whoestab-lishes the Marine Corps' requirements. He was going to have every one of those validated and vetted by the Chief of Naval Operations. He saw the Commandant of the Marine Corps as a bureau chief.

The negotiations were of great length, very exhaustive and exhausting. Party lines were drawn up within the civilian element of the Navy Department early on. I suppose

I worked on GO #5 for a year and a half. Admiral Libby, who lives here now was one of the principel agents involved. He was sort of Admiral Sherman's worker.

Q: Is this the man known as Lord Plushbottom?

General Krulak: No. Lord Plushbottom was another fellow, named Mitchell. Libby was and is a very very bright man and he saw his way through this thing very clearly and, whether or not he agreed with the instructions that he got, he carried them out with skill and with a great deal of tenacity. He was a real antagonist and believe it or not we became warm friends after GO #5 was over. To bring it to a climax — he works for me now.

Q: Oh, really?

General Krulak: Yes. Mr. Gates was, of course an important factor in it. An uncertain and undependable factor. We didn't know where he was going to stand at any given moment. However, it came out right. GO #5 was correct where the Marines were concerned. I just look on that as one of the few things which I can call a triumph. I really worked on it and it came out correct.

I wouldn't say it was a single-handed thing at all. I had absolute, unqualified loyalty from the Commandant and from the Chief of Staff. Unqualified. It couldn't have been better.

The outcome was good for the Marines.

Q: At this time, General Thomas undertook the reorganization of the Headquarters, putting it on a proper staff functioning basis, as I recall. I've been told everything went off fairly well with the exception of the reorganization of the Quartermaster General's Department.

General Krulak: He had great trouble there because General Hill had General Shepherd's confidence and respect and because General Hill was a very skillful talker and was able to intermingle those things which were executive and administrative, and statutory. Those things were just the way he wanted them.

He made it a tough job, particularly with respect to the dollars and the establishment of a comptroller in Marine Corps Headquarters was General Thomas' idea. He selected Shoup for the job. Shoup was precisely the personality that was required for it. He had the endurance and the patience and the painstaking personality to permit him to stand up to General Hill. He had great support from General Thomas and great support from me. Indeed, I have a copy of the first manual of the Fiscal Director which was approved by General Shepherd over General Hill's objection, on which Shoup inscribed his gratitude to me for what he said could not be accomplished without my help. I did help him; General Thomas helped him vastly more. And it came out very well. Shoup was

exactly the right choice for that job and he did it extremely well.

Q: There was a lot of "blood-letting" along the way, was there not?

General Krulak: Quite a bit. Shoup and Hill never saw eye to eye afterwards. But, it was the correct thing to do and it had to be done. General Shepherd had the wit to understand it.

Q: You were four years at Headquarters?

General Krulak: Four years. '52 to '56, slightly less than four years, but I went then to be the Chief of Staff of the FMFPac.

Q: You returned to FMFPac?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: For whom?

General Krulak: Brice.

Q: General Brice had taken over?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: Was he the first aviator FMFPac?

General Krulak: No. Geiger.

Q: I never considered Geiger as an aviator in view of his assignments in later years.

General Krulak: Oh, yes, but he was.

Q: He was, but he...

General Krulak: Oh, sure.

Q: He had primarily infantry duties.

General Krulak: Oh, no. He was an aviator. Very properly so. I went out there and worked for Brice. On my way through San Francisco I just happened to be there when the Commandant of Marine Corps was there en route to somewhere. There was a reception for him at the Marine Memorial Club. General Ames asked me to come — Amy and me. So we went.

We were just about to sail on a transport and as we went through the receiving line, General Shepherd said, "You can be expecting to hear some good news." This was my first intimation that I was going to be the object of the first Marine Corps deep selection for general. I've forgotten, those may not have been his exact words. When I arrived in Honolulu, the first day I arrived, the announcements came out, the board reported out. Well, there I was selected for brigadier general just reporting to a colonel's job, but quick arithmetic showed since I was the last one on the list

that it would probably be a year, about a year, and I think it was just about a year, before I made my number. During that year, I really don't think there was an awful lot that was noteworthy. I was anxious, of course, to get away from Pearl Harbor as soon as I was promoted. I was promoted on July l,and I think, July 4th I left for Okinawa.

Q: How did you happen to get assigned to FMFPac again?

General Krulak: Brice asked for me. See, Brice was the Assistant Commandant for Air. He was transferred to FMFPac and he asked General Shepherd for my services.

Q: That's a picture over there, I guess, the bottom left, the day that you got your star at FMFPac. I must say Mrs. Krulak looks as lovely now as she did then.

General Krulak: We'll tell her that.

Mrs. Krulak: I'm listening.

Q: Well, I've told you that before.

Mrs. Krulak: Yes. Thank you.

Q: You're welcome. It's my pleasure. You got your star and you left shortly afterwards. What was the total effect of this deep selection? Was this the year that Carey Randall got his?

General Krulak: No. He was retired; he wasn't selected.

Q: Oh, he was retired?

General Krulak: Retired and called back to active duty and promoted as a result of the action of the Secretary of Defense.

Q: That caused quite a bit of consternation.

General Krulak: Only because...well, Randall had lost his empathy with the Marine Corps at that point. He would have been applauded under other circumstancws, but it was a matter of Randall having lost his empathy. But, he was a retired officer. What effect did my selection have? Well, just the effect that you could imagine. There are two kinds of people. The kind that like it and the kind that don't. To his everlasting credit, the Chief of Staff of FMFPac, Whitey Lloyd put it to me straight. I had just walked into the building and he walked up to me and said, "The selection board is out and you got selected. I think that there were fifty people who were just as deserving as you."

That was his viewpoint and honestly stated. Then on the other hand, of course, there were those who saw in it an opening up in the Marine Corps, promotion system, and were pleased. So it just went across the spectrum. The

people who talked to you, generally, speak favorably, but those who talk to others may or may not. So, it's just what you would expect.

I went out to the Far East and reported aboard to be Tom Wornham's ADC. The 3d Division was divided into two parts. A little over half in Okinawa and a little less than half in Japan. He said that he had to have his ADC in Japan and he couldn't command it directly at that distance so he was going to consitute it as a task force, and put me in command. It was a big brigade; it was about seven or eight thousand.

Q: Can I go back and ask you just one thing? How do you feel as a rule, aside from your own deep selection at this time, as regarding the principle of deep selection?

General Krulak: I think it's fine, just fine. It's predicated on the assumption that selection boards are comprised of good men. And they are; that selection boards are not given instructions which in any sense contravene their oath. Under these circumstances, the law is adequate. You can use deep selection any day that you want. You can select out any day you want. I think it consistent with the Officer Personnel Act and I would be in favor of it.

Q: Who was on your selection board?

General Krulak: I can't remember.

Q: Now to get back to Japan, you had the 3d Brigade.

General Krulak: I went to Japan, to Camp McGill. That's where the headquarters was. We had one regiment at Camp Fuji and artillery and tanks and engineers all spread around between Camp Fuji and Camp McGill.

I was there for just a very brief time until I got another message to come back to Okinawa immediately. I got back and Wornham informed me that he was being transferred on the briefest notice, leaving the next day and that I was to relieve him. So here i was; I'd been a Brigadier General for a month and I found myself in command of a division.

It wasn't intended that way, they intended that Shapley would relieve Wornham, but Shapley was otherwise engaged and couldn't do it. So, I was the division commander for three months, I guess.

During that time, a terrible thing happened, which I will never forget — actually two things. First, we had the biggest typhoon in Okinawa since 1945. And our logistic structure was just destroyed. Jumbo quonset huts disappeared in the air and material was damaged beyond repair. We had a hell of a time trying to explain that.

That was no sooner over then we lost thirteen men by drowning in a five minute period, in an undertow and this was not long after Ribbon Creek. Of course, it had no similarity to Ribbon Creek, but it was still dead Marines in water.

I learned my first lessons about relationships with the press, then and there. This occurred up in the northern training area. There was no drinking or washing water there then. This was the first battalion ever to go up there, there was no water. They were washing themselves in the ocean and the typhoon had caused a lot of turmoil in the water apparently.

For some reason, and I don't know why, this battalion commander was pretty cautious. He permitted them to go to the water only by squads and wash themselves, I suppose for control. Anyhow this squad waded out and people on the bluff all around them, as near as from here to across the street, just watched them all lose their footing at once and never come to the surface again. Just sucked under. Just like that.

Q: Were the bodies ever recovered?

General Krulak: Within the next week or ten days here and there they washed up. They told me within minutes what happened so I got all the facts I could. I sent Jim Murray up there, gave him a couple of hours to get together everything he could and he brought it back. He wrote it down and

I sent a message to FMFPac and the Commandant telling them what had happened. I wrote a press release, got two helicopters, sent for all the newsmen on the island, got them in my headquarters, explained to them what had happened, handed them the press release and said there are two helicopters and the engines were running and they will take you to the scene.

Not one went. Nothing dramatic ever appeared in the newspapers. But if we had given any essence of concealment, they would have been all over it like a tent. I learned my lesson about press relations then.

Q: Did you have a good ISO over there?

General Krulak: I don't remember.

Q: Have you depended on your ISOs to a great extent?

General Krulak: Some. The best ISO I ever had was Jim Williams.

Q: Yes. I know Jim.

General Krulak: He was the best ISO I ever had. Better by a country mile.

Q: Where did General Wornham go to? Did he go back to take over FMFPac?

General Krulak: I've forgotten where he went. But, anyhow, they had to have him right away. He went to Washington, but

I remained in Okinawa until Shapley arrived, and then I went back to Japan where I remained for the rest of that tour.

Q: This was unaccompanied?

General Krulak: Yes. Unaccompanied. It was at that time that we took part in the big exercise in the Philippines, the first return of armed U.S. troops to the Philippines since World War II. It was called Beacon Hill. The distinguishing characteristic of it, in addition to the fact that the Filipinos in the back country were tremendously well oriented to Americans, was the fact that Magsaysay was killed at this time.

Then I remember there was that traumatic business about dependents. I didn't reckon that there was any problem in connection with dependents. In my command we had one dependent. She was the wife of a hospital corpsman. There being only one I was able to persuade her that this was the wrong thing to do. And she went home.

But just over the hill at Iwakuni and over another hill at Atsugi, there were scores and scores of them. There was a great deal of tension, but I'm proud to say our people in the 3d Division hung together and we managed. We didn't have any trouble. The aviators didn't have any trouble either, they simply did it.

Then the Commandant sent Shoup to investigate. He investigated and he found out that I didn't have any dependents in my command, that there were a hell of a lot at Iwakuni and

Atsugi. I don't know what he did about them; I'm sure he reported it. There was an awful lot of trauma.

The Commandant then came to visit and his wife came with him. There was nothing wrong with her coming at all, except that she got off the airplane at the wrong place and this gave him great pain with many of the senior officers and they tried to persuade him that he wasn't behaving too well.

I had a dinner for the Commandant in my quarters at Camp McGill. I assembled all the Marine generals in Japan to see him. Alan Shapley came up from Okinawa. With the Commandant there was Christian Schilt and Phil Berkeley. I sensed that there was real trouble. He had been at Iwakuni the night before and had an altercation with the Chief of Staff of the 1st Wing.

Q: Who was that, Croft?

General Krulak: No. It wasn't Croft. It was someone else, he was relieved that night for his improper comments. All told I could sense that this was giving General Pate great pain and, of course, subsequently it was visible that it did.

I think that's about all that is meaningful in that phase. I came back then from Japan to Quantico where I took over as Head of the Educational Center and I ran that for two and a half years.

Q: 27 months. I want to ask you a question. This period, about the dependents, I can recall very vividly, and, as

you indicated that there were tensions. How was it possible that the aviators could bring their dependents out and other people didn't?

