

# ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT

Major General Raymond L. Murray  
U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)

Murray  
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HISTORY AND MUSEUMS DIVISION  
Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps  
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Major General Raymond L. Murray, 1 September, 1967.







LtCol Murray greets his wife and children upon their arrival in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; 31 March, 1947.







Col Murray in Korea; August, 1950.







Col Murray (left) and MajGen Riseley (right)  
greet Zsa Zsa Gabor during her visit to Camp Lejeune; 10 March 1959.







BGen Murray breaks ground for a new school in Ishikawa, Okinawa while a Shinto priest and the mayor look on; 26 Oct 1959.







BGen Murray; 1960.

OLD CHINESE TREE





MajGen Murray (2d from right) looks on as Gen Wallace M. Greene (far left) receives a copy of the third volume in the History of U.S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II series from Mr. Henry I. Shaw. Also looking on is Col Frank Caldwell; 21 June 1967.





DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
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FOREWORD

This typescript, the transcribed memoir of Major General Raymond L. Murray, USMC (Ret), results from a series of recorded interviews conducted with him in San Francisco, California on 27 June, 1975, and at Camp Pendleton, California on 10 and 11 February, 1986, for the Marine Corps Oral History Program. 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 a 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 Marines.

General Murray has read the transcript and made only minor corrections and emendations. The reader is asked to bear in mind, therefore, that this is a transcript of the spoken rather than the written word. General Murray has placed a restriction of OPEN on the use of his interview transcript. This means that a potential user may read the transcript upon presentation of appropriate credentials.

Copies of this memoir are deposited in the Marine Corps Oral History Collection, History and Museums Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D.C., and Breckinridge Library, Marine Air-Ground Training and Education Center, Quantico, Virginia.



E. H. SIMMONS  
Brigadier General  
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MAJOR GENERAL RAYMOND L. MURRAY, USMC, RETIRED

Raymond Leroy Murray was born January 30, 1913, in Los Angeles, California. He attended schools in Alhambra, California, and Harlingen, Texas, graduating from high school in 1930. On July 9, 1935, following graduation from Texas A&M College, he accepted his commission as a Marine second lieutenant.

After completing Basic School at the Philadelphia Navy Yard in March, 1936, Lieutenant Murray joined the 2d Marine Brigade in San Diego, California. Embarking with the brigade for China in September, 1937, he served for a short time with the 2d Battalion in Shanghai. In January, 1938, he joined the Marine Detachment at the American Embassy in Peiping. He was promoted to first lieutenant in August, 1938. Upon his return to San Diego in September, 1940, he again saw duty with the 2d Brigade. While there, he was promoted to captain in March, 1941.

That May, Captain Murray sailed for duty in Iceland with the 6th Marines (Reinforced), 1st Provisional Marine Brigade and later graduated from the British Force Tactical School. After the brigade was disbanded, he returned to San Diego in April, 1942, and the following month was promoted to major.

In October, 1942, Major Murray embarked with the 6th Marines for the Pacific area. For conspicuous gallantry on Guadalcanal in January, 1943, as commander of the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, he was awarded his first Silver Star Medal. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in June, 1943. Lieutenant Colonel Murray was awarded a second Silver Star Medal for conspicuous gallantry while commanding the same unit on Tarawa in November, 1943. Serving in this same capacity on Saipan, his heroism in remaining at his post although seriously wounded and continuing to direct his battalion during the initial assault, earned him his first Navy Cross on June 15, 1944.

Returning to the United States in August, 1944, Lieutenant Colonel Murray entered the Command and Staff School at Quantico the following month. After brief duty as an instructor, he was named the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, 1st Special Marine Brigade, moving with the brigade to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in February, 1946. In October, 1946, he departed for duty in the Pacific area as Deputy Chief of Staff, Headquarters Marine Garrison Forces, Pacific, and the following April was named Inspector of Marine Garrison Forces. He returned to Quantico in July, 1948, for temporary duty on the Marine Corps Board at Marine Corps Schools.

Transferred to Camp Pendleton, California, in January, 1949, Lieutenant Colonel Murray served consecutively as

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4; as Commanding Officer, 3d Marines; and as Executive Officer, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. In July, 1950, when the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was formed for duty in Korea, he was ordered overseas with the 5th Marine Regiment which was to be the nucleus for the brigade. As Commanding Officer, 5th Marines, he was awarded his third and fourth Silver Star Medal (Army) and the Legion of Merit during action in August and September, 1950.

With his unit, he participated in the battles of the Naktong River perimeter, Wolmi-Inchon, Seoul, and Wonsan, and in the Marine advance north toward the Yalu River. He was subsequently awarded the Army Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in the 1st Division's historic breakout from the Chosin Reservoir area to the sea at Hamhung. Two days later he took part in the action which earned him his second Navy Cross. Shortly afterward, with his regiment committed to fighting on the central Korean front, he was advanced to the rank of colonel, in January, 1951.

Following his return from Korea, Colonel Murray served from May until August, 1951, at Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D.C. and then entered the National War College. On completing the course in June, 1952, he saw two years' duty as Commanding Officer, Basic School, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Virginia. In July, 1954, he was ordered to Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton.

Colonel Murray remained at Camp Pendleton four years, serving first as Commanding Officer, 1st Infantry Training Regiment, until February, 1955; then as Chief of Staff of the Marine Corps Base, until July, 1957. During his final year there, he was assigned to the 1st Marine Division, serving as Division Inspector, Chief of Staff, and Assistant Chief of Staff, respectively. In July, 1958, he assumed duties as Chief of Staff, Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune. He was promoted to brigadier general in June, 1959.

General Murray departed for Okinawa the following month and assumed duties as Assistant Division Commander, 3d Marine Division, in August, 1959. In July, 1960, he reported to Camp Pendleton as Deputy Base Commander and subsequently, in March, 1961, became Commanding General, Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton. He served in the latter capacity until June, 1962. On July 1, 1962, he began a two-year assignment as Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina. While serving in this capacity, he was promoted to major general, February 1, 1963.

Transferred to Headquarters Marine Corps in June, 1964, General Murray was assigned as Inspector General of the Marine Corps. In August, 1966, he assumed duties as Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3. Detached from Headquarters in September,

1967, he reported to the Far East the following month and began his last tour of active duty as Deputy Commander, III Marine Amphibious Force. He returned to the United States in February, 1968, and entered the U.S. Naval Hospital at Bethesda, Maryland, where he remained until he retired from active duty, August 1, 1968.

A complete list of the general's medals and decorations includes: the Navy Cross with Gold Star in lieu of a second award, the Army Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star Medal with Gold Star and two Oak Leaf Clusters (Army) in lieu of second through fourth awards, the Legion of Merit with Combat "V," the Purple Heart Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation with three bronze stars indicative of second through fourth awards, the China Service Medal, the American Defense Service Medal with Base Clasp, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with four bronze stars, the American Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the National Defense Service Medal with one bronze star, the Korean Service Medal with four bronze stars, the United Nations Service Medal, the Korean Ulchi Medal with Gold Star, and three Korean Presidential Unit Citations.



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**MARINE CORPS ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM**

Interviewee: Major General Raymond L. Murray, USMC, Retired

Interviewer: Mr. Benis M. Frank

Place: San Francisco, California

Date: 27 June, 1975, and 10 and 11 February, 1985

Session I; 27 June, 1975

Begin Tape 1/II, Side A

Frank: The first question, General, is whether or not you'd been briefed at Headquarters Marine Corps and/or FMFPac before joining III MAF and if so, what was the nature of the briefings?

Murray: I was briefed in both places. The nature of the briefings, as I recall them, was general. They briefed on the current military situation or tactical situation in the area. I can't recall whether was any logistical briefing. I'm sure there must have been because the briefing took the form, as I recall, of going to each of the sections--1, 2, 3, and 4--and getting an informal briefing from each of the sections before I went out.

Frank: Now, Gen Buse was FMFPac at the time, or was Krulak still there?

Murray: Krulak was still there.



Frank: Okay. Given his interests and undoubted frustration at not having a bigger hand in Vietnam operations and so on, was there anything specific that he said? Did he recommend the use of back channels, Specats, if you had any problems?

Murray: Not to me.

Frank: Not to you. You had an opportunity to talk with him?

Murray: I certainly had an opportunity to talk with him. We didn't have a specific tete a tete concerning Vietnam.

Frank: Just making your manners.

Murray: Just making my manners, and I attended a party, but he didn't talk to me directly and specifically about what was going on, what should be going on in Vietnam; just general conversation.

Frank: In other words, you didn't receive special instructions at either place?

Murray: No.

Frank: Now, what was the situation in regards to staff, location, and operational situation when you reported in to III MAF?

Murray: I'm not sure I understand what specifically you're after here in this question, but the headquarters, of course, was located in III MAF headquarters in Da Nang. It was the standard staff enlarged considerably by virtue of many special types of activities that were going on out there. The civil affairs staff was fairly large. As far as the tactical situation, 3d Division was based at that time at--I get these names mixed up--it was north of Hue and south of Dong Ha. I can't remember whether it was Phu Bai.

Frank: Yes.

Murray: Phu Bai; I think that's what it was. Headquarters was there at that time, and 1st Division was around Da Nang itself; that is, out some distance, but essentially surrounding Da Nang with the headquarters out west of Da Nang up on a hill, where I think it stayed the entire time, as far as I know, the entire time I was out there.

The Americal Division was in a little town south of Da Nang, and, again, I can't remember the name of it. It was operating in that area. The 1st Division, as I recall--and I couldn't be pinned down to this because my memory is just

a little bit hazy about it--the 1st Division was essentially guarding the so-called Rocket Belt around Da Nang and patrolling generally in that area. The 3d Division was farther north in a series of places, one at Dong Ha, and, of course, at Khe Sanh patrolling from those bases. There were no major operations when I was out there.

Frank: Talking about the size of the staff, did you have a feeling at the time that the administrative tail to the whole III MAF setup was too big? There were more administrators and rear echelon types than troops in the field?

Murray: I don't think I could say that, categorically. If there was a large administrative setup, I have the personal feeling . . . let's see how I can say this. I had the sense that this was a half military operation and half barracks operation; a little bit of a sense of unreality, but I'm not saying that that wasn't the way it should be done. I'm simply saying that this was a feeling, having participated only in operations in which there was a fixed enemy, a place where you went and got him, chased him out or captured ground, or captured people, killed people. Here in Vietnam you had reasonably comfortable bases complete with tape recorders, hi fi sets, etcetera, and operated out of these bases. To anyone, I think, who had only fought the conventional type of war, there was a sense of unreality about this one, to me.



We went up to the man who got out in the field periodically and got shot at, blown up by mines, and what not. The general setting had a sense of unreality about it.

**Frank:** Now, exactly what were the functions and duties assigned to you as Deputy Commanding General at III MAF? Was it the typical ADC type of billet?

**Murray:** When I reported in, Gen Cushman told me . . . My predecessor had been Gen Nickerson, and Gen Nickerson, being quite interested in logistics, had been assigned by Gen Cushman (in writing) to oversee the logistics or logistical aspects of operations. When I reported in, Gen Cushman told me that although that directive was in existence, he felt that I might be more interested in the tactical aspects of it than the logistical aspects and he wasn't going to hold me at all to the charter that he had given Gen Nickerson, and that I could interest myself in just about whatever I wanted to get interested in. This was initially.

Not too long after I got there, I was assigned the specific job of overseeing the construction of the so-called McNamara Line in I Corps. III MAF was involved with this, of course, but also the ARVN was involved with it. The Vietnamese 1st Division was on the right (which would be the east flank of the line), and the 3d Division was in from them, and they were involved in the construction of the line.

I might go on if you want me to explain. This had been under way for some time when I got there, prior to my arrival, and actually prior to Gen Cushman's arrival also, when Gen Walt was there. They had bulldozed a rather wide strip that ran roughly from Dong Ha, over the mountains toward the direction of Khe Sanh, along the flatlands. The 1st Vietnamese Division had built a strong point, which, as I recall, was called A-1 or C-1--I can't remember which--near the coast north of Cua Viet. The next strong point was north of Dong Ha, and I can't recall the name of the town. Then, another on farther west, Con Thien, was also occupied and then Khe Sanh. These were actually the occupied and fortified areas.

We came under some pressure from Gen Westmoreland to get on with building the line as it was proposed. We ordered an operation to capture a place which we called, I believe, A-3, which was between Dong Ha and another occupied place called C-2, which was near a little town whose name I've forgotten. I wish I had a map here. These are easily recognizable on a map.

One of the units of the 3d Division captured this place. What was going through my mind all this time was, how in the hell were we going to build this rather sophisticated and complicated setup of barbed wire and sensor, when you had to fight the enemy to capture one of the spots, for example, that you were going to anchor part of this line. I think

this troubled everybody. How in the hell were you going to build this thing when you had to fight people off while you were building it? Nevertheless, A-3, I'm sure was the name of it, was captured and fortified.

This is a terribly complicated story and I'm not sure that my memory is going to serve me 100 percent here. During earlier operations, part of the time that I was speaking of, there had been attacks on various of our strong points and materials designated for the McNamara Line. I don't recall the official title of this thing; it was known as the McNamara Line.

Frank: DYE MARKER.

Murray: DYE MARKER, right. Materials that had been shipped out specifically for this purpose had been used by various units to improve their own local defenses. Track had been lost of a lot of this material and unfortunately, under the system under which we operated, there was a place for everything and everything had its place type of thing. This stuff had been shipped out from the states in accordance with a plan that had been approved some time previously that so many beams of this size and length and so on were shipped specifically for this purpose. Well, it had gotten pretty much confused by this time as to where some of this stuff had gone. It was perfectly understandable. When you're



getting attacked and you feel that you need some more security, you'd like to use whatever is at hand to provide that security.

So some of the problems that we had were that certain types of lumber and equipment, which were required for building the line, weren't there. There were many problems connected with this thing, and frankly I never got a handle on it. Neither did anybody else. So much for that little aspect of it.

Now, when I was given a job of assuming control or direction of building DYE MARKER, I was given a staff of assistants: Assistant 3, Assistant 4, Assistant Supply Officer, and so on, from the big staff, and quite frankly I couldn't make it operate. We tried to--and we did, in fact--prepare an operation order which ultimately went out under the signature of Gen Cushman, but I was not in control, of course, of the primary staff of Gen Cushman. I was not in control of the ARVN. All we could do was put out an order, and it seemed to me that an operation of this kind, which was an integral part, really, of the tactical operations, in my opinion should never have been handled by a separate staff trying to operate alongside the primary or main staff and trying to operate through the tactical organizations in a separate line. I felt all along that the whole thing should have been handled as part of the operations of III MAF by the principle staff, and I could have been the sort of super

inspector or supervisor to see that the III MAF orders were carried out. But, actually, the tactical operations and DYE MARKER were run as two separate operations with two separate staff, and I didn't see how it could work, and I was never able to make it work.

Frank: One was defensive and one was offensive?

Murray: Well, not only that but the tactical organizations were the ones that were having to put this in, and they were having to coordinate tactical operations with the installation of the line, and the setup was beyond me. I was unable, really, to get a handle on the thing. Things got done, but it was in a rather haphazard sort of way, so it seemed to me. And I say this with no criticism of anyone; this was the way the thing was set up, and it just didn't seem to me that it was a workable setup, and terribly frustrating. I couldn't make it go. Ultimately the Tet Offensive, in a sense, solved the problem because the whole thing, as far as I know, was abandoned after the Tet Offensive.

Another thing that was frustrating was the very idea that we could put in this type of defensive installation in the middle of a battlefield. It was totally incongruous to me, and I couldn't accept it intellectually that any such thing made any kind of sense. I could see the sense of it in Korea, for example, where no war was going on, where you

set this thing up to detect whether anybody was infiltrating into South Korea or whether a massive attack was going to come at you. But, in the middle of a battlefield, to set this kind of line up just didn't make any kind of sense.

**Frank:** Well now, the directive to set it up initially came from the Department of Defense.

**Murray:** Yes, I'm sure that's true. The original orders, of course, had been issued long before I got there.

**Frank:** And there was, as you know, there was initial reluctance even on the part of Westmoreland; that it was totally unrealistic. Again, as I understand it, he was directed to get on with it. The concept had been developed, I think, by Gen Starbird.

**Murray:** That's right. Gen Starbird came out, by the way, while I was there and looked things over. He was sympathetic to our problems and, as I recall, promised to try to get some additional materials to replace the materials that had already been shipped out but had been used for other purposes. He was going to try to get some additional materials shipped out to us to make up for what had been lost.

Frank: I understand that the plan of the barrier was to set up sensors and then lay your barbed wire, and that one of the fallacies of the whole plan was that if the sensors were tripped, how were you going to get out from behind your barbed wire and reset them?