General Krulak: I just don't know. It was just in Japan; it didn't have anything to do with Okinawa. There wasn't anyway dependents could get to Okinawa or survive after they got there. So in Japan it was just the aviators on the one hand and my 3d Division command on the other. If my people had tried to bring their wives, I would have done something about it. I just would have done something about it. Like my adventure with Major Reich in Okinawa in 1964.

Q: Oh. That's right. You had the division there?

General Krulak: No. I was at CGFMFPac.

Q: Oh. That's right. When his wife came out and created such a disturbance.

General Krulak: All I can say is that I solved it. Mrs. Reich left Okinawa. She didn't like it, but she left. I'd have done the same thing in Japan.

Q: He's still a major, by the way, up at El Toro.

General Krulak: Well, that's a disgrace. He shouldn't be a major; he shouldn't be a Marine at all. Well, I can't

answer your question about dependents at Atsugi. They were just there, and I'm sorry but that was the way it was.

Q: How were you treated when General Shoup came out as an investigator?

General Krulak: He just did what he had to do. He asked the questions and used all the means available to him, I'm sure, ONI and what not. As far as I was concerned, I was delighted. I knew what my situation was and he validated it. When he was at my house General Pate said, "You seem to have the answer on this dependent business. I want you to write me a press release that expresses my policy in clear strong terms." I did.

Q: You were back at the Schools as Director of the Educational Center under, who had the Schools at the time?

General Krulak: Twining.

Q: So you were back in harness with him?

General Krulak: Yes. And it was a very enjoyable, productive, inspiring period in many ways. We wrote a whole new set of textbooks again. We enhanced the stature of the advanced base problems, tried to get a little bit more prospective.

Q: What was the thrust of the curriculum at this point?

General Krulak: We tried to move in the direction of the modern amphibious war. We tried to teach them a little bit

more about the bureaucracy with which they'd have to contend. We tried to bring the air-ground team into a well-focused relationship. The Schools improved very slowly; they can get bad overnight. I would say that this two years and four months period was one of slow improvement.

Q: It was at Quantico that you received your second star, toward the end of your tour?

General Krulak: Yes. I got my second star just about the time I departed to go to San Diego.

Q: The Schools period was perfunctory?

General Krulak: Fine, rewarding, hard work, enjoyable; but I can think of nothing that involves history in it.

Q: Now about the time that you went out to San Diego, it was shortly after General Shoup was announced as the new Commandant.

General Krulak: That's right. That's right. He was named Commandant, as you may have heard, from some of your other interviewees, or maybe from Shoup himself — have you interviewed him?

Q: No. But, I have a feeling that I might...Well, please go on.

General Krulak: I think he talked to maybe all the generals

or most of them and his attitude to me was an ambivalent one. On the one hand he applauded all the things I had done in terms of contributions to the Marine Corps, and on matters of energy and industry and loyalty. He also was pretty upset with me that he felt I had been a sort of competitor of his, and that I'd been in some respect, involved in keeping him from having a clear track to be Commandant.

That, of course, was silly. The only thing about it is, what he didn't like was that I believed deeply in Twining and wanted to see him Commandant like a lot of other Marines did. I was neither in the position to do anything about it nor did I try. But Shoup seemed to think I did and he chided me pretty roundly about it, but it didn't bother me particularly. In retrospect, I could see that this was the emergence of a new personality or indeed the reemergence of what may have existed all the time.

Q: Was it at this point do you think, that he changed?

General Krulak: Well, I have no idea. I would just reckon that he never did change, that he was always the same fellow, but he concealed certain of his more implicit characteristics because they were not consistent with professional advancement.

Q: At that time, I think it was pretty well accepted among

Marine Corps circles that the latter stages of the Pate Commandancy were unhappy for the Marine Corps.

General Krulak: Well, I think they were. I believe that General pate was probably ill in one respect or another and that there were certain substantial weaknesses exhibited in the way that he behaved with respect to the Corps itself. This was enhanced dramatically by the Ribbon Creek event from which General Pate and his administration were never able to recover.

Q: Were lines drawn up or teams or cheering sections for the candidates for his successor?

General Krulak: Pate's successor?

Q: Yes, sir.

General Krulak: I don't know. I wouldn't say so. I'm sure that as is the case every four years everybody in the Marine Corps has his idea who would be the best Commandant. But, though you can describe them as cheering sections, I wouldn't say so. Nothing like this past time, for instance, nothing.

Q: But there certainly were people who favored General Twining and I think maybe General Pollock may" have been in the running.

General Krulak: Yes. Yes, he was.

Q: I'm trying to think who else was running. But in any case, as I understand it, this was the first time that the incumbent Commandant had no say in who his successor was to be.

General Krulak: I don't know whether it was the first time, but I believe that General Pate had very little say, very little indeed.

Q: Do you feel that your assignment to the depot at San Diego was an exile in a sense?

General Krulak: No. I was at a stage of my career when that was a proper assignment. I believe that if you would look at the relative lineal positions you would see that I was a bit junior to have gotten a division at that time in competition with some others, that Shoup did not apparently have a job for me in Washington, which I was happy about.

So, while I suspect that it may have been looked on by some as a sort of exile, I somehow didn't look upon it that way, and I found it to be a great challenge. I enjoyed it and I did a lot of good things for recruits, and for recruit training and for our Corps.

Certain things persist to this day in this depot that I instituted. The way they teach drill instructors, the way they take slow learners and look after them, the instruction in American History and patriotism.

So I feel good about that and while it might have been

exile, I never felt that way about it.

Q: Talking about recruit training, General, this business at Ribbon Creek and all that it brought out, aside from the actions of the Commandant, the mere fact that such things could occur at a recruit depot...Was this a great shock or did you have any knowledge that this was something that might have been building up? It certainly must have affected your thinking when you took over San Diego.

General Krulak: No. Ribbon Creek came as a surprise to me, but the proceedings related to Ribbon Creek which made plain the validity of many of the allegations really shook me up, right to my boot straps. I was terrified that the Marine Corps could do this. But, it did come as sort of a surprise.

Q: Did this affect your thinking to a considerable extent when you took over in San Diego?

General Krulak: You're goddamn right it did! I didn't take off my uniform. I was on duty seven days a week and so was my staff and so was everyone else. I wasn't going to get caught in any such a silly situation as they had at Ribbon Creek where there wasn't a responsible officer within a hog call of the event. No, if any outfit was supervised — this one was when I was here, and it was because of that. I was really worried that it could happen. We ran a very taut ship,

just as taut as I could possibly make it, tauter than any other I've ever run. I rode around this place on Sunday as if it were Tuesday and so did the rest of the people, too.

Q: What were some of the things that you instituted during your tour as Commanding General at the Depot?

General Krulak: Well, I mentioned several things to you about the drill instructor training, drill instructor screening, and essentially great supervision. I changed names and made them significant. There had always been a thing called a series officer and always a thing called a DI. I changed that for an emotional reason. I was the Commanding General and we had a recruit training regimental commander and we had a recruit training battalion commander and then had recruit company commanders and they had recruit platoon commanders. Those were the drill instructors, you see. We had the series commander, a chain of command, and I made them responsible for what went on. Of course, we very sternly disciplined and whenever we had any infractions on the part of the drill instructor, I cold-cocked them. Just gave them everything we could.

Q: And they held up?

General Krulak: Yes. Just great. We had very few problems.

Q: I noticed on your bookshelf you have General McKean's Ribbon Creek. Do you think that that's a pretty valid apologia or a pretty straightforward account of what took place?

General Krulak: It's a very useful book. I don't think it's entirely accurate. I think it's a little overdrawn in some self-serving respects, but it's worth reading.

Q: One of the ancillary assignments of any CG of the depot here was his community relations program and I assume that your's was no more no less onerous than any of the other commanders.

General Krulak: No. It was just fun and I enjoyed it. It's a fine community and I enjoyed taking part in it. All depot commanders with very few exceptions have. I think that's about all for San Diego, I can't think of anything else.

Q: President Kennedy came out here when you had the depot, did he not?

General Krulak: No. I had left.

Q: You had left when he came out?

General Krulak: I was back in Washington then.

Q: What was the background to your assignment to the JCS?

General Krulak: It depends on who you talk to. Shoup tells one story. President Kennedy told me another. Admiral Sharp tells me another, which dovetails with President Kennedy's. I prefer to believe them.

Q: What did General Shoup say?

General Krulak: General Shoup simply says that he chose me. Sharp describes a meeting in the "tank" when they had to pick this individual to fill the job Kennedy had required be established in the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Navy said they had nobody. Sharp was the Navy OpDep and he said, "I know the man for this. It's Brute Krulak, and the Marines ought to fill the billet." Kennedy told me that one of his aides, an Army general — I've forgotten his name — had mentioned this suggestion to him, because he knew that Kennedy knew me. Kennedy said that would be a fine assignment from his point of view. Sharp and Kennedy, I think, are more accurate.

Q: You had met Kennedy originally in...

General Krulak: In the Solomons.

Q: During the withdrawal from Choiseul?

General Krulak: Yes. That's right.

Q: Was it his boat that you withdrew on?

General Krulak: His division picked up a part of my outfit during one of the raids in the Choiseul operation, and returned it to the base area in Choiseul which we were occupying. They did not participate in our withdrawal. We withdrew on LCIs. Anyhow, I believe that I went on the JCS job because Sharp surfaced my name and Kennedy got word of it. I think that's the way it happened.

Q: The job, of course, was Special Assistant for Counter-insurgency. . .

General Krulak: It doesn't make much difference what the name was. What it really involved was Kennedy saying that this matter of insurgency worldwide is the wave of the Communist future and we had better learn how to fight it. He said, "I want someone in each of the armed services and in the Joint Chiefs of Staff who has that as his specific responsibility. I want to know his name (incidently that's how he got to know that I was considered). I want to know his name and I want it done at once."

That's why I left here on no notice and I went back there with no leave and went to work the day I got there. It was a freewheeling thing. The job, the functions, the specialty was so much in the limelight because of the pre-sident that although technically I worked for the Director of the Joint Staff, I didn't have much to do with him. I was always being sent for by the Secretary of Defense, the

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or the President.

Finally, in order to make this easier, McNamara gave me another job to answer to him specifically, in addition to the[1] Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency, which simplified my relationship. This second job was a highly classified one where it was appropriate that he deal directly with the individual involved.

It turned out that when McNamara went somewhere, he took me with him. I came to know and understand him, like him, respect him.

The Counterinsurgency business we had to start from the very, very bottom and work up. Nobody knew anything about it. The services, from one end to the other, and I except none of them had the idea that it was all going to go away. If any had the slightest glimmer that it might not go away, it would have been the Army.

The Marines knew it was going to go away. Of all the services, the Navy and the Marines were the most obtuse, and the Marines most obtuse of all. "Hell, we've been to Nicaragua, we know all about that jazz. We don't need any special individual in our outfit — and they never had one." They paid the President of the United States lip service, assigning Bill Buse the job but it was really lip service. The poor guy already had ten times as much to do as he could handle. Anyhow, he was their point of contact. I believe this was Shoup's solution.

Q: Do you think it was a reflection of his attitude toward

you as special assistant more than...

General Krulak: No, I do not. I do not.

Q: It was just his attitude about the business?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: When you reported to Washington for this job, did you make your manners to the Commandant?

General Krulak: Oh, of course. I reported to him first.

Q: That's when he told you that you had been selected for...

General Krulak: Yes. And he told me a little bit about what it was but not a great deal. He told me to go and talk to Buzz Wheeler and some of the others. They filled me in very quickly.

He did all the proper things. The job just developed in terms of what I would make it. It turned out to be a tremendously interesting, tremendously influential opportunity for me. I enjoyed every minute of it.

Q: How would you characterize Mr. Kennedy? What was he like?

General Krulak: Smart as a whip. He did his homework. He decentralized. He was astute. And he was clever, too. He had a great personality. I believe, sometimes, he was a sort of poseur like MacArthur, failing a little bit in sincerity. But where I was concerned, I found him to be utterly

sincere and tremendously decent. There's a celebrated occasion when I was sent to Vietnam to find out something, to look into a very important question, to find the answers for Kennedy. The State Department was afraid to let me go alone, so they arranged to send a State Department representative with me.

Q: Why were they afraid to let you go alone?

General Krulak: Because I was a soldier and because — let's face it — this business of subversive insurgency is not a military problem alone. It's economic, diplomatic, political, mental and sociological and it's a lot of things beside military.

If I had been the Secretary of State, I'd have felt the same way. So, they sent a man with me. I've forgotten his name. We flew out in a jet all the way to Vietnam and back, just the two of us, in a Boeing 707. The question I was sent to investigate was this: "Is it true, as we have heard, that South Vietnamese Army is on the verge of mutiny, revolution, going over to the enemy?"

You'd say, "Hell, that is a military question and that should be the size of it." But the State Department perceived correctly that there was more to it. So, we flew out there and I went from one end of the country to the other talking to advisors and to commanders. There were not very many Americans there, they were just advisors.

Q: This was when? '62?

General Krulak: '62. Their reaction was uniform. This turmoil is political; the Army is essentially apart from it. They're doing the best they can and there's no chance of them folding up.

I gave my report in the Cabinet room. And the State Department man gave his. Just exactly the opposite from mine — He said that the military was deeply immersed in politics and they were about to give up, to turn tail and fo over to the Vietcong.

That was when President Kennedy made the often repeated statement — he was very serious — after all he had waited to make certain decisions for our return and here you've got two guys; one says A and one says B. He just said this one sentence, "Were you two people in the same country?"

There was great silence. Maxwell Taylor was silent, McGeorge Bundy was silent, the whole outfit was silent.

So, I said, "I think I can explain it. The war is a rural war and the military is in the country. That's where I went. This fellow went only to three cities. Saigon, Hue, Qui Nhon. He has given you a metropoliton viewpoint." Then Kennedy got up and walked out, and when he walked by me he put his hand on my shoulder and said, "I know what you mean."

And he walked in his office and then sent for me. He told me that he believed what I had told him. Of course, I was right. There hasn't been a revolution or a defection in Vietnamese Army yet.

Q: Schlesinger wrote this up and I don't recall he put in the

follow on. Do you remember reading A Thousand Days where he...

General Krulak: I remember it vaguely. I remember it was unflattering.

Q: Yes. It was unflattering to you. And I found it quite surprising and I'm glad that you put on the record the...

General Krulak: Yes. And that is the truth. Of course, there were many witnesses. Maxwell Taylor was a witness to my meeting with Kennedy in private because he came with me. Of course, history has borne me out. The Army did not defect to the Viet Cong.

You've asked about my other assignment directly responsible to Mr. McNamara. It had to do with certain of the Pentagon/CIA relationships. As is quite plain, there is a tremendous interface between the military establishment and the CIA in a war such as we have fought — are fighting in Vietnam. The irregular native forces, the paramilitary forces are in many respects procured, organized, and, technically speaking, trained by the CIA. The simpler: fact of the matter is they can't do it alone. They've got to have soldiers to train the irregulars and the paramilitary forces. It was this relationship that which consumed a good bit of my time.

Q: Do you think that this kind of relationship redounds to

the disadvantage of the military? Or do you think that this type of a relationship is a perfectly natural thing?

General Krulak: I've never been able to get a mental grip on how I would like to see such a thing organized. I just feel that there is something wrong with a relationship which in some respects is intended to be clandestine but which really isn't.

Q: Was this job you had sort of a follow on to something that General Erskine had been doing?

General Krulak:' Yes.

Q: You relieved him in this particular position?

General Krulak: That's an oversimplification by far; he did an awful lot of other things, but the things which I did, he had done.

Q: What were some of the other things you were involved in this particular job?

General Krulak: Writing doctrine, which in itself is a considerable problem. Attempting to develop programs that would result in measurement of what was going on in Vietnam. The measurement of our progress there or the progress of our allies at the beginning there was one of the things that flustered the President and the Secretary of Defense the most. My outfit, among others, had the responsibility to try to measure what went on. Then the matter of training. People had to

have their minds changed about what the war was about. It wasn't a war of hills, valleys, airplanes, and ships — the battlefield was a group of native people and they were the target too, they were the objective. The whole attitude of the military establishment had to be changed. It changed with incredible slowness. The attitude of the Department of State had to be changed. And for this purpose I was also the link with this element of the State Department. I lectured at the school which they ran.

Q: The Foreign Service Institute Senior Seminar?

General Krulak: Yes. All of these things took time. I would go to Fort Bragg, National War College, Newport, out to the field to talk about it. This was onerous because it wasn't believeable yet. Its hard to look back and realize that, but that was the size of it.

Q: Do you feel that this country had been properly prepared, properly sold in the rationale for American involvement in Vietnam?

General Krulak: No. This is one of the great mysteries of this era, I think. What we failed to do and why we failed to do it. How we could have failed, which we did, to make plain to our people what this war of national liberation philosophy was; what it meant to us; why we had a stake in Southeast Asia;

what would happen if we didn't fulfill our obligations there and one reason I think we did such a poor job is that our government itself did not understand.

I know that President Kennedy had no idea of how difficult a guerrilla war is. I know that Mr. McNamara had no idea of how absolutely frustrating and ennervating such a war would be. I am absolutely certain that the Joint Chiefs of Staff individually or collectively did not have any idea about how complex the war would be.

I think these things all united to hurt us because when McNamara said, as he did several times, "Things are going better," knowing him, I know he believed it.

You might ask did I believe it. I certainly didn't. I was terrified about that war from the very beginning. I felt that we were fighting it wrong because we were proceeding piecemeal and if I played that tune to him once, I played it a hundred times, that you can't piecemeal.

Well, he thought you could. And to make it worse, when Johnson became President, he thought you could. They dovetailed just like Pat and Mike on that; that you could piecemeal. And to make it even worse, a voice which was becoming more resonant, Averill Harriman was sure you could. So the great mistake was we piecemealed.

Q: There has always been this feeling of a credibility gap where the JCS was concerned or was the President getting the straight scoop from the field? Did the Army out there know

what was going on?

General Krulak: I think it is a sort of a combination. I'm sure at every echelon of command they behaved in this respect the way they have behaved throughout history.

End Session IV, Tape 2, Side 1

Session IV, Side 2, Tape 2

Q: We're talking about whether or not we're getting the straight scoop from the people in the field.

General Krulak: Yes. I said that I'm sure the same things apply here as applied throughout military history. The subordinates, let us say unwittingly, are likely to try and tell the boss the things they think he wants to hear. Kennedy, McNamara, subsequently, Johnson, McNamara, etc., wanted good news, not bad news. I think there was this implicit syndrome, always. But in addition, I believe it was exacerbated by the fact that the people on the ground themselves did not know the magnitude of the problem which faced them.

I remember so well, talking one day to General Thi at Danang in 1965, right after we got there. I said, "This business of the Marines just milling around here inside this barbed wire fence and providing security for a Hawk battery up on that hill up there, three or four miles away, is for the birds. We should get out here and patrol and provide some very substantial security."

General Thi is a very polite man. He said, "You're not ready." When I pursued it, to find out what he meant, he went into a little bit of the nature of the countryside and who the people are and what they thought and what sort of a problem they would represent. He was explaining to me how ignorant I was. But I was no more ignorant than my

peers; nobody else understood it either.

I do now. I know that we were not ready. All of those things contributed to what you could call a credibility gap, but there was very little caprice in it. It was mostly ignorance.

Q: What would you say, and I ask this as a matter of curiosity for my own sake as well as for the record, is the rationale for American involvement in Vietnam.

General Krulak: How would I rationalize it?

Q: How would you explain it? What are the reasons?

General Krulak: The reasons in 1964 were the reasons in 1954 and are the reasons today; they all seem somewhat different because history has gone across the screen but they are the same. Certainly we agree that Southeast Asia acre for acre is one of the richest areas in all the world. Certainly we agree that the Communists want it for themselves and want us not to have it. Certainly they don't want us to capitalize upon those riches in any way. The Indochina peninsula provides a perfect flanking position for the Philippine Islands; a perfect flanking position for the other states of Indochina.

So you have economically and strategically two very good reasons for maintaining what is now Vietnam oriented toward the free world. This is wholly apart from any Southeast Asia Treaty Organization obligations that we may have

regarding the area, or unilateral obligations which we may have respecting South Vietnam. Prom our personal point of view, we can not afford, we never have been able to afford a major development which would result in weakening the position of freedom in Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand, metropolitan Japan, Okinawa, where the loss of a freedom's foothold in Southeast Asia would be an almost implicit guarantee. So if you can rationalize it in a few sentences that would be it.

Q: Isn't there here a situation where a power state doesn't. understand the power that it has or the administration refuses to employ that power for national survival?

General Krulak: There is no question that we had the power to bring our enterprise in Indochina to an earlier completely victorious conclusion. It could be all over now, had we done the right thing from the beginning in 1962. We did most of the wrong things, few of the right things. We did none of them with the resolution that is needed.

The real gimmick in that area is the people and their protection. We put less effort into their protection than in any one of our endeavors. The last individual to get any consideration were regional and popular forces, the paramilitary, the local militia whose mother is involved directly and who had the real stake in making sure that the VC get kicked out of the village. He's gotten the least from the

French and the least from us and even today we're deeply immersed in lip service, where he is concerned, although we're vastly better off than we were two, four, six years ago.

If at the very beginning we had put our investment in protecting the people, we would have been all right. There was a moment when I — well, let me read you the quotation. I wrote this in 1964. "The conflict between the North Vietnamese and the hard core VC on the one hand and the U. S. on the other could move to another planet today and we would still not have won the war. On the other hand if the subversion and guerrilla efforts were to disappear, the war would soon collapse as the VC would be denied food, sanctuary and intelligence." This is the point which we never understood. Now, I have here an address which I gave at the University of California, which is simply a compendium of extracts from letters to McNamara, the Secretary of the Navy, over this period. I think I'd like to give them to you. It puts into a capsule what I think was wrong with the prosecution of the war.

Q: I'll make a copy and send it back to you.

General Krulak: I'll make a copy in my office and give it to you Monday.

Q: Fine. I don't think I want to dwell on the Vietnam thing too much more because we'll probably go into it in our classified session. And I think you might expand on it.

General Krulak: Very good.

Q: What about the Bay of Pigs? Were you involved in that at all?

General Krulak: No. I was not involved in the Bay of Pigs in any way. I was involved a little in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Q: Yes. I'm sorry, that's what I meant.

General Krulak: But only to the extent of my counterinsurgency interest in Venezuela and Columbia on the one hand, and my responsibility to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for cover and deception plans. The plans relating to cover and deception for the U. S. operation plans for the Cuban Missle Crisis I prepared.

Q: Again that gets into classified matters and perhaps we had better discuss that on the classified tape. You were about 16 days short of two years at the Pentagon.

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: I imagine it was all very exciting.

General Krulak: It was indeed. I travelled around with McNamara. I went around the world with him, went to Europe, Greece, the Far East. I got a great opportunity to watch him perform. And of course, I got to see a lot of important people, too, and to observe their interface. I became fast friends with some people in the State Department among whom was Averill Harriman, with whom I disagree on everything; but we became good friends.