Murray: Well, I don't recall that that was exactly . . . It was a system of barbed wire entanglements, obstacles of various sorts, and sensors. But another part of the concept was, once the line was constructed, there'd be a series of strong points behind this line occupied by relatively small units and patrols behind the line. Well, that made no military sense to me either. I just couldn't accept the concept of this thing. It was very difficult to try to make it work. It seemed so utterly ridiculous to me to waste time, effort, and money in building this damn thing under the circumstances.

Frank: A lot of money. If you were frustrated and unhappy about it, it must have been even more frustrating and a great unhappiness on the part of the tactical units, the 3d Division especially--I imagine the ARVN--but the 3d Division in trying to carry out this effort.

Murray: I remember one occasion when I talked to Gen Hochmuth, who was the 3d Division commander at that time.

Our headquarters was getting pushed to get on with this work, and I talked to Gen Hochmuth about getting on with it. He said he'd get on with it just as fast as he could, but he had a lot of other things he had to do, too. There was this conflict.

Another reason, by the way, why I felt the thing should all have been run from one staff, under one head . . . I grant you anything that I said was said in the name of Gen Cushman, but I think anybody realizes that where I was operating with a separate staff, sort of separately, that no matter what I said, people felt, "Well, I'm not working for him. I'm working for Gen Cushman," and the theory breaks down a little bit there. I felt that I didn't have the authority to directly order anybody to do anything in relation to DYE MARKER, plus the fact that, I guess congenitally it didn't fit with my idea of the fitness of operations, the way things should run. So there was always, at least in my mind, there was always this conflict between the tactical operation and what was essentially a logistical and engineering operation. But, unfortunately, both of which had to be accomplished by the same troops, primarily the same troops. We had engineers, of course, there supervising, but the bulk of the work had to be done by troops. Being an old tactical commander myself, I fully realized that the primary problem of the division commander up there was the tactical handling of his troops and accomplishing his tactical



mission rather than build the damn line that nobody believed in in the first place.

Frank: You can't be totally offensive-minded when you've got to be concerned about building this defensive type of thing.

Murray: I'm sure that many of the others didn't let this worry them nearly as much as I did. It worried the hell out of me: how we were going to get this damn job done under the conditions that existed.

Frank: Really affected you?

Murray: Yes, it did.

Frank: Now, you had your own staff which had been siphoned off from the regular, III MAF, staff. How was the relationship? Well, what was your relationship with Gen Cushman? Of course, you'd known him; he was a classmate. Was it a close one? I'm thinking in terms of the classic CG-ADC relationship, any number of examples where the ADC or the deputy is sort of something to have, but you really don't have to pay much attention to him. Was there this type of

. . .

Murray: Certainly . . . not . . . I don't think consciously on the part of Gen Cushman. Gen Cushman had enough problems--not only tactical but many other problems--not the least of which was entertaining a constant stream of visitors through the headquarters. I never had the feeling that I was shunted aside. On the other hand, we didn't have, for example, frequent little meetings in his office, discussing what was going on, what the problems were and possible solutions and this sort of thing. That never happened. On the other hand, I certainly didn't have the feeling that he felt I was a necessary but unwanted appendage, and he told me on several occasions, as far as having any problems with DYE MARKER, why let him know. But hell, there wasn't any point in running to him and saying, "I don't think the way this thing is set up is right." I did, I believe, on one occasion, tell him that I didn't think this was the right way to do it, that it ought to be done through the staff. But, he felt that this was probably the only way that this could be done because his staff was so busy with other things, and he felt that this should be separate. There was no aloofness, antagonism, anything of this sort between the two of us at all. On the other hand, neither was there a real closeness.

Frank: Were you brought in and apprised of everything that was going on?

Murray: I attended the daily briefings, every morning.

Frank: Gen Anderson, then a brigadier general I guess, was the chief of staff.

Murray: Initially Gen Owens was chief of staff, later relieved by Gen Anderson.

Frank: Did he keep you apprised? Did he make sure that everything that went on . . .

Murray: Yes. Well, initially I lived at the beach house and came in every morning to headquarters, which was about six miles away, as I recall, and he was quite anxious to keep me informed of everything that was going on. Later, after the Tet Offensive, I moved into the headquarters; actually the same building that Andy was living in, so we were together quite a bit.

I had a feeling--which I think was my own fault for feeling this way--but I had a feeling that I was sort of out of the stream of things, but I think this was my fault. It probably was a feeling that wasn't justified at all by facts, but I had been used, for quite a long time, to running the show myself, and it was very difficult for me to stand on the sidelines and have somebody else run the show and me not really have an responsibility. I always tried to be careful

not to try to give any indication to anybody that I thought this was the way things ought to be done because when a staff worked for me, I wanted them to work for me. When Gen Cushman had his staff, it should work for him. It shouldn't work for me. Occasionally somebody on the staff would come and ask me what I thought about something, but I never knew for sure whether they were doing this just to make me feel good or really what was on their mind.

Frank: You had a fine . . .

Murray: Well, I think the position of an ADC or a deputy is always a rather difficult one. At least it was for me. I was ADC of the 3d Division on Okinawa; not in combat, of course. It wasn't nearly as frustrating as being a deputy commander of the outfit engaged in combat, but it's a position that, I think, perhaps is not terribly comfortable for a person who spent a good part of his life being the commander rather than second in command.

Frank: I can understand that.

How about the relationships between III MAF and MACV?  
Were you brought into that at all?

Murray: Very little.

End Tape 1/I, Side A

Begin Tape 1/I, Side B

**Murray:** When Gen Westmoreland came to headquarters he wanted to talk to Gen Cushman, and I was never in on it, any of those conferences. We did go to Nha Trang on one occasion for a periodic gathering of all the corps commanders and staffs where there'd be a general briefing of what each of the different corps was doing and so on, and I did get to Nha Trang for one of those briefings, but I never got to Saigon. Well, the answer simply is no. I was not involved in dealings between Westmoreland's headquarters and our headquarters except in the case of DYE MARKER when members of Westmoreland's staff would come down to talk about DYE MARKER.

**Frank:** There's no question . . . no sense of liaison between you and your opposite number, say, Deputy MACV? No reason for it?

**Murray:** No. In any case, there wasn't any.

**Frank:** Given the size and composition and complexity of III MAF staff, do you think there was anything unusual or unique in its staff functioning? There's been some comment made that perhaps the staff functioning during this time was not



as good as it should have been, that the overall staff was not as good as it should have been.

**Murray:** I couldn't answer that question. The staff wasn't working for me. Gen Cushman was satisfied with it. I guess it was functioning properly. If he wasn't satisfied with it, why it wasn't. But, so far as I know, it functioned as a staff normally functioned. The only aberration, you might call it, was this setting up a separate staff for DYE MARKER, which I felt was a little unusual. Perhaps it wasn't; perhaps it's been done before and done successfully, but I never was comfortable with the setup because of the circumstances I've already described.

**Frank:** In your role as Deputy III MAF, weren't you the representative or chairman of the council with CORDS?

**Murray:** Yes.

**Frank:** Was that sort of a pro forma type of thing? Did it have any real function?

**Murray:** I don't think it had any significant function. It served to bring us together periodically so that everybody continued to realize that there were many operatives functioning in the area. During my time out there, nothing

of significance came up or was resolved, but it did serve to keep people informed. There was some talk periodically about knocking it off. It wasn't serving a useful purpose, but we continued it up to the time of the Tet Offensive, and I don't know whether it was ever re-established later on, but it did stop after the Tet Offensive. I think it was worthwhile, from that aspect, even though it didn't accomplish anything specific. It did serve to keep people informed.

Frank: Well, do you think this civil-military relationship or the impingement of having to be concerned with civilian matters during a tactical situation or fighting a war was not only unrealistic but surrealistic? Or do you think that this was just a natural outgrowth of Marine Corps involvement with civic action?

Murray: I think, under the circumstances of the Vietnam War, it was a necessity. I don't see how it could have operated otherwise. As everyone was well aware, it was a very unusual war. You could have many different kinds of organizational setups, I think, and whether what they had out there was the very best I'm not prepared to say. But something of the sort, I think, would have had to have been set up, given the circumstances of the type of war we were fighting. Again, you can't really separate out strictly civilian matters and strictly military matters in a war of

that kind, I don't think, and, unlike conventional warfare where you capture an area and then you can turn it over to somebody to run the civil aspects of it, the civil affairs area and the battleground coincided out there. We were fighting over villages back and forth; fighting within villages; fighting behind so-called lines that we had established.

**Frank:** Of course, the frustrations of this type of war, I think, are more than evident: the decision on the part of the commander of which area he had to pay closest attention to, civic action or the tactical situation. You see the pressures in both areas . . . to successfully conduct operations in both areas. Which, in your mind, do you think was the most important, the area to which you had to pay the most attention?