Indeed, when I left Washington, he did an unprecedented thing. He had a party for me, something that he advised me of openly in the presence of the other guests, that he'd never done for any other military man and would probably never do it again.

Q: He is a fascinating and fabulous individual isn't he?

General Krulak: Oh, he is indeed; with a tremendously alert mind. The fact that he doesn't think right is beside the point. He is an exciting fellow.

Q: Of course, based on the level at which you were working especially as close as you were to McNamara and with access to the President, the political side of the administration must have intruded to a degree.

General Krulak: I didn't get to see much of that really. I

saw a little here and there, but not enough to really impress me. Mostly I got to see the interface between the Departments of State and Defense.

Q: Did you know you were going to get FMFPac?

General Krulak: No. When Greene became Commandant, he told me that he intended to give me that assignment. He intended to give me that just as quickly as he could disengage me from the Pentagon. I've forgotten just what month I went out to — I went in March, didn't I? Yes. You see he made Commandant on the first of January and so I knew it that long.

Q: Did a Marine relieve you?

General Krulak: No. I was relieved by an Air Force officer, who had been in Vietnam.

Q: Do you feel he had the same degree of expertise and knowledge?

General Krulak: I really don't know. I really didn't maintain a close contact with the office after I went out to Pearl Harbor. I had too much else on my mind.

Q: What was the situation when you went out to Pearl Harbor?

General Krulak: Well, FMFPac was involved in training and I'm not sure that they had a strong feel for whether or when

they would be committed in Southeast Asia, if at all. But, they were busy doing the conventional sort of amphibious training and doing it aggressively.

My feeling was that we were going to Vietnam. I think that was conditioned by my previous two years. And I was convinced that we were going there and that we were going there in some strength; I wasn't necessarily assured that I thought it was the best idea. But, I had a feeling that that's what was headed. I listened a lot to Maxwell Taylor and I knew how he felt. I knew how McNamara felt. So, I felt that we would be going there and we would be fighting a counterinsurgency war and I began to alter our training immediately, the first day, aiming in that direction; exercises that caused people to think about the political-military interface and the importance of the people as the battlefield.

You may recall that I prepared a very large exercise on the west coast that was actually underway when we were committed to Vietnam. Indeed, part of the exercise task force had to reembark from the island of San Clemente, the 1st Marine Brigade from Kaneohe, and turned around and set sail for Vietnam. They never disembarked. This exercise was a pure counter-insurgency exercise. I don't know whether you remember.

Q: I remember it, yes I do. It was Silver Lance?

General Krulak: Yes, Silver Lance. It was extensively

reported in Time Magazine by a fellow named Don Neff, who had an incredible ability to understand. He saw it at once. He saw that it was news and it covered a couple of pages of Time describing what it was all about. And Silver Lance had the very essence of Vietnam in it. It was a war among the people and we had almost as many troops representing the native population as we did fighting, which was, of course, very unpalatable to most of the participants but they did it. I wish I had a war bond for the number of times the people have said to me, "Silver Lance was really Vietnam, wasn't it?"

Q: Who wrote this up at your headquarters?

General Krulak: The report of it?

Q: No. The script.

General Krulak: Oh, well. It was a team effort. A lot of people contributed to it. Marion Dalby was a big factor in it — a very brillant mind. One of the smartest Marines I have ever known.

Q: He was passed over.

General Krulak: Oh, yes. Dalby is the kind of fellow that the Marines have often passed over. Career pattern or outspoken personality or, perish the thought, a combination, and you are dead. Wonderful man. I'd rather see him a general

than half of the people who are generals today.

Q: I imagine you worked very closely in preparation for this?

General Krulak: Oh, yes. Sure I did. I enjoyed it and I influenced it in every way I could and it was a prodigious success. Everybody got a lot out of it. A fellow came up to me the other day and said, "You don't remember me, but I was the reserve colonel that you brought to active duty to come and be the U. S. Ambassador." See we even had our diplomatic people represented.

Q: Oh, really?

General Krulak: At Silver Lance. And Don Neff came down here for dinner a month ago with Jim Williams. They invited Amy and me and we relived Silver Lance. Silver Lance was a fine rehearsal for our adventure in Vietnam.

Q: What else was FMFPac involved in at this time?

General Krulak: You will recall that we had forces afloat in the South China Sea almost continuously. Sometimes a battalion, sometimes a regiment, and this was a great training. Then we were studying about improving the character and broadening the base of the 3rd FSR in Ikinawa- and getting it on a war footing because I was sure we were going to need it. We were involved in building up our helicopter strength and

improving our aviation training for this kind of war. I guess really that's about all — preparation of plans. I had a great relationship with CinCPac. I was a warm close personal friend of Admiral Sharp and I had a fine relationship with him. And he used me a great deal. I advised him in a score of ways on ground matters. This took up a good bit of time. I spent a lot of time in the Western Pacific in Okinawa, Japan and the Philippines. And then, of course, about 8 months after I took over at FMFPac, we were in Vietnam, in early '65.

Q: All your efforts from that time on were just...

General Krulak: Just Vietnam.

Q: Vietnam.

General Krulak: So there's nothing else.

Q: We're getting to that point...

General Krulak: We can quit if you like.

Q: All right. And save the....I think that might be a good idea.

End Session IV, Tape 2, Side 2

(NOTE: Session V is Classified)

Session VI, Side 1, Tape 1

Q: What I wanted to ask you before we do get into the Commandant thing, I've gone over your article on Marines in the Future in Navy Magizine and a couple of questions which they raise. I think — I know I agree with everything you say, I think its because this is the only viewpoint anyone can have, it would seem. This point about fierce loyalty up and down,' do you think that this is a lost art?

General Krulak: No. Of course not. People don't change.

Q: Do you think it's still as strong in the Marine Corps as it ever was?

General Krulak: It's very hard to compare one era with another. Someone once said, "Things aren't like they used to be and never were." I believe that is so. Certainly values have changed. At the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey the students do not wear uniforms. Their name plates do not have their rank or service on them. The most acceptable form of address of an individual is by his first name.

Q: Regardless of rank?

General Krulak: Regardless of rank. This is quite a contrast

with the Naval Postgraduate School which existed when I was stationed at the Naval Academy in 1935; where they wore their uniforms to class and the matter of military ranks and procedure and behavior was very important. Now, I cannot say that they are not running a good postgraduate school. It is quite interesting, for instance, that on Moratorium Day to the consternation of various students one of the instructors — a Navy lieutenant — came out to give his instruction with a black arm band on his arm. Well, this is significant, particularly in the knowledge that he was a naval officer.

Q: Oh, he wasn't a civilian?

General Krulak: No. He wasn't a civilian. Well, values have changed. That's all I can say. And I believe that among the things for which a Marine has traditionally fought is his right to his standards. I would pray that the Marines would never cease to fight for their standards which have sonsistently been higher in terms of military morality than any of their counterparts.

Q: I wanted to ask you about this business of vertical envelopment. Have we gotten away from that in the Marine Corps?

General Krulak: Not at all. Vertical envelopment is just another way to go to war. It's a faster way than we had before and in terms of flexibility, a far more flexible one. It has

it's limitations. It's limitations are, meteorological, they're technical, and they're economical. But, with all its limitations, it's the way to go.

Q: You think this will be the way that we will continue to go?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: How about the Navy/Marine team? Is it still strong as it ever was? Are there any rifts?

General Krulak: Of course there are. There always have been. I think I told you once before that in time of peace you compete for dollars and in time of war you compete for priorities and tasks. Well, right now we're in what might be called a period of peace, certainly economic retrenchment. And the Navy and Marines are going to fight very bitterly for the same dollar just as they both are going to fight the Air Force and the Army. There, is just one thing that cements them together and that is the community of interest in carrying our military power across the sea. There's only one way to do it. Material has to be shipped. All the airplanes in the world will not carry out wnat we want to do if there is any prospective hostility at the other end. The Navy knows this and so do we.

Q: You made a statement here, "to be ready to go and with whatever means are at hand, of constant quality and for the '70s

the Marines will need to maintain and nourish a state of mind that has been constant in their Corps for two hundred years." Well, this is great and I think it's very important but do you think that we're going to be able to do it?

General Krulak: To maintain that state of mind? I have reservations. It's not easy. It's not easy in a democratic society that is the all-time exhibition of the validity of Parkinson's law. Our attention, as I told you last Saturday, is turned inordinately toward the Pentagon and the higher echelons of our government where there are more supervisors per capita by a factor of about 2 or 3 than they were just a couple of decades ago. It's going to be very difficult, indeed, for the Marine Corps' leadership to find the opportunities to. do the things that are needed to cement our structure together.

Q: The Korean War — each war since World War II has been less popular, certainly the Korean War was not a popular war and the Vietnam War is not a popular war. The Korean War brought out certain things which we do not like to see, primarily the prisoner business, the defectors. Now, we have the situation in Vietnam that is so called "massacre business." What is it all about? Are the people in the field different? Is this type of war...

General Krulak: Well, a lot of factors that unite — for instance,

generally speaking the shorter the war, the less chance there is for unpopularity to arise. I dare say that the Spanish-American War was a reasonably popular war, that the Korean War on the day of Inchon was a popular war. That the Vietnam War on the day of our landing at Danang was not an unpopular war. As it becomes protracted, after all, it has been the longest war we have ever been involved in, it frays around the edges.

Then there's the matter that the wars of anti-colonialism and national liberation are quite different from the wars which aim to make the the world safe for democracy. There's by no means the catch word or catch slogan involved at this sort of grinding political-military endeavor that you had when there was apprehension of the Japanese landing on the west coast or fears that the Kaiser, after eating up all the French babies, was going to rush over and start doing it in New York. There was no Lusitania. Quite a different thing. The emotions were not there.

Apart from that, there are the erosive effects which have had their origin in the United States, itself. The people are just literally tired of supporting something that they don't understand mark you, this war is not well understood, and I despair now that it ever will be. This has a very important aspect to it, too.

Q: What about the activities of the people in the field; this Mylai thing? To my knowledge this did not happen during World

War II — at least any of the operations the Marine Corps was involved in.

General Krulak: To my knowledge, which of course, is incomplete, the Marines did nothing that would equate to things which we have done in this war and for which our people have been brought to book. Matters of which there has been little public knowledge but we had a Mylai sort of situation back in 1965 in Vietnam. Marines were involved in this. We cleaned it up as aggressively and sternly as we could, but it did happen. I believe that that is an outgrowth of the kind of war it is. Never has there been such a frustrating situation facing a hard-hitting young fellow who wants to fight it all out. As one of my sons said to me once, "All they fight us with is trash, but it's lethal trash." Well, this frustration finds it way into the soul of the PFC very quickly.

Q: When I was at FMFPac as a newly commissioned second lieutenant, a real "boot loot," I saw you in operation. I was quite impressed with what I thought was a really sharp officer. The talk at that time was that Colonel Krulak would be Commandant one day. And as the years have passed since that time, 20 years ago, I felt very confident that you would be. What happened?

General Krulak: I suppose its pretty much in the public domain.

Everybody aspires to reach the peak of his profession and I was no different than any other. But, like anyone else I suppose I have in my system that small leavening of hypocrisy that permits me to say that I didn't allow it to transcend my higher dedication.

In 1962 or '63, 1963, when they were groping about for a replacement for General Shoup, I was interviewed by the Secretary of the Navy along with several others and, when the interview concluded, he said some very encouraging things to me.

I didn't particularly want to be Commandant at that time. I felt I had too long to go professionally, and that it would not be good because when you're finished with being Commandant you really ought to get out right away. That would have had me retiring at the age of about 55.