**Murray:** Well, they certainly both were important in my mind. When you're actually engaged in combat, your sole concern, of course, was the actual combat situation. I don't think you worry much about, too much, about the civilians in an area of combat. You've got to try and defeat the enemy and certainly keep him from defeating you. But in that particular type of war, where it was so much hit and miss-- you have an operation, fight for a short time, and the enemy would disappear. This occurred right in the area where you

were trying to develop village government and dig wells, set up markets, etcetera. The two were totally intermingled in these circumstances.

Frank: Do they cancel each other out?

Murray: Not to a great degree; I don't think so.

Frank: How could you expect a PFC, a private, a rifleman, to, on one hand, start shooting someone who's Vietnamese and then turn around, embrace him, and love him, and help him?

Murray: Because you're dealing with Americans, and the vast majority of American Marines and soldiers that I've seen find it very difficult to hate, for very long, even the guy they're fighting. In World War II I saw . . . many a time I saw wounded Japanese--about the only kind we captured--being treated as gently as our own people were treated. Once you're through fighting them, there's no more reason to hate them. Now there are exceptions to this, of course, but I went to many, many villages . . .

Oh, another job that I was assigned--and which I liked very much--was general supervision of the CAPs, Community Action Platoons. I'd visit these villages and see these young Marines and a corpsman (of which each group was composed) and you'd think that they were foster parents of

the village. They just spent hours and hours working with the villagers, trying to help them, and do all sorts of thing. They'd go into a village, and after a short time they'd take a very proprietary interest in the village, knowing that possibly some of the villagers were Viet Cong and might, in the dark of the night, kill them. The Americans have a very peculiar way about them, in this respect, I think.

**Frank:** Do you think the reactions of the villagers were akin to that of China, the old rice converts? Missionaries would convert someone to Christianity by giving them rice, and the next thing you know . . . It was just on the face, a conversion.

**Murray:** I never was able to tell for sure. I'd visit villages where the village chiefs and the villagers themselves would give every appearance of thinking that we were just the greatest people in the world, and we were their salvation. I'd go back to my quarters convinced that we had won the hearts and minds of that village anyhow, and then I'd begin to think, is this really true or am I just believing what they want me to believe? I was never really able to determine that. I think in a great many cases it was absolutely genuine. They were anti-Communists, and they appreciated the protection that they were getting. They were very definitely on our side, but even within groups where there



were a lot of people that felt genuinely this way, there probably were Viet Cong sympathizers right in the same group. But I, nor anyone else, had little way of telling. The troops that I visited never gave any indication that they were particularly concerned about this, though I'm sure they must have been concerned about it: who in this crowd of people would lead us to believe that they love us but actually were ready to slit our throats the first chance they would get.

Frank: A facet of this, something which has come out recently, these rules of engagement, were you aware of them? Had you seen in black and white what the rules of engagement were?

Murray: I don't believe I actually sat down and read what the rules were. I may have but don't recall having done it. Not being much involved in tactical operations, as it turned out, (I never did get involved with the tactical operations.) I didn't pay too much attention, personally, to the rules of engagement; didn't think about it.

Frank: Well, given your record and experiences in combat and so on, did you go out there with a feeling that we're fighting a war with one hand tied behind our back? Is this part of the frustration which you may have had?

Murray: No, I don't think so. I don't think about Vietnam the way most people apparently do. I feel that it was a war of very limited objectives, and, as far as I'm concerned, our objective was to prevent the Communists from taking over South Vietnam. Our mission was not to "win" a war. Our mission was to prevent the Communists from taking over South Vietnam. I felt before I went out there . . . I still feel . . . fortunately I'll never have to prove it. I still feel that the better way to have fought the war would have been to defend major population centers with our troops, do only enough patrolling to accomplish that mission, to have trained the South Vietnamese army from the very beginning and equipped it to go out and do its own fighting in the area beyond.

For example, I never could see any sense in having troops at Khe Sanh. There were no people there of any consequence; a few villagers here and there. The road was ostensibly being protected was the road that nobody used because it was torn up. Bridges were gone; nobody could use that road that they were protecting. Sitting astride an infiltration route didn't prevent infiltration. I just never could see any point to having a significant body of troops sitting out on a mountain in Khe Sanh.

Frank: Was that a feeling at III MAF headquarters too? Was there a concern about the ability of the . . .

Murray: I don't know. I never discussed it with III MAF headquarters. I did, on one occasion, mention it to Gen Krulak, that I thought it was kind of foolish, and Gen Krulak didn't say, "I agree with you wholeheartedly," nor did he say, "I disagree with you." He listened to my comment.

But, at any rate, I felt that the area of Vietnam was fairly limited, where population was fairly limited, and I felt that we should concentrate our efforts on protecting the major populated areas, I say, and let the Vietnamese go out and take territory, then hold it and develop an infrastructure that could support itself. We sort of halfheartedly went about this, it seemed to me; halfheartedly.

When you take a village and establish a CAP who tried to train the villagers, but this wasn't really a major, organized operation. I thought we wasted an awful lot of troops and time running around in the hills just trying to kill people. I felt the important thing was to hold what was important and let the Viet Cong run all over the goddam hills if they wanted to. What did they have in the hills?

Frank: Well, you were a product of the Basic School, the schools of the '30s; a member of the class of '35. The Small Wars Manual had been developed. Marine experiences in Nicaragua, in Santa Domingo, in Haiti, and so on have been pretty well chronicled and documented. Do you have a feeling that the lessons learned of those periods could have been

applied to operations in Vietnam? Certainly there are very close parallels there.

Murray: I don't think there is a close parallel.

Frank: You don't?

Murray: No. The operations in the small wars of the '30s were against what were essentially bandits.

Frank: Non-political.

Murray: Essentially non-political. Guerrilla warfare, yes, but relatively small as compared to the total population; a group of people who . . . There might have been some political too, but not in the same sense as Vietnam where you had not only a fairly major army that was sending divisions down from North Vietnam into South Vietnam, but you also had a tremendous organization of Viet Cong right in South Vietnam. I don't think there was any real parallel between the two places.

Frank: Of course, given the fact that you did have Viet Cong, which was Communist-inspired and Communist-based, do you feel that the basic aims . . . that the lack of a cohesive central government--and given the structure of government,

class relations, and what have you--that there should have been any reform? Did you get into that at all? That there should have been a reform, that it should have changed, had some of the things that Viet Cong wanted or the insurgents or whatever you want to call them. Had these things been changed it might have alleviated the situation; land reform, etcetera.

**Murray:** That's very difficult for me to say. The way the South Vietnamese government operated was, I believe, is pretty much the way Asian governments have operated from time immemorial, and I don't know how deeply the resentment against this sort of thing ran amongst the people. Even though they were anti-Communists . . . they may have been anti-Communists and still resented very deeply the way their own government was run. I don't know.

My impression was that the people that I came in contact with were certainly very anti-Communist. However, the people I came in contact with were the military leaders, the government leaders, most of whom could speak English and I could talk with. I never talked with villagers, couldn't talk with them. I really have no idea what the villager felt. I've heard many generalizations by people such as, "Those people out there don't care what government they've got. Just leave them alone." This may be true. I don't



know. I rather doubt it, but I don't know. I'm sure the majority of them must have been sick of war.

Frank: Thirty years of it.

Murray: Whether they were willing, would have been willing, for the Communists to take over just for the sake of getting the war over with or not (talking about the common people now, the villagers, farmers) I just don't know.

Of course, first of all, I don't think we should have ever sent troops to Vietnam. I felt that the day we sent them in. We should have offered air support, training support, equipment support, and kept troops out of Vietnam. That's my personal opinion.

Frank: As an add-on to that, I heard a discussion last night as to how did the Marine Corps come out of Vietnam? Did it do a good job; over all, not from the point of view of individual bravery or individual heroism? Did the Marine Corps learn anything out of Vietnam? Did it gain anything out of Vietnam? What did it do that was so outstanding and so different from the Army, if anything?

Murray: Quite frankly, I don't think we did anything that the Army wasn't doing out there. That type of warfare is not the Marine Corps' forte. We do best to charge hard and

wipe out opposition and take land and what not. We don't do best, I think, with the type of warfare that was conducted out there. I guess if we learned anything--I shouldn't say this--but perhaps what we learned was we shouldn't get ourselves involved in a military war like that.