General Shoup told me after this interview, when I went to report to him on it, that he fully expected to see me as Commandant in four years. "That," he said, "short of stubbing your professional toe," as he put it, "you must end up in this chair in four years."

Well, it was nice to hear the Commandant say that, nevertheless, I went back about my business and spent the bulk of the remaining time as CGFMFPac. As you recall, I had that job for four and a half years. Well, there was an awful lot of chattering as there always is about the Commandant's position and I was just delighted to be so remote, as far away as I could get and I had more to do than I could manage. Many times I told Wally Greene that I didn't envy him being so near

to the flame in Washington, because he would recite to me the events that were transpiring and a lot of chatter and rumor and innuendo.

In mid-September of '67, on a Saturday morning, General Greene called me up and he said, "I've just finished helping the Secretary of the Navy draft the letter recommending that you be the Commandant." He said, "it's pro forma from here on." I said, "Well, by pro forma what do you mean?" He replied that, within 48 hours it should be public knowledge.

That was in September. Thereafter, from time to time, when we talked about other business we talked about it and he said, "Well, nothing has eventuated at the White House yet, but I want to talk to you about a lot of details."

He got down to detailed discussions relating to the redecoration of the Commandant's quarters and what I wanted to do about aides and secretaries and all of the multitude of details. We thrashed them out fairly well.

And then he sought my counsel on various assignments, which would take place near the very end of his tour, which are traditionally discussed with your successor.

Days passed and finally he called and said, "There's a tremendous political furor connected with this, and I don't know how it's going to mature. I believe it will end up by your being Commandant, but I just don't know exactly how it's going to mature in terms of time." Then we talked about

timing and he said I should be back in Washington by — I've forgotten the date; "back it off on leave and back it off for your replacement and his leave and all."

Then I told him what my thoughts were about my replacement at FMFPac and he gave me his and we discussed it. I had a discussion with the Surgeon General of the Navy about one of the candidate's for my job; we'd gone that far.

Then one day General Greene called and he made what I felt was a rather cryptic but a revealing comment, he said, "The Commandant's job is up for grabs, it's in the political arena completely, and I don't know what will happen."

Well, I won't burden you with further details, the record need only show that as far as I was concerned, I was far enough away from the political arena that I not only could not but would not if I could seek to influence it. But General Greene was very patient in describing to me what I felt was an almost disgraceful invasion of the executive process by politicians both professional and amateur, both in and out of uniform...

Q: What was the political furor?

General Krulak: Pressure by the political sector, upon the President.

Q: Instituted by other candidates?

General Krulak: I can't say. Carried forward by an individual who had some relationship with a Congressman of a Senator or

a member of the executive department, in behalf of various of the people who were being considered, and General Greene kept me as informed as he could.

I meanwhile, of course, vibrated back and forth to Vietnam and attempted to do my duties. September, October, November passed and finally, as you know, it was announced that General Chapman was to be the Commandant. As far as I was concerned, I knew what I would do if I didn't get to be Commandant and that was to carry on in my then-present job as long as the Commandant wanted me to. But, when it came time to move, I would not stand in the way of someone whose star was in the ascendancy; after all I was the senior permanent officer in the Marine Corps other than the Commandant. Despite my youth that was the fact of it, I was the senior permanent officer in the Marine Corps other than the Commandant. I had to step aside.

When it became known to Mr. McNamara that that was my intention, he called me and said, "Please don't step aside until I talk to you because there are several jobs which I feel you might usefully fulfill." And he mentioned one was CinCPac, another was CinCSouth.

Q: Taking over CinCpac?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: A Marine officer?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: That would be historic.

General Krulak: Yes. And he actually polled the various members of the JCS as to their attitude on this matter. I myself felt that it was most unlikely, as did Chapman, with whom I discussed it at length.

So, ultimately, when it appeared to be a prudent time and a proper relief could be available, I realized it was time to retire. And I did it without any rancor.

You might say that an individual would have a right to just a nickel's worth of bitterness having been told by the Commandant that the letter was signed, recommending that he be Commandant. But somehow I didn't. It may sound a little bit idealistic, but the truth of the matter is, that the Marines did just one hell of a lot for me. When I became a second lieutenant, my real objective in life was to get to be a major so that I wouldn't have to wear puttees. Well, I got a hell of a lot fartner than that. When I was sick or wounded they looked after me. I never had a bad job in all of my 34 plus years. I never had a bad job and I look back on it now as a most rewarding experience, and I really end the whole deal feeling in the Marine Corps' debt. That's the size of it..

Q: Why did this thing get so political this time?

General Krulak: Why did it get so political? Well, I'm not sure that I know. There were very strong emotions in the minds of some in civilian clothes and some in uniform with respect to me, as an individual, I know. You know how it is, if you are a doer, you're likely to be loved and hated. My father once said, "In all the world there are really just two kinds of people who are worth knowing: one are the good guys and the other are the sons-of bitches. The people in between don't count."

Well, there were some folks who didn't want me to be Commandant, I'm sure, because they felt I wasn't good enough; which is all right with me. The ones who were in uniform, and who because active campaigners, probably could be indicted for meddling. But after all, there are no laws that prevent them from going to their Congressmen. That's perfectly all right. But, my comments on these aspects are sort of restrained because its second-hand information. Nobody ever came to me and said, "I don't want you to be Commandant" or "I do, and I'm going to go talk to the Presi-dent." No one ever said that to me. I had the very cleanest of consciences in this matter, I utilized or sought no influence. Of course, I'll go to my grave with a sense of satisfaction about that.

Q: Now you were General Greene's selection, as I understand it.

General Krulak: So he told me.

Q: You were Mr. McNamara's.

General Krulak: So he told me.

Q: And, according to General Greene, the Secretary of the Navy's.

General Krulak: So General Greene told me.

Q: And the only other person involved in this was the President.

General Krulak: That's correct.

Q: Who did not obviously stand still against the political pressures. You were at FMFPac and you probably did get the report. I remember there was a trial balloon in the article by Jim Lucas about your Commandancy way before the selection ever began.

General Krulak: Oh, is that the one that said something about General Shoup being my protagonist? I have some vague recollection of Lucas writing such an article.

Q: Something like that, to the effect that you were a cinch for the Commandancy. That was in the summer of '67 because...

General Krulak: I'm not aware of that one.

Q: Then aid the Copley Press come out with some articles about it?

General Krulak: No, I don't think so. The only newspaper mention that I recall about the Commandant were a couple of pieces in the New York Times. And they were reprinted in various other newspapers. I know that one was printed in the Honolulu paper, where I saw it first. But that's all I recall.

Q: Evidently, the way I understand it, the old 1st Division team, Paul Douglas and Henry Heming and so on, started putting Lew Walt up for the Commandancy and inserting his name into the race.

General Krulak: Well, again, its only hearsay, but I'm told that Paul Douglas was a very substantial factor in influencing the President.

Q: And in the final result, General Chapman, without any disrespect to him, was the alternate candidate.

General Krulak: Again, I have a letter from a friend who was riding across the continent with President Johnson in his airplane and President Johnson said something to him about there being a very substantial conflict in terms of forces that were anxious to see Walt on the one hand and me on the other make Commandant, and so he took a fellow who embodied the best qualities of both.

Q: We discussed this matter I think, several days ago and you said you'd be willing to put it on record. What would a Krulak Commandancy be like?

General Krulak: I'm sorry that I ever said that, because I realize in answering the question it has to be answered from the point of view of irresponsibility.

I'm not the Commandant. I never will be. I don't have the responsibility. When you speak without responsibility, you're not accountable. That's a pretty much a preface that makes any subsequent words of mine not too meaningful.

I would say these things, perhaps its over-obvious. I would attempt to fight Parkinson's Law. I would insist, in the face of attitudes to the contrary, that the standards of behavior which characterized Marines of other years still were valid and had to be maintained. I would not compromise on the matter of race, in any way, shape or form. I would insist that there isn't any race in the Marine Corps, and I would try to prove it.

Now these are very high sounding statements, far, far easier for me to make than for <u>any</u> Commandant to carry out. But that would be my objective.

If a Secretary of the Navy debated with me about matters of soul food, or rock music or long hair as a concession to the parochial requirements or views of one kind of man whom I might command, I would fight him. This, too, is a high sounding expression, I would fight him; I might end up being fired and maybe when you're faced with that alternative nose to nose, your courage might disappear.

But that's the way I feel now, and that's what I hope I would do. In terms of training, I would sacrifice everything on the altar of genuine air-ground readiness. I would seek every conceivable way to diminish administrative overhead. I would try to make the Marine Corps more rather than less parochial. By that I mean, more Marines going to Marine Corps-type instruction and training, less of the Catholicism in our training, instruction.

I do not and never have held with the idea that a career is long enough for an individual to become a mutation, to see war through four sets of eyes simultaneously. In other words I don't believe in a breed of purple suiters. A career is brief; it would behoove an officer to expend every moment of his time learning to be a proper Marine, not to be a proper hybrid.

Here again, it's easy to say this. You're flying in the face of the current trend. The current trend is for a fellow to arm himself with diplomas from joint schools so that he's obviously headed for higher things. My personal feeling is that the National War College is a disgraceful waste of time. The Industrial College only silghtly less so. I believe that Marine officers should address themselves to learning languages, to attending their own schools or the Navy schools, to enhancing their professionalism in every conceivable way they can and not this diffusion.

Q: Do you see a lessening in professionalism in the Corps?

General Krulak: In some respects I feel an increase. The intellectual level of the officer and the enlisted man in the Corps is higher than it was one or two decades ago. So intellectually there's every reason for them to have a higher level of professionalism. But, this incredible diffusion; for instance, how many officers does the Marine Corps have attending the Naval Post-Graduate Schools in Monterey studying one thing, operations analysis? — 54. Maybe 54 is the correct number; it may very well be. I just don't think so.

Q: Well, what do you foresee for the future for the Marine Corps?

General Krulak: It's very hard to say. I believe that the Marines are faced with an inter-service contest, as a fall out of the Vietnam conflict. I believe that their survival will be governed or heavily influenced by the aggressiveness with which they pursue their own defense. I believe that they have the big minds and the fine record necessary to conduct a strong defense and I have every hope that they will do it.

Q: You're talking about professionalism and education, something that concerned me over the past years, that's the Marine Corps sends a man, for instance, to the Senior Seminar of the Foreign Service Institute or sends him to a prestigious

and unique assignment for a tour of duty. And yet we'll never use them again in this area no matter how great his expertise or whatever he gained in this period of time. Do you think that this was a waste of manpower? In any case, what I think I'm trying to get to is, whether there is any place for the unique individual in the Marine Corps, for the man who has been educated in areas other than purely Marine Corps.

General Krulak: Oh, yes, of course there is. We simply need to pursue this thing in moderation. Of course there's need for operations analysts. Of course there's need for Afghan linguists, but we've got to be awfully prudent about the number that we qualify in Urdu.

Q: Well, I was thinking, for instance, just a few years ago we had our first Marine Rhodes scholar. A young second lieutenant and there was considerable discussion as to whether or not he should go to Oxford because the Marine Corps couldn't afford to relinquish the services of a second lieutenant for two years or whatever his scholarship was for.

General Krulak: Well, my aide was a Rnodes scholar, John Grinalds. The Marine Corps is using him adequately. They have him in the Defense Department now, utilizing his expertise.

Q: Well, in the case of the Army and the Air Force, where they preselect people; put them through programs so they can get a PhD.

General Krulak: I'd say that we're so small that a minimum of this is acceptable.

Q: Well, we've covered 35 years plus.

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: In six sessions and some 12, 13 hours. I doubt that we've covered everything. I wish we had more time to ask more questions.

All I can say is that I really appreciate your hospitality and cooperation. Its been a rare pleasure for me to see you again and Mrs. Krulak and spend some time with you.

General Krulak: Not at all. I'm not sure I've contributed a single thing to the Marine Corps history, but if I have made any small contribution, it's really been a great pleasure for me. I'll look forward to seeing the manuscript. I'll look forward to having my tape back that I loaned you and I'll look forward to hearing from you.

Q: Thank you, sir.

The following portion of the transcript, once classified, is now declassified. It is not included in the index.

Session V, dated 22 June 1970. Side 1. Tape 1

Q: What were the most significant decisions regarding Marine participation in the Republic of Vietnam made by you during your time as Commanding General of FMFPac?

General Krulak: Essentially, I made a few decisions, mainly they were recommendations. This was largely be cause of my administrative relationship with the CinCPac and COMUSMACV. Among the significant actions which occurred as a result of my recommendations or in part as a result of my recommendations; these come to mind. First the maintenance of our forces in a state of readiness off the coast of South Vietnam during moments of crisis. Second, the assurance to all of those in the pure operational setting of the capability of those forces to influence activities ashore by the use of our helicopter capability.

Another action which I believe turned out to be important indeed, historic, was my persuasion of Mr. McNamara to give us a chance at installing a SATS field at Chu Lai. There was no enthusiasm for this at any point in the Pacific command, and very few people knew our SATS capability was. Those

who knew about it were likely not to believe it. I persuaded McNamara in the presence of a large group of people in conference at CinCPac that it was worth a try by telling them we could do it in 21 days. This turned out to be a real turning point on the matter of air bases in the Vietnam War. Aluminum fields grew up all over Vietnam very quickly. Our SATS matting was quickly taken away from us and used by the Air Force and by the Army. I believe this was the important step.

Here are a few more; they are not in any chronological the fashion. A decision to go to/mat with the Air Force on air support control authority and thus to provide some grounds for protection of Marine aviation in Vietnam. A demand to CinCPac that Marine aircraft, particularly our A-6s, be per-mitted to become involved in the "Rolling Thunder" Operation in North Vietnam. Another, certainly not successful, but nevertheless significant was a constant reaffirmation to CinCPa and COMUSMACV that they were aiming at the wrong target in Vietnam and that the best thing for them to do would be to address the attention of ourselves and of our allies to the

protection of the people. In this matter, I suppose that my vocal support of our own Marine Combined Action Program will rank high as an aspect of this endeavor that turned out to have been very important.

The decision to create some means of measuring Pacification. As you will recall, this was original with us; generally created in the Headquarters at FMFPac and was basically the subsequent COMUSMACV creation the "Hamlet Evaluation System" (HES). The HES which was created in MACV's headquarters was as a follow on to our own efforts.

I suppose the negative one in retrospect, was my decision to agree with the Commandant that we should not undertake to get into the Mekong Delta battle. There were very good reasons. They were somewhat institutional, but there were good reasons at the time for our maintaining totality of our efforts in the I Corps Tactical Zone.

In retrospect, I believe that I wouldn't do it that way again, I think I would have attempt to unite with the Navy in solving or trying to solve the Mekong Delta problem. So I guess you can call this a significant, albeit, bad decision.

Here's a totally intra-Marine Corps decision, which I did make It related to the manner of constituting the Force

Logistic Command (FLC); seizing many of the service elements of the participating divisions against their objections. In doing so, we eliminated one echelon of administration and bureaucracy and the FLC formula turned out to be a great success. I believe if we had to do it over again, we'd do it exactly that way.

Another was the acknowledgement formally that the 3d FSR in Okinawa was in fact a major overseas depot and that it's character as a mobile service element had to be foregone because of the characteristics of the Vietnam War.

Another was to take on Westmoreland on the basis of the importance of the SLF. He wanted those forces ashore. He did not want the SLF. As a general proposition, CG, IIIMAF pulled and tugged as he was for more troops and in answering more fire calls to do more jobs, was not too enthusiastic about surrendering any of his forces to this mobile amphibious role. I stuck to it like a drunk hangs onto a lamp post, that we had to have a mobile, amphibious element at all times and, as I say, against any utterly overriding reasons to the contrary. We’re going to look back on that as a source of tremendous strength when we start defending ourselves in the post-Vietnam period. So, I should regard that as an important factor right

now.

Q: If I may ask an ancillary to that, is the fact that you were a type commander, did that influence your role as decision maker rather than as a recommender?

General Krulak: Not at all. I just reckoned that my function was the boss of all the Marines in the Pacific and I ignored to the extent that my counterparts in the Navy and CinCPac would permit me to ignore it, the existing institutionalized arrangement. I felt that something needed to be done with respect to those Marines. I would utilize my relationship with CinCPacFlt or CinCPac or even with COMUSMACV, if the situation demanded to try to get our legitimate points across. Of course, I was aided very much in this by the understanding attitude of Admiral Sharp, who was CinCPac. All he wanted to do was get the job done.
Q: This could be a good lead into the next question. What was the working relationship between CG FMFPac, CinCPac, CinCPacFlt, and COMUSMACV?

General Krulak: Well, I've described it in very general

terms. I don't think it needs much elaboration. The existing "Christmas Tree" arrangement as portrayed in the CinCPacFlt organization was actually transcended by reality. Admiral Sharp, as matter of habit, found it necessary to come to me for advice, counsel, and recommendations on purely Marine matters that had nothing to do whatever with the Pacific Fleet, but had to do with many thousands of men who were committed to battle on the continent of Asia, and whose relationship with the Fleet had been wholly severed. He understood this, I understood this, the fleet commander understood it, and to my recollection, we never had any trouble.

Q: What was the evolution of the North Vietnamese Army, Viet-cong strategy in South Vietnam from the early '60s to 1969 and particularly in the I Corps Tactical Zone?

General Krulak: Well, that's a big question and you could write a book about it. But, let me put it in these simple terms. When the United States first put ground forces in Vietnam in `62, the problem was one of subversive insurgency entirely, dominated from Hanoi, but subversive insurgency within South Vietnam. It was South Vietnamese

versus Vietcong. The subversives were weaving themselves into the fabric of the society and it was the job of the South Vietnamese to get them out.

There was no Vietcong functional entity as big as a battalion. Then battalions began to appear in the Vietcong lines. We came to Vietnam in 1965 and the North Vietnamese were there. Whether they preceded us or followed us is moot. I believe a very good case can be made that they preceded us by a long shot.

Nevertheless, we began to be faced with something more than burp guns and plastic explosives and tin cans with rocks in them and began to encounters more sophistication -- I remember when we found our first .50 caliber antiaircraft machinegun, an old World War II vintage. This was a cause for tremendous alarm. I remember in ‘65 when the enemy overran a civilian irregular defense group and made off with a couple of U.S. artillery pieces. My reaction was that we had not heard the last from of those artillery pieces because the enemy had none. Well, it gradually changed to this very dramatic situation in ‘67, ‘68, and '69, where the enemy had lots of artillery, and he all sorts of exotic equipment. So, in the battle against subversives-insurgency became a battle against two enemies, the North Vietnamese invasion, which was a very substantial

invasion with strong logistic ties and lots of big Katyusha. rockets and other exotic weapons on the one hand and the subversive insurgency on the other.

From a single kind of war in the space of five years, four and a half years, it became a dual type of war. Our reaction was a standard military reaction. We weren't ready to fight the first type of war, we were reluctant to shift our goals to fight the second. But we shifted to fight the second, (that is to say the North Vietnamese invasion) our tendency was to forget the first. It seems to me that we were always just slightly off frequency.

Q: As an adjunct to the first question, about decisions, I hesitate to ask you this because I'm sure you made many, but what were your recommendations concerning operations at CGFMF-Pac?

General Krulak: Recommendations as to operations?

Q: Operations, conduct of war.

General Krulak: Oh, I think I've told you that before. Basically, I kept insistinc, to Westmoreland and to Sharp and to anybody else who would listen, that the first and foremost we had to protect the people, protect the people. People

have never been adequately protected. They're not adequately protected today, although its somewhat better than it was then. If there was a broken record in my theme to those commanders, that was it.

I felt that Khe Sanh was an unsound blow in the air. I was adamant about not going back to the A Shau Valley.

I felt that these major operations, such as the one conducted by the Army in Tay Ninh province involving, 27 battalions, was unwise and unproductive, and that they'd have done better to pull back, let the enemy come across the Cambodian border and extend his lines a bit, and then cut him up. But basically my formula, philosophy and preachment was first protect the people.

Q: We discussed this on Saturday and I don't know whether you want to go into it any further. The two questions actually are allied here. What did your duties for Counter insurgency ^1QP JCS entail and what was the attitude of the various services to counterinsurgency?

General Krulak: I discussed it in detail and I can't go any further.

Q: All right, fine. What features of your Joint Counter-

insurgency: Concept and Guidance, published in 1962, were adopted in South Vietnam?

General Krulak: The book itself was a set of generalities and since the generalities were pretty much dogmatic, it would be fair to say that it was used very generally. But, it didn't get down to the detail necessary really to make a great splash in the "down to earth battle."

Q: How effective was the Diem regime in coping with the Viet-cong threat as it existed in 1963?

General Krulak: It was not very effective. There was a great deal of inefficiecy on every level of the Diem regime. They were disorganized, disoriented militarily, and there was a great internal conflict. But most of all, they were not likely to react well to the need for protecting the people. And that's because they're Asians; Asians traditionally find their military giving little consideration to the well-being of the people.

Diem, himself, to his everlasting credit, understood this. He was advised very sagely by Colonel Thomson, who under stood this also. Diem's aim was to look after the people.

He never got very far in carrying out this aim.

Q: What role, if any, did the United States play in the downfall of Diem?

General Krulak: What I know about this, I don't want to talk about. I would only say that the deposition of Diem was fertilized by the attitude of the United States.

Q: What was the significance of the Gulf of Tonkin incident and why was it decided to commit American combat units in March 1965 and not in August through December of 1964?

General Krulak: The impact on the United States of the Tonkin Gulf incident is certainly well documented and there's no point in my talking about it. The decision to commit our ground forces in Vietnam in March of '65 was not related directly to the event which occurred in Tonkin Gulf, but to an estimate on the part of our political administration in Washington, and mark you, not military but political; that the regime that stood for freedom in Southeast Asia was going down the drain unless we did something.
And that, I'm sure, is why we went there because we saw, at the very beginning, 16 million

people against their will being communized and collectivized if we didn't do something about it. And that's why,we landed; it was a political decision, not military.

Q: Do you think the time was appropriate or should we have gone in there earlier or later?

General Krulak: Oh, I don't know. My guess is that the Washington analysis of the state of affairs in Vietnam was pretty accurate at that time, and that their estimate of the quality of the Vietnamese military was pretty accurate. So, if those were the criteria, then we got there at the right time.

Q: Why were the Marines selected to go in first and why at Danang?

General Krulak: Why were the Marines selected to go in first? Because there wasn't anybody else, and you must get that abundantly clear in your mind. There was no competition. It wasn't a clamoring at the gates to see who could get through. There was nobody ready to react to President Johnson's decision excepting the Marines.

Why did they go to Danang? The

reasons were quite obvious. There was an airfield there. It was in the northern part of the country near the border with North Vietnam, not as near as we would have liked perhaps, but as near as there was a big airfield. The airfield needed protection and Danang formed a good base, since it was the nearest thing to a port on that whole coast north of Cam Ranh Bay.

Q: What was the rationale for inserting a battalion at Phu Bai?

General Krulak: It was a foolish reason. The 8th RRU, a radio unit, was installed at Phu Bai. It had been there a long time. The U.S. had an investment in it; some considerable sum in construction, trailers, and generators, and other communications material. In addition, the geography of Phu Bai was desirable for their communication purposes. So, it was Westmoreland's conclusion that the unit should be protected because there was strong apprehension of guerrilla raids or worse.