**Frank:** I think there's been a lot of feeling like that from Marines.

**Murray:** Another thing, in my opinion, we did not do well at all well--I really can't compare it with what the Army did because I didn't see any Army troops out there except the Americal Division, and I really didn't see very much of them. We're not very good on defense, a defensive organization. We all study it in school, but, I guess because we consider ourselves primarily an offensive type of organization, we don't do well in organizing defenses. I noticed this when I went to various defensive positions that we had. I thought, personally, that they were rather poorly organized defensively. The main idea seemed to be a big, long trench and just put a bunch of Marines in there and shoot at anything that came, rather than truly organizing the defense in some depth; one position covering another position and so on, interlocking defenses.

Frank: Yes, I've heard that criticism elsewhere.

Considering the primary mission of the Marine Corps, the amphibious role of the Marine Corps, what was your attitude and what was the attitude of the III MAF staff concerning the SLF? Do you think it was employed properly? do you think it could have been employed better or elsewhere? Did you feel that you could have used the troops better in country as part of III MAF?

Murray: No, I rather doubt that. I think it was employed properly. It was used as a weapon of opportunity; when intelligence indicated that there was a good use for the SLF, it was so used. Had we been in a different kind of war, a more conventional type of war, it could have been used to great advantage in ways that it wasn't used. But we weren't in that kind of a war. It was . . . I know . . . As far as Gen Cushman was concerned, it was a mighty handy thing to have available. I think I recall him mentioning that a time or two, that we sure were fortunate in having that SLF our there where we could use it if we needed it.

Frank: Well, there was a lot of criticism that every time an SLF operation was to be mounted, it went into this "ritual preparation" for amphibious operations, to quote someone, and the end result was that the net gains were not all the great.

Murray: I don't know anything about that.

Frank: Question about Khe Sanh: what were the most significant problems associated with holding Khe Sanh?

Murray: Oh, I think probably the only real problem was a logistical problem. I don't think there was too much of a question of whether it could be held or not, but it was difficult to supply it, and it was difficult to evacuate the casualties from it. It was a defensible position, and, ultimately, I think they got some pretty good defensive organization in the place. I was in Khe Sanh about two days before the attack; just before the attack. I didn't think it was very well organized. As a matter of fact, this was a concern I kept to myself because no one else seemed to be concerned. Of all our defensive positions, they really weren't organized as well as they should have been for defense. From what I've heard and from pictures that I've seen, as the attack went on, they built better and better organized defenses, so that I don't think there was ever any serious question of it ever being lost.

Understand, too, that even though the North Vietnamese had a very large number of troops, they had their logistical problems also. I think back to Korea, and I've thought many times about this, that maybe we could really have pulled off

a coup out there if we'd been a little smarter than we were. The Chinese resupply was what the soldier carried on his back. Once that was gone they didn't resupply that unit. They put another unit in because the first unit has used everything up. They didn't have anything else, and I sometimes think that if we'd really realized this at the time, we might have . . . after they made some pretty costly attacks, we might have counter-attacked them and really beat the hell out of them.

Frank: Yes.

Murray: But this was true of the North Vietnamese to some extent. I, of course, don't know any details about their supply situation other than it was long, arduous, and constantly harassed. You know they were coming down the trails. They were constantly harassed. It must have been a monumental problem to keep them supplied.

End Tape 1/I, Side B

Begin Tape 2/I, Side A

Frank: About Khe Sanh, there's been much criticism about holding it, putting troops there in the first place. Do you think there was such a thing as a Khe Sanh Syndrome that, number one: unlike Dien Bien Phu, which the French lost, we

were going to keep Khe Sanh? There wasn't going to be another Dien Bien Phu; we were going to show that we could hold such a position? Number two: considering the nature of operations elsewhere, here was a focus point. Here was something that we could really focus on as an extremely successful American operation: "We were in a defensive position, but we were really punishing the enemy." You know, Khe Sanh became a focus, at least in the newspapers, to the exclusion of everything else.

**Murray:** As I previously said, I never could understand why we had troops in Khe Sanh in the first place. I asked the question one day of someone, I don't recall who it was, in the headquarters. It may have been Gen Cushman. And the reply, as I recall, was that Gen Westmoreland wanted Khe Sanh held to protect Highway 9 for a possible future attack into Laos. Gen Westmoreland didn't say this to me. I never saw that in writing. This was what I was told was our reason for holding Khe Sanh. I saw no reason for holding it. There was no population up there. The road presumably they were protecting was unusable, although it could have been repaired and used. I guess it was in a later date, but . . .

**Frank:** It was Highway 9, wasn't it?

Murray: Highway 9. So we were there . . . as I understood it, Gen Westmoreland said that we should be there. What his reasons were, I don't know, other than from hearsay. Once the attack started on Khe Sanh, there was nothing else, I guess, to do but hold it. You couldn't very well evacuate the place under attack, but so far as I know this was a MACV-directed position because we were trying to hold this position. I read in the newspapers, also, about how we were trying to make this a show place and so on, and I resented it very much that the newspaper people were writing that sort of thing. I don't think there's any such thing. We were ordered to hold it, so we held it and for reasons that MACV had, of which I'm not personally aware other than by hearsay.

Frank: How about air support for Khe Sanh? How much Air Force . . . that is C-130s were made available and how was it apportioned?

Murray: I don't know.

Frank: You don't know. To what degree, if any, did Headquarters Marine Corps, or FMFPac, look over the shoulder, so to speak, of III MAF in the conduct of its operations? Did you feel that you were an independent agent, or did you feel . . . Gen Greene always had that little walkie-talkie



that connected him into the National Command Center and go out on radio relay so he could say, "Hello, Lew," or "Hello, Bob" at any time. FMFPac, with its back channel traffic and its Specats, was there a considerable amount of that traffic out there?

**Murray:** I was not directly involved with any of that. No one ever called me, of course. How much Bob was called, I don't know. The general operations were directed by MACV. Gen Westmoreland, I know, on a couple of occasions either called or visited and told Bob that he wanted an operation somewhere; he wanted a sweep somewhere, attack and destroy, or whatever. But local commanders, so far as I know, had the ability to direct operations in their immediate vicinity for their own protection, for their own defense, and I don't believe that any of them planned any major operations on their own; offensive operations on their own.

There weren't too many major operations conducted during the time that I was out there. I think the feeling was that you were being looked at over the shoulder from MACV, from FMFPac, from Washington, from the White House, was how they wanted to know in some detail pretty much all the time what the hell was going on. And that, accompanied with the constant stream of visitors through the headquarters, I'm sure must have harassed Bob just almost to death. I wish I'd kept a log of the people who came through that

headquarters. I don't think there was a day went by that there weren't VIPs of some sort coming through there, and so many that Bob would ask me on many occasions to entertain them, at luncheons primarily, people that were overflow.

Senator Tower, I remember, was at lunch one day at my place and another senator whose name I don't recall. It just seemed like there was a constant stream of visitors who had to be provided for, taken care of, escorted to various places. I don't know that it interfered with actual combat operations to any great extent, but it certainly took up a hell of a lot of time which probably could have been more profitably spent in doing something else; thinking, if nothing else.

Frank: Getting to talk about the Tet Offensive, what, if any, were the indicators vis a vis the onset of the Tet Offensive? Did you have a feeling that something was coming up?

Murray: Oh, very definitely. I think it was felt very strongly throughout Vietnam. I'm sure that MACV also had a strong sense of impending major attack. One of the indicators that I recall very distinctly in III MAF was we had a briefing about every two or three days, depending on the weather, wherein photographs of A Shau Valley were shown. This briefing took place as often as they could get

photographs because the weather was very hit or miss. We first began to get these briefings when a road obviously was being built from the northern end of A Shau to the south. Bombing missions were called in. Two or three days later we had another briefing and a new set of photographs, and the road would be a little further down the valley. Another bombing mission would be flown. A few days later we'd get another set of photographs showing that the road had advanced still further and this kept on. Every time we'd get photographs that road would be a little further down the valley. I don't know whether anyone ever deduced that that road was to bring troops and supplies into Hue, although we knew that there was a road from A Shau that came right into Hue.

I think everyone felt that there was going to be an attack, but, in retrospect, it seems to me--I'm not going to state this for a fact--it seems to me that Tet, being what it was, the kind of holiday that it was, it simply was inconceivable to anyone that Vietnamese would launch an attack on Tet. This was traditionally the time that everybody went home to visit their families. This is one of the reasons, by the way, why initially it was so successful. It was that the Vietnamese organizations had stood down. They went home to their families. Gen Truong (who, by the way, was one of the greatest combat leaders that I've run across in my time)

had a very small garrison in Hue. Being the tiger that he was, they never captured him or his troops.

Frank: Would you say that's the reason that the attack at Hue was more successful than Da Nang, because the Vietnamese were there, and they'd stood down, where at Da Nang the Marines were there?

Murray: This is probably true. Again, I can't say positively it was, but of course Gen Truong had the 1st Division and his troops were scattered around just as our troops were scattered around. I don't know exactly the size of his garrison in Hue. It wasn't very large, and it was reduced considerably by the fact that many troops had gone on leave. I heard, on one occasion, that he had about a company, but whether it is true or not, I don't know.

Frank: Out of the whole division?

Murray: In Hue. He had troops up above Cua Viet, too. He had, I guess, a battalion up there, and he had troops at other places scattered around. I don't know this; I just heard somebody say it. It seems rather inconceivable to me that they'd have nothing by a company there. That may have been the headquarters company that was in Hue itself, and

all of these other combat troops were scattered around. I really don't know.

**Frank:** Is it possible that the enemy attack in the area itself of Da Nang may have been a diversionary effort in preparation for the major attack on Hue? Apparently the enemy went in for symbols; the capture of Hue would have a much greater propaganda success than the capture of Da Nang, purely because of Hue's historic presence.

**Murray:** So far as I remember, all the attacks were launched about the same time, almost immediately after midnight. I know I heard a hell of a lot of racket going on, and I woke up and the airfield at Da Nang was being rocketed. When I got up and went outside to look at it, my steward asked me if I'd heard the firecrackers. I said no, I hadn't; I'd slept through the firecrackers. "But," he said, "the whole town erupted at midnight, the firecrackers. My God, there were just firecrackers going off everywhere." Immediately after this the air field was rocketed and then almost immediately after that we began getting reports.

I called up headquarters at this point--I was at the beach house--and found out that they had begun getting reports of attacks all over the area. So they sent a helicopter for me, and I went on over to headquarters. From then on until Tet was over there were just constant attacks. They were

beaten off. I've forgotten how long it took in Da Nang before they finally beat them off and they withdrew; two or three days, as I recall. Hue, of course, was captured and it took some time for them to recapture it.

Frank: How good or bad was MACV intelligence? III MAF intelligence? 1st and 3d Division intelligence?

Murray: Oh, I can't say in any detail.

Frank: There's been criticism of the fact that there was such a proliferation of intelligence that each of the sources tended to cancel each other out, and that none of it was very fragile.

Murray: I think probably--I hesitate to say this, but it's only an impression of mine--that our intelligence agencies tended more to report all sorts of information rather than thoroughly digested intelligence. That's been my experience in 33 years in the Marine Corps in combat, that our intelligence tended more to think of intelligence as information rather than intelligence if you understand what I mean.

Frank: The collection effort was good, but the analysis was poor.

**Murray:** The collection effort was, I thought, very good. I would tend to criticize the analysis.

**Frank:** And the speed with which it was analyzed. I think that Gen Nickerson made that comment on the Americans' lack of ability to respond to fragile intelligence, not being able to interpret what they might have picked up from the Vietnamese themselves.

**Murray:** I decided that--from my career in the Marine Corps--that two major criticisms I have are, of our operations, are intelligence and defense. I don't think we're real good in analysis of information to create intelligence, and I don't think we're very good at defensive organization.

**Frank:** I don't know how much of a study has been made, but the Asians' ability to organize the ground and feeling for the ground is something innate and something inherent and something which we don't have.

**Murray:** Well, I've heard Marines say that we could never organize the ground properly because we can't get our boys to dig. Well, I disagree with that. I think they will dig if they're told to, if someone will properly organize the ground. We just simply don't concentrate like the Asians do



on ground defense. We tend to gloss over it a little, I think. Of course, as I say, our tradition's not defense but offense, and subconsciously, perhaps, we gloss over defense.

Frank: The history of Marine Corps combat in the Pacific or Asia; the ability of the Japanese to organize the ground, organize the defense; the history of the Koreans to have their trenches bombed out by day and by night and build them up to a point that trucks could be brought down; and the ability of the Vietnamese (North Vietnamese), as an example, to build that A Shau road: that's pretty typical.

Murray: You'd think with as much difficulty as we had in overcoming defenses of the Asians, that we'd think about it a little more ourselves, but we're seldom in a position where we have to exercise our talents.

Frank: Getting back to Khe Sanh, was there any great degree of concern on the part of . . . about III MAF's ability, Marine ability, to hold on to that particular position?

Murray: I don't think so.

Frank: To get more general, what, if any, were the problems facing III MAF during your tour? We have already spoken about the barrier plan.

Murray: That was a major problem. A constant problem was defense of the Rocket Belt, trying to prevent rocket attacks on Da Nang, and I guess you'd call a problem the apparent inability of ourselves--either by counter-battery fire or naval gunfire or air support--to knock out the goddam North Vietnamese cannon that were up above the DMZ.

Frank: What were they? 230s weren't they?

Murray: I think that's what they were. However, they were an annoyance far more than an effective weapon. I don't think we lost very many people from them--and we certainly lost no territory as a result of them--but it was a constant annoyance, constant work; as were the rockets, in fact.

The rockets . . . Periodically, the airport at Da Nang would be rocketed. Never, other than just a very short time, did they stop any operations. Seldom did anybody get hurt while I was out there. I don't recall anybody being killed by a rocket when I was out there. There may have been, but I don't recall it. There were a few wounded. I went to the air field right after a rocket attack one day, and there were a few little nicks in the airway that you could patch in a few minutes. So this was an annoyance rather than a significant weapon, but it was constantly on everyone's mind,

trying to keep the rockets from coming. Just the general frustrations of war were the principle things.

**Frank:** How about the maintenance of foxhole strength, things like that; feeling that there were so many matters to sidetrack the main objective, the main mission of III MAF? You worried about rear areas; you worried about keeping the troops out of the hot sun in rotation; keeping up the pipeline; constant reports.

**Murray:** All these were bothersome. I'm sure that there was a general feeling that the accounting, across-the-board counting, that was enforced in the Vietnam War was not only largely unnecessary but very annoying; and the end-company strength that couldn't go above certain levels; the fact that you couldn't build up supplies beyond certain levels. It was something certainly new in warfare, to my knowledge.

**Frank:** Controlled warfare.

**Murray:** Very close accounting for everything. On the other hand, I was both astonished and dumbfounded sometimes in World War II at the terrible, terrible waste, primarily because there was no accounting. It seemed that the theory in those days was get everything in the world out there that anybody might need just in case they might need it, and it

was a terrible waste. To a very large extent, the same thing was true in Korea, but Vietnam, on the other hand, very close accounting for everything, and it took an awful lot of time and effort that a military man felt would be better spent in other ways.

Frank: A kind of balance sheet war?

Murray: Sort of.

Frank: Did you think that III MAF had adequate personnel to accomplish its mission?

Murray: I think so.

Frank: Even considering the size of the territory? Of course, the 1st Division in Korea had a wider front than the books said it ever could handle, but yet in Vietnam, you had a 360-degree war all around you, and so on.

Murray: I'll have to qualify that. For the type of war others thought we should be fighting, we certainly didn't. I think many people felt that we should simply sweep the countryside, in effect, and, if necessary, go into North Vietnam and sweep that out and "win the war." I don't agree with that thesis, but I think for the type of way that I

felt we should be fighting out there we did have adequate troops. But, I didn't think they were properly employed.

Frank: Of course, that was the conflict between III MAF and MACV, or Krulak and MACV; the search and destroy as opposed to the ink-blot theory--gaining a center of control and then working out from there.

Murray: I was unaware that this was a conflict between Brute and MACV, but I certainly agree that the ink-blot theory comes closest to my feeling of the way it should have been fought.

Frank: I don't think there was any out-and-out conflict. I didn't mean to imply that, infer that. It was just a difference of philosophies. You probably hadn't gone out yet. I think that came up in the newspapers. Along this line, what limitations or control, if any, other than normal command interest, did MACV place on the conduct of Marine operations in I Corps?

Murray: I'm not familiar enough to make any statement about that with what MACV might have done. Besides, I didn't get into the tactical aspects other than listening to briefings, the only way I got into them.

Frank: Gen Cushman never said to you, "Ray, goddam it, MACV is sticking its nose into something," something like that?

Murray: No.

Frank: Had the single management of air resources become a problem during your tour?

Murray: It was on fire. As a matter of fact, I believe just before I . . . quite sure that just before I left it did become single management control; quite sure that's true. Of course, the records will show whether it was or not, but I'm quite sure that shortly before I left the Marine air came under MACV and missions were assigned from MACV.