I urged Westmoreland, to move the 8th RRU southward of the Col Des Nuages, which is the ridge that separates the Hue-Phu Bai Plain from the Danang area and to permit us to provide a protection of the unit from

forces based in the Danang area. He was not willing to do this.

Q: At this point, I'll ask you, was General Westmoreland receptive to your recommendations, concepts?

General Krulak: Sometimes. At the outset, General Westmoreland sensed that he'd better watch out for the Marines and particularly for the Marines at FMFPac or they would be interfering with his tactical operations. I was quite aware of this and I sought to dissuade any such apprehension.

I told him that when I had any ideas about what he ought to be doing that I'd tell him, and that I wouldn't tell his tactical subordinates,(who were the Marines)in Vietnam. I gave him this sort of reassurance everytime I went out there. I'm not at all sure that it took. I don't know really to what extent I was able to satisfy Westmoreland was as to my bona fides in this regard. But I was always very candid and straightforward with him. Ultimately, I believe he came to believe what I said, although I think he always had sort of an apprehension that I didn't like the way he was doing what he was doing. In this respect, he was often correct.

Q: What was the difference in the counterinsurgency strategy

employed by the Marines in the I Corps Tactical Zone and in the Army in the II and III Corps Tactical Zones?

General Krulak: Let's just simplify it by saying we believed in the combined action program and that's the difference.

Q: Did this difference cause any friction with COMUSMACV?

General Krulak: I don't think so. On one occasion, Westmoreland observed to me that we were putting more effort into this than it was worth. But, basically, as time passed, I believed that Westmoreland, himself, began to see keenly the importance of what we were doing, and the Army slowly adopted procedures that were not inconsistent with this same idea.

Q: What was the real COMUSMACV opinion of the pacification efforts and the combined action program?

General Krulak: I believe growing respect.

Q: Is Corson's The Betrayal, his appraisal of General Westmoreland's attitude regarding pacification accurate?

General Krulak: My guess is that it's a bit overdrawn. There were several aspects of his book that were overdrawn, particularly when he got out of discussing what he knew about directly. The things he knew was extremely accurate and his portrayal, was very good. But when he began to talk about finance, politics, sociology and military personnel strength in South Vietnam, or about the way other people thought and behaved, I have a feeling that he sometimes was visceral and occassionally exaggerated.

Q: But all in all his book is a rather accurate appraisal?

General Krulak: His book is a provocative thing, No, I wouldn't say it was accurate because he talked in the book about things that were not in his direct knowledge. But I would say his book is provocative, because in those areas knew first hand -- the importance of pacification, of revolutionary development, and its relationship with victory and defeat he's very accurate indeed.

I objected to the very large amount of discussion in the book of other people's affairs. Of course I should like the book very much. He says I'm a hero, which is an exaggeration, but I think I've

given you a fair analysis of the book.

Q: I think you may have answered this from the first question. You might not want to dwell on it any further, and that is why weren't American troops employed more extensively in the IV Corps Tactical Zone?

General Krulak: Well, at the outset, the Vietnamese said we weren't up to it, that we didn't understand the problem. Then they insisted that this was sort of their cup of tea. Then, of course, the growing interest in the so-called riverine activity and it was a growing interest mainly because it was novel. It offered a new outlet for thinkers. People who were about to discover America again. I talked to Army officers who were just thrilled with the thought of playing around with barges at sea. Actually, the Delta was and is important but if ever anything was approached wrongly -- this was it. Let's just look at it this way. The French conducted their Delta operations at, on the water, speeds of about seven knots on canals, where controlled mines and floating mines were a real hazard, where people hidden in the reeds could fire a few mortars and neutralize an area.

Picture how the French would have done it if, instead

of being restricted to the use of those boats, they had a thousand helicopters. Do you suppose for a minute that their tactics would have been the same as they were? Of course not.

They would have scrapped everything and built it all around the helicopter. But we studied slavishly the French operations, although we would be the last ever to admit it, and we recreated their mistakes in our own image and increasing it by two or three knots here and there plus a little air conditioning. But basically, we did the same things they did in the same way.

Q: The Dinassaut Program?

General Krulak: Yes. Now, it could be said that you just can't do it with helicopters in the Delta, there isn't enough land and there's too much water. I would just love to have the opportunity. So I feel that we really blew it in the Delta. I think that we've spent literally millions of dollars on a kind of tactical operation that was outmoded when Igor Sikorsky began to think,

Q: Would you say that the tremendous interest that the concept of riverine operations aroused was an escape, that it was something new that....

General Krulak: I said that. It represented an avenue for those whose minds were fertile. But, remember the Navy liked the floating part of it because that's Navy. And they initially tried to regard it as a projection of the amphibious operation. But, some sober minds precluded this from really ever maturing. The Army enjoyed the idea of these relationships with the Navy and between them, I'm convinced they did it wrong.

Q: Did General Thi ask for Marine reenforcements during the battle of Ba Gia, 20 miles south of Chu Lai on 30 May 1965? If so, why were the Marines not committed?

General Krulak: I don't remember. Ask the division commander or Walt they would have a better recollection than I.

Q: Why was General Thi reluctant in allowing extension of the Danang TAOR? And I think you answered that.

General Krulak: Yes. He told me -- and I think he was very honest -- "You don't understand the people yet, you're not ready." In retrospect, I realize he was right; that we had to move at it slowly. We did move

at it slowly and we learned, I think, reasonably well. The Marines* behavior with respect to the people throughout that operation, was far better than the Vietnam average.

Q: And why did he finally agree? The realization that the Marines finally understood?

General Krulak: A gradual breaking down of his inhibitions; that's all. He saw that we weren't winning and because of a very dramatic event which occurred, if I remember correctly, on about the first week in May 1965 when enemy sappers got through the fence on the Danang airfield and knocked out a half a dozen airplanes. Lew Walt and I sat down with Thi the next day and said that this had to stop, that we had to get outside the fence. So that pretty much squared away General Thi's attitude.

Q: Are the Vietnamese, by nature, basically xenophobic?

General Krulak: Oh, I don't think so. Remember they're incapsulated in that part of the world far more than we are here. The residents of Tonkin are absolutely antipathic to the residents of Annam, which is astride the 17th parallel. They, in turn,

despise the Lao and the Khmer and the residents of Cochin Chine, Which is to say Saigon southward. The Thai dislike the Khmer. They are all incapsulated. To this extent -- I suppose -- they could all be little xenophobic. But, I don't think that's really what you mean.

Q: Not within an infrastructure of the overall area of Indochina, but I was talking about xenophobes in relation to the westerners.

General Krulak: I don't think so. They're so ignorant of the westerners. The residents of what is now North and South Viet-nam, pretty much looked upon our soldiers as Frenchmen. They hated the Frenchmen, not because they were Caucasian, not because they looked different, but because of the way they behaved.

The Natines had a hard time getting over the fact that we were not Frenchmen. If we, as Caucasians, had a bad repute, if we as non-Vietnamese had a bad repute, it was largely because of the behavior of the Frenchmen. I kept saying Caucasian, I forget that in the Legion Etrangere there are an awful lot of black people from Africa. And I have seen many Negroid Vietnamese children, which indicates that there was some sort of

intercourse between the two groups, but this generated hatred among the families and the manhood.

Q: Do you think the French, failed abysmally in Indochina and we picked up the bag that they left?

General Krulak: They failed abysmally; we picked up the bag, but we did not behave with absolute perfection ourselves. They left us a terrible heritage and that's the size of it. Some almost irreconcilable things.

Q: Do you think that the enemy build-up along the DMZ in mid-'66 was a result of our military and pacification successes along the costal plains? And, if so, was it possibly a latent reaction to capitalize on the Spring '66 political crisis?

General Krulak: This is just a matter of opinion. I believe it was more related to the political crisis at the outset. But, as our pacification progress began to be felt, in '66 and '67, the enemy actions were more and more polarized on attempting to slow us down in our efforts to care for the people.

Q: What proportion of the United States strategy was a reaction vis a vis offensive action against the Communist effort in NVN?

General Krulak: I'm not sure I understand the question.

Q: I guess what they mean here is, was our strategy a reaction to the Communists or is it....

General Krulak: Yes. Generally speaking, ours was a reaction formula.

Q: Was General Westmoreland's employment of Marine forces consistent with their normal mission, training, and equipment?

General Krulak: That's not a good question. We all know what his employment was and can draw our own conclusions. I think we ought to get one thing straight. Once we got into that battle, and were working for Westmoreland, it was incumbent on us, within reasonable limits, to do exactly as he directed us to do.

The Marines in this respect were extraordinarily

loyal. They did just what he said. Now, the fact that the Marines often argued with him about the impropriety or imprudence of some order or other is beside the point once the decision was made. I can recall of no case when the Marines didn't acquit themselves as well as they could within the parameters of their orders.

Q: And I guess you've already discussed this one, General. Do you feel that the riverine environment would have provided a logical alternative?

General Krulak: I would have liked, in retrospect, to have a crack at it. I'm sure we could have done better! I'm sure we could have done better!

Q: It seems to me that the amphibious nature of riverine operations would have been a logical environment.

General Krulak: The heliborne nature of it; the utilization of the water wherever it was prudent to do so would have been useful.

Q: What was the FMFPac/Ill MAF position concerning the McNamara Wall?

General Krulak: We were absolutely opposed to it.

Q: It was a Maginot Line concept?

General Krulak: A Maginot Line concept, a tremendous drain on personnel, an essentially insoluble problem in terms of maintaining the thing as an impervious wall. The ease of drawing a belt across a map and the incredible complexity of doing anything of an engineering nature west of the Dong Ha Mountain was well-known to the Marines and everybody deplored the McNamara Wall.

Q: I'm not sure I understand what this next question means. What are your opinions regarding the big battles fought in the hinterlands, such as la Drang, Khe Sanh, Dak To?
General Krulak: Those battles which we brought on ourselves unwittingly were bad battles. Those battles which the enemy prepared for us and which resulted in form of entrapment like la Drang were bad battles. The only large battles that had any virtue at all were those large battles which we created on our own terms and for our own purposes and for which had the total intelligence advantage.
Now, I'll just pick one, it’s a classic one and it happens to be the first large

battle. The one where the Marines, south of Chu Lai, by virtue of good intelligence, were able to surround and attack from several sides an enemy force that couldn't go anywhere. They destroyed it.

Q: I guess the optimum situation for Marine forces in Vietnam was the employment of the three F's, find ftiem, fix them, fight them, where the offensive was all on the part of Marine forces.

General Krulak: It is very difficult to beat the brush in that country to find them; it’s very difficult indeed to fix them. On one occasion when it could be brought about, we had some measure of success. But, still, at the risk of being boring and saying it over and over again, the real virtue is to oil-spot the problem, spreading security outward from the areas where the people lived and the rice could grow.
Remember -- the great bulk of Vietnam is without strategic significance; 85% of the people live on 15% of the real estate; 85% of the money resides on 15% of the area. The people live, on the costal littoral and in the rice fields. Rice culture is the name of the game in that part of the world. Anything that moves in the hinterland ought to be fair game — a target. But anything that moves in the highly populated area is a potential friend and he's the guy

that needs protection and care.

Q: Do you find any logical comparison between Vietnam, Cambodia, and Korea that the southern parts are the rich agricultural areas and the northern parts of these countries are manufacturing and heavy industrial areas?

General Krulak: That's not the way it is in Vietnam. The belt extending along the coast, almost unbroken, from the Red River to the Mekong; Delta, is a rice culture, and such that manufacturing that takes place in Indochina was found before this fracas in Saigon and Hanoi and a little in Danang. It's not comparable to Korea.

Q: What is your appraisal of the Tet '68 offensive?

General Krulak: It was a clear exhibition of very poor intelligence on the part of the enemy. He made judgements that turned out to be terribly wrong with respect to attitudes of the people. It was a corresponding manifestation of poor intelligence on our part that he could deploy his forces in such strength and with such speed as to cause the depredations that he did in Saigon and Hue.

So it could be looked back upon as a portrait of poor intelligence performance on the part of both antagonists.

Q: Let's get to the heart of the successes. Let's ask a question about this intelligence business throughout military history. Commanders are notoriously reluctant to accept the appraisal of their intelligence sections. It happened in World War II and it probably happened in Korea too. Do you find the same thing occurring there in Vietnam or vice versa, are the intelligence agencies weak, are they able to provide good intelligence?

General Krulak: I think the situation is different in Vietnam. In Korea, the commander did believe in his intelligence agency. When Willoughby told MacArthur that the Chinese were not a potential problem, MacArthur believed it.

In Vietnam, I think, the real problem in intelligence on our side was the proliferation of intelligence activity. Everybody had his G-2,and nobody's G-2 talked with complete candor with anybody else's G-2. Whether it be the Vietnamese intelligence or the Central Intelligence Agency or the National Security Agency or the MACV intelligence or the 7th Air Force Intelligence or the II Corps Intelligence or the political intelligence or our embassy or the Vietnamese government or their CIA; there were so many intelligence agencies and so much intelligence capacity

and so little intelligence coordination and so little intelligence candor relatively, that ours was a famine of plenty.

Q: Is it getting any better do you think?

General Krulak: If I had to make a guess I would say that it has gotten substantially better.

Q: Do you feel Vietnamization can work in view of past Vietnamese political/military performances?

General Krulak: Of course, it is working.

Q: What, in your view, does Vietnamization mean?

Geneall Krulak: Vietnamization simply means the acquisition by the South Vietnamese of the competence, the material, the experience and the will to look after themselves in the environment in which they find themselves. This is not a problem soluble by short notice procedures. It's an evolutionary one. We've done many of the right things to help them evolve. Lamentably we've done many wrong things, too. But, the net aggregate is

good not bad, and Vietnamization is becoming far more effective as it goes on.

The Cambodian enterprise was a great spur to Vietnamization because it gave them confidence. They were comparing themselves not against U.S. soldiers but against North Vietnamese and Cambodian soldiers. They were very glad to see what they saw. It gave the South. Vietnamese military really a chance to stand up and be the king-pin; and of course, they've done very well indeed. So, the question has to be in the absolute affirmative. Certainly, it is worth it.

Q: General, do you feel Thieu and Ky have the best interests for the South Vietnamese people in mind or do they seek to perpetuate the war, U.S. aid, and their control of the country?

General Krulak: That’s an easy question. That Americans are likely to try and appraise Asians by American terms. And this is a deadly booby trap. I remember when George Marshall said, "Chaing Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung are both crooks." Well, he was measuring them both by VMI standards and they were no more universally measureable than water and oil. The fact is the South Vietnamese government of today or of a year ago, the Thieu government, is a better government than most

Asian countries ever aspire to have. They've done a great deal for their country, indeed. They've provided them with a constitution, conducted fair elections, have a congress, decent laws, and moving slowly in the direction of land reform. Of course, they're venal, of course, there are thieves and crookedness and chiselling at every level of their government. Almost like Jersey City. In any case, they are doing well for their country by Asian standards. Oh, certainly, we can do much to criticize by our standards, but they're a better government than I ever expected them to be.

Q: One of the problems, it seems to me, is the lack of American understanding of the Asian frame of mind, Asian attitudes and so on. Do we have anybody in our government, in power, in a policy-making position who understands the Asian way of life?

General Krulak: Just as sure as an individual thinks that he understands it, well better get rid of him. I was amused to read a report from one of my subordinates, who had never been to the Soviet Union, he was there for about five days and he wrote a most definitive report what was going to happen in the Soviet Union.

This is the bitterness of arrogance. The longer I've had to do with Asia and Asian, the more convinced I've become that I cannot insinuate myself into their thought process. I can't think like they do. And when Americans get around to believing that they can think like Asians do, they're headed for trouble. So, when you ask if there's anybody in our government who can think like they do, I'd say there are a lot who believe they can, and none who really can.

Q: Well, how about understanding them?
General Krulak: There are numerous people who are sane and sober enough to realize their own and our own limitations with respect to estimating what any Asian will do. Just how influential they are, how important their position is in the government, I don't know.

Q: Do you feel land reform in South Vietnam is really taking place in sufficient depth to generate a counteraction to Communist appeals?

General Krulak: Yes. But only for a confluence of several

reasons. As you may know, when Bao Dai was in power in Vietnam, Diem was his right hand. And Diem persuaded Bao Dai to issue an edict with respect to land reform, that expropriated French land, limited any amount of land that any land owner could hold, I think it was, 113 hectares and distributed the resultant acquisitions to the peasants. This scarcely got off the ground before Bao Dai departed and the war came on and Diem worked on it a little bit during the next few years. He then disappeared. Really not a heck of a lot developed from it.

However, as time has passed, these very ideas have taken hold and there are halting, clumsy, slow moves towards land reform, on its own, this would not satisfy the people. But, taken in conjunction with the Communists' inability to deliver anything, to do nothing more than promise and sometimes to do that only under circumstances where people are terrified of them, these two things put together, I would say, indicates to the people that there is a little motion.

Q: But land reform is part of it"?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: What is your reaction to employment of the SLF in South Vietnam?

General Krulak: Well, I've spoken of that. It was an essential thing. It often was inefficient from the point of view of the mechanics of troop employment, but when measured against tremendous rehabilitation power that it gave, the tremendous mobility that it gave is, the tremendous threat that it posed, all told, I believe, that COMUSMACV would have said that it was a useful thing. And, of course, it gave the Marines an opportunity to do what they know how to do.

Q: How do you account for the lower casualty counts of the purely amphibious operations, of the SLF as compared with the SLF in-country "Chop" operations?

General Krulak: It's hard to say. Many things could contribute to it. One could be the nature of the targets which they were committed. Another could be that some of those operations were preceded by excellent intelligence or else they would not have been launched in the first place. Others could be that the attritional effects of the protracted ground operation served to be cumulative. I don't know. I'm

sure that no one could give you a good answer on that.

Q: Do you feel that the prolonged in-country employment of the SLF/BLT represented a misuse of these assets?

General Krulak: They had to make a compromise between the need or the fancied need for forces and the desire to reload your gun, to reconsititute the SLF. It was always a conflict.

Q: What about the cost effectiveness of this type of employment?

General Krulak: Well, hell, I just told you what I thought it added up to in terms of general contribution. I believe that if you could fulfill all of the unknowns in the equation, you'd find it to be a very cost effective operation.

Q: Was the capability of the SLF as a "Sunday-punch" reserve diminished by being tied down in areas of reduced priorty during 1968?

General Krulak: Sure.

Q: Do you feel that the amphibious role of the Marine Corps

has lost some of its validity because of the Vietnamese experience?

General Krulak: No.

Q: Do you foresee an interservice showdown in the relatively near future regarding the Marines' amphibious role?

General Krulak: I see a trend towards a showdown that goes far beyond the Marines' amphibious role. It goes into something more, more important, by far, and it is the Marines readiness role.

I see a showdown there. The Army is pointing out that they are able to do anything that we can do. Whether this is true or not, I believe that that is where the show-down will be. Amphibious capability will just be one part of it.

Q: If this takes place, and you think it will, what should the Marine Corps position be?

General Krulak: The Marine Corps position should be based on reality. On what we really can do and what the Army really can do in terms of short-notice reaction. And that is why I believe that it behooves the Marines to enhance their technology with

respect to amphibious matters, to build on their technology with respect to afloat readiness. Because this, in the end, is the one thing that that is going to provide us with the incremental time advantage over everybody else. We occupy the ships, if the ships are there we had better be on them. If we're not on them somebody else is going to be on them. Just like the South China Sea. There were Marines on ship ready to do something, when Lyndon Johnson said, "Do it." We'd better keep that much in mind.

Q: Do you think that the development of the mobile air/cav division and its employment of helicopters has surpassed the Marine Corps?

General Krulak: In some respects it has, yes. In others, it has not. It has absolutely no endurance. It almost feeds on itself for endurance. It moves from one place to another involving a logistic undertaking that almost beggars description. If you don't have a logistic airfield immediately at hand here, there's trouble. If you don't have vehicles, you're in serious trouble, but for a quick single punch, which does, not involve great tactical mobility other than that in the battle area, it’s a very impressive thing.

But somebody has to provide the fuel.

Q: What is your position regarding the single management issue?

General Krulak: My position regarding the single manage issue is so thoroughly documented in papers in Marine Corps Headquarters, I think it would be idle to try to simplify it here. I laid out my position in great detail and it's all in Marine Corps Headquarters in the archives. Obviously, I couldn't applaud it, any aspects of it, or any compromise connected with it.

Q: Do you think that this again foreshadows this post-war fight?

General Krulak: Absolutely.

Q: What about the conflict between ground people and aviation people, the argument of the Marine aviators, senior aviators, that the ground commanders didn't understand aviation's problems and the ground Marines' argument that Marine aviation wasn't as responsive as they would like it to be?

General Krulak: Both arguments have validity.

They are both logical.

If you spend all of your time learning the intricacies of making a helicopter go and in keeping it going, you're going to lose something of the feel of what somebody else is doing with whom you operate from time to time.

On the other hand, if your function is mainly related to fighting on the ground you can't be expected to understand the terrible restraints -- mechanical and personal -- that are levied on the people who fly in the air.

This is certainly nothing new. It's been one of the Marine Corps' internal problems since we started having airplanes in the Marine Corps. It has continued because the aviation function is, by its very nature, so different from the ground functions that we can't be absolutely homogeneous at the lowest level. Good, hard-thinking, conscientious people have tried to minimize this problem but they're never going to eliminate it completely. And they may as well face it.

Q: Do you think that the Marine aviators welcomed the way this single manager problem was resolved?

General Krulak: Of course not. They saw it as a threat to our air-ground team just as the rest of us did and they deplored it. Of course they did not like

Q: It wasn't a question of feeling more at home in an aviation environment?

General Krulak: To the contrary. No. No. No. There's no future to Marine aviation as a sublimated element of any major air force. They've got to be a part of the Marine air-ground team. They know it.

Q: How do you think the image of the Marine Corps will emmerge from the Vietnam conflict?

General Krulak: Not as good as it did from the Korean conflict. Not as good as it fimmerged from World War II. In this regard, I would suggest that you get the text of the talk which I delivered at Marine Corps Headquarters shortly before I retired. I addressed that at great length, in the length of about an hour.

Q: That was the speech that you gave at Quantico, too?

General Krulak: Very nearly.

Q: I think you've answered this. How good or bad was our Intelligence prior to Tet?

General Krulak: Bad.

Q: Some U. S. Commanders say that we knew about enemy plans and intentions.

General Krulak: I'm glad to hear that they think that; it's too bad they didn't do something about it.

Q: Again you would place the blame on the proliferation of intelligence agencies?

General Krulak: Mainly.

Q: What were out major mistakes in the Republic of Vietnam?

General Krulak: You have 40 pages of them.

Q: That includes also our best moves.

General Krulak: Well, more or less, I guess.

Q: Should we have poured more money and personnel into the combined action program?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: Revolutionary development?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: Civic action?

General Krulak: Yes.

Q: Well, that ends the questions, General.

General Krulak: That's all right with me.

Q: Thank you very much.