Frank: Seventh Air Force, I guess.

Murray: Well, yes, under MACV, right.

Frank: We talked about the effectiveness of SLF operations, and an add-on question here would be, since the SLF was largely committed to continuous in-country operations during this period, did this not allow Gen Cushman to bring more forces into South Vietnam without bucking the in-country personnel ceiling?

Murray: I suppose, as a matter of fact, it did. As I recall, the SLF was not counted against the in-country force level, but it did, on several occasions (I don't remember how many), come in country and stay in country for some time. I presume that, as a matter of fact, that was true.

Frank: Of course, John Chaisson said that this was a problem when he was down as the head of the MACV COC, that Westmoreland was always concerned that he didn't have control, and that also when he was chief of staff to Lew Walt, I guess it was, (chief of staff or G-3) that not being able to put the hands . . . control the SLF was a concern. When they needed them . . . when they wanted to keep them, they couldn't because they had to revert back to Seventh Fleet. This never became a concern while you were there?

End Tape 2/I, Side A

Begin Tape 2/I, Side B

Murray: I feel certain that Gen Cushman would have liked to have had them in there all the time. I never actually heard him say so. A troop commander always likes to have more troops than he's got.

Frank: How would you assess the effectiveness of the Korean Marine Corps?

**Murray:** They were very effective as fighters, but I found out an interesting thing about the Korean Marine Corps: that they were as much, if not more, subject to public opinion in South Korea than we were back in America. They apparently-- and I say apparently because I couldn't prove it; I never saw anything or actually heard anything specific on this point--but apparently they were under orders not to lose very many men, and it was my distinct impression that they did not like to be committed too often. They preferred to spend their time where they were, in their area of responsibility, and take care of themselves and not get too many men killed.

**Frank:** Not often committed?

**Murray:** Yes. However, they were damn good fighters. When they fought, they fought real well.

**Frank:** Some criticism's been made of III MAF logistical functioning in late 1967 or early 1968, (This would be exclusive of building up the barriers.) and especially resupply along the DMZ and the 3d Division sector.

**Murray:** I wasn't aware of it.



Frank: Not aware of it. No problem?

Murray: I don't know whether there was a problem or not. I wasn't aware of it if there was.

Frank: What was the nature of the relationships between III MAF and subordinate Army commanders--the Americal Division, the 1st AirCav (Mobile) Division?

Murray: The only one of which I had real knowledge was the Americal and Sam Coster. He later got in trouble over My Lai.

Frank: Sam Coster, yes.

Murray: Relationships were excellent, so far as I could tell, between III MAF and Americal Division. They were south of Da Nang. They fought well. Incidentally, I was in the Americal Division headquarters one day for an intelligence briefing, and I thought it was the finest I'd ever heard anywhere. It was real intelligence. It was a young, as I recall, major; he was the intelligence officer. At least, he was the one who gave the briefing, and it was outstanding. As I say, the relationships were excellent between that division and III MAF. I don't recall that the Air Cavalry Division was ever up there while I was there; they may have been later.

There was, at one time, a plan prepared in which I was not involved. This was another rather strange thing. I was told that I was going to command the operation into A Shau Valley, but a staff was formed that was making the plans, and I wasn't involved with the planning. This never came off. There was also another staff that was formed that was making plans for invasion of the southern portion of North Vietnam, and that never came off either. Army troops were involved, at least in the A Shau operation, I know. I don't know who was to be involved in the North Vietnamese invasion besides Marines. But, neither of the operations there came off.

Frank: Gen Westmoreland . . . Among his many concerns, I've heard that he had two main concerns. One was, of course, Khe Sanh, which we talked about. The second was the A Shau Valley. I understand he was constantly . . . always trying to get someone to go up to the A Shau Valley, always ping-ponging on it. Did this MACV concern evidence itself at the III MAF headquarters?

Murray: To that extent that an operation was planned. It was all stopped by Tet, but there was a planning staff working on an invasion and how far they got on that, I don't know--an invasion of A Shau Valley. I recall that Gen Westmoreland, on one of his visits to the headquarters, talked

about this invasion of A Shau Valley. I don't know how much of a continuing concern it was to him. I'm sure he was concerned about A Shau as well as many other major places. But I'm sure he wasn't pinging on III MAF to organize and conduct and operation at A Shau. All he had to do, if he really wanted that, was to order it done. He may have talked about it a lot to Bob Cushman, I don't know, but I do know he went so far as the initial planning for an invasion of A Shau. Originally I was to be in command of it. I believe later on that changed because, if I remember correctly now, MACV established a forward headquarters. It wasn't established when I left; it was in the process of being established. It was in the process of being built, and it seems to me--though I can't recall precisely--that the idea changed and the Army was going to be in command of A Shau, and I think this is why this forward headquarters was established. I simply can't remember precisely why the headquarters was established.

Frank: That was one of the questions.

Murray: I think it was, though, to conduct that A Shau Valley campaign.

Frank: Well, the question about MACV, Forward . . . Gen Chaisson said that Gen Westmoreland did this because, to

quote him [Chaisson], "He was getting a little nervous about the quality of our leadership. When he recognized that the biggest battle of the war," that was Khe Sanh, "was going to be fought up there, he didn't have solid confidence that we had the right guys on the right spot." Will you comment on this? Were you aware of this lack of confidence? Because, had MACV, Forward, as it was being formed, taken over command of I Corps, it would really have been a slap in the face to the Marine Corps.

**Murray:** That sounds like as good a reason as any for him establishing the forward headquarters, though I never heard this said by anyone that he lacked confidence in the leadership of III MAF. It's a pretty good deduction, since he established the forward headquarters up there. Perhaps he didn't trust . . .

**Frank:** You don't know who in particular?

**Murray:** I don't know who it was he didn't trust. I would have to assume that it was III MAF; it wouldn't be a battalion commander out at Khe Sanh he didn't trust. So he established a forward headquarters to run a battalion at Khe Sanh. My memory's hazy about why that headquarters was established. I know there was considerable resentment about it.

Frank: Oh, I can imagine.

Murray: And, too, MACV had been raising hell because we let a lot of DYE MARKER equipment get away from us without knowing where it went. Then when they built this headquarters, they used a lot of DYE MARKER materials to build the headquarters.

My own, personal feelings about Gen Westmoreland are better left unsaid. I didn't think very much of him. What Bob's feelings about him were, I have no idea. My feelings were based, to some extent, upon the fact that on one visit up to the northern outposts, he noticed we had foxholes in the lines rather than just covered little emplacements in each place. So he ordered us to build some kind of covered emplacement with openings, you know, to fire out of. So we built one and he said before we used it, he wanted to come up and look at it; so he came up and looked at it. He was dissatisfied with it, so he had the Seabees build half a dozen of these things. Then he personally came up and checked each one and had a long discussion about whether this one is better than that one is better than that one, or we ought to have a sloping front or a solid front. It that's all the commander of MACV had to do is come up and personally build individual emplacements, he must not have much else to do.

Frank: Had III MAF heard any rumors about the My Lai killings in the Americal?

Murray: I personally hadn't a hint of it; not a hint. I can't say anything about what anybody else heard. I never heard it discussed. I never heard of the operation in My Lai until much later back in the states when it broke in the news media.

Frank: Well, had the Marines been involved with anything along this line?

Murray: We had several general courts-martial going on periodically of atrocities: cutting off ears of the Vietnamese (whether they were Viet Cong or not I guess nobody knew); one case I recall that two or three very elderly people were allegedly shot down in cold blood, in a village, just a small Marine patrol seeing them and just plain shooting them. There were others, I don't recall the details, but we had several general courts-martial in session, trying Marines for alleged atrocities.

Frank: No cover up or . . .

Murray: No cover up, no. On the other hand, we didn't call in the newspaper and say, "We're trying so and so for this

atrocities"; but no cover up. Courts-martial were going on back in Da Nang.

Frank: Gen Chaisson also commented on the logistical problems north of the Hai Van Pass, and this is sort of an allusion to the question I asked earlier about the logistical functioning during the period you were there. Could you comment on this?

Murray: Oh, we had problems in that the roads were periodically blown up so the convoys couldn't get through, or the roads were cut, by Viet Cong presumably; attacks on villages, and we'd have a village taken and a CAP wiped out along the road and have to go back in and take it for the road to be reopened. There were periodic sinking of ships up the Cua Viet River--I guess it was on the Cua Viet River. There was this kind of problem. I'm not aware of any problems of failure because of staff failure to get supplies where they were needed when they were needed. Now there certainly could have been problems I was unaware of.

Frank: Organizational, in the sense of getting the stuff that was needed there at the right time, getting everything that was requisitioned, getting the requisitions through.

Murray: I'm not aware of any problems; there may have been.

Frank: I think you pretty much answered this next question: the effect the imposition of having to build a barrier on over-all III MAF planning and operations. It was an interference.

Murray: Very definitely. It was an absurdity; that's what it was.

Frank: Your evaluation of the ARVN 1st Division . . . You mentioned Gen Truong, and you were pretty much impressed by him as far as leadership qualities were concerned. How about the effectiveness of the division as a whole?

Murray: I thought it was a very effective fighting force, particularly considering its lack of what I would consider to be adequate armament. It had . . . One day we went up there, and I was with a group (It included Gen Westmoreland.) that went up to look at A-1, which was the ARVN outpost. He was surprised to find that they only had a couple of automatic weapons in the whole battalion, and he went back and ordered that they be given additional automatic weapons, which ultimately they were. But they were fighting essentially with just rifles, very few automatic weapons. They were well led. They were a good fighting outfit and, I think, considered by everyone to be an outstanding division.



I was not personally acquainted with how well the 2d Division fought, but their reputation was not good. I don't remember--he was a colonel who commanded that--I don't remember his name, but the general reputation of the 2d Division was not very good amongst the Marines; but the 1st Division was highly thought of. Truong later became corps commander when they fired Lam.

Frank: I believe he did.

Murray: I saw it in the newspaper and was delighted to hear it. He was a brigadier general at that time, in command of the division. I guess he'd been fighting for 25 years.

Frank: Do you feel that the Americal enemy casualty figures were accurate or inflated?

Murray: I have no idea. I think this is sort of a ridiculous indicator of effectiveness in any case, the so-called body counts. People have asked me about that and my answer to it is that being the kind of war it was, we couldn't report that we captured this city or that hill or taken this railroad junction or what not. So there was really one way to judge whether you were fighting or weren't fighting; that was how many enemy that you killed. That's how the body count became the big deal.

By it's very nature, body count can't be totally accurate. For example, aviators reported body counts. They'd bomb some place and reported so many were killed. Well, they developed a system; I don't know what the system was, but it's somewhat like a doctor looking at a slide and he says, "You have ten thousand white blood cells per centimeter," whatever it is. Well, obviously, they don't count ten thousand; take a little corner, count them there, and then extrapolate. So I'm sure that their system was somewhat along these lines. They'd estimate the total size of the force, and they'd see some dead, and they'd extrapolate from that that they'd killed this many. I think on the battle field the same thing was true. I believe that they had a sort of rule of thumb: if there was x number killed, then there were so many more that had been killed that the Viet Cong had dragged away. It wasn't absolutely accurate, but I don't think it was dishonest. I think it was an honest way to do it because we knew that a certain number of them were dragged away after being killed.

I'd like to say one last thing. Now, I was not there very long. Let's see--I don't recall how long it was--four or five months. Most of what I've said this morning are impressions; some things I know for a fact, but a lot of them I didn't know for a fact. They were feelings that I had. I think I probably indicated, mostly, if that was the case, because I wouldn't want some of the things I've said

to be taken as fact because they're not. They may be or they may not be, I don't know.

Frank: In any case, I want to thank you for taking time out to get together with me, and I look forward to getting out to Oceanside, and to the west coast, to work with you on the very beginning of your career in the Corps.

Murray: How many people have you talked to that served in Peking before the war?

Frank: A number, but we like to get as much material as we can. That's a fabulous story in itself, China.

Murray: The reason I ask is because a hell of a lot of those people aren't around any more. Have you talked to Gen Turnage?

Frank: I had one interview session with him, but his wife was sick at the time. Then she died, and he became ill and died shortly thereafter, as I recall.

Murray: You hadn't started this before Gen Marston died?

Frank: No, he died way before the program began.

**Murray:** Louis de Haven is out, and Gen Robinson was out there at that time.

**Frank:** But I got Graves Erskine, Gerry Thomas, and, of course, we got Gen Van Ryzin and Bob Luckey.

**Murray:** There was one who retired as a colonel . . . Buzz Letcher was out there and Freddy Beans.

**Frank:** Oh, yes, we got Freddy Beans. Letcher we've yet to get, but he wrote a book about his career, and I don't know whether he will have anything to add to it.

Again, our thanks for your time.

**Murray:** Okay.

**Frank:** Good seeing you.

**Murray:** Nice to see you. Give my regards to anybody back there who might remember me.

**Frank:** I certainly will. Thanks very much.

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Murray: You betcha.

End Tape 2/I, Side B

End Session I

Session II; 10 February, 1986

Begin Tape 1/II, Side A

Murray  
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Frank: It is very interesting to see that you grew up, although you were a Los Angeles native, in Harlingen, Texas, and you were probably the first Marine down there before the Marine Memorial Academy was opened. What was it before the academy went down there. What was it before, a prep school?

Murray: No, it was an air base, that the Air Force took over during the war and they trained either bombardiers or navigators. I think it was bombardiers that they trained down there and they had a very extensive plant which was excellent for a school because that's what they did, what the Air Force did, they had a school. The classrooms were all soundproofed, the barracks were, although they were barracks, were fixed up pretty nice, like BOQs, as I understand it, anyhow. So, it was real fine that the academy was able to take this over. As I understand it, when the Air Force gave the land, when it was declared surplus, gave it back to the city and the city really didn't know what to do with it and somehow or other, Gary, Capt Gary that established the school, or was one of the principals that established the school, got wind of this somehow and made this proposal to the city and initially I believe they got the place for a dollar a year. Later on, I believe they got

some land or were deeded some land and they now own it, I think.

Frank: Of course, there was nothing like that there when you were growing up.

Murray: No. Now, I really didn't grow up in Harlingen. I just went to high school there from the end of my sophomore year until I graduated. I grew up all over the southwest. My father was involved in Boy Scout work and was transferred all over.

Frank: Oh really! He was one of the professional . . .

Murray: Yes, he was one of the professional scouting men, so that when it came to that time of my life when I was finishing high school, we moved to Harlingen and I finished there. That's how I happened to go to Texas A&M, because I happened to be in Texas.

Frank: Your classmates were Bruno Hochmuth . . .

Murray: Bruno Hochmuth, Joe McHaney, and Odell Conoley.

Frank: All of whom went into the class of '35 at Basic School. As a Texas A&M graduate you would have gotten an

Army commission, but I guess that because of the circumstances of the time, you would have gotten an Army reserve commission, but the Army could not take all of their reserve commissioned officers on active duty.

**Murray:** That's right. All graduates of A&M who took advanced ROTC, and I don't remember the number, but it wasn't the full class, but they didn't have that many contracts available. But it was a pretty large number of students who took advanced ROTC. But upon graduation, you received a commission as a second lieutenant in the Army reserve. It was interesting to me, at any rate, that about a month before I graduated, I was called into the office of the PMS&T, an old leathery skinned cavalry colonel who was the senior Army officer there and scared me to death, because you were only called into his office if you were in trouble. And I couldn't imagine what I had done wrong, but with fear and trepidation I went and reported to him and he looked up at me, and in a very gruff voice asked, "How would you like to be a Marine?" And I said, "I don't know, sir. What is a Marine?" He said that it was a small but elite military organization that had a pretty good reputation and that the Marine Corps was expanding its officer corps and that year was taking in ROTC graduates who were honor graduates of their school and A&M had a principal appointment and an alternate appointment, and if I wanted the principal appointment, I could have it.



And I asked for a few days to think it over, and he said to make up my mind in a hurry because he had to get a name in. So, I went back and talked to several of my classmates and several of my professors, and finally thought that this might be a good idea because I figured we were going to be in a war anyway.

Frank: That early?

Murray: Oh yes, indeed. Hitler had come into power in 1933 and was making all sorts of nasty noises.

Frank: You looked towards Europe rather than the Pacific.

Murray: Yes. I had no idea of what the Marine Corps did at this point. So, after talking it over a bit and since I thought that we were going to war, and if we did, the United States was certainly going to get in it, and if we did, I might as well be in a regular commissioned status rather than a reserve commission status, and went back to see the colonel. I told him that I would like to accept this. In the meantime, he had been given three principals and three alternates and he told me then, fine, I could have one of the principals. He gave the other two principals to Bruno Hochmuth and Joe McHaney, and the alternates, one of them I

knew was Odell Conoley and the other two were cadets I didn't know.

Frank: Tell me about A&M, what was it like? There's a classic movie which I guess all A&M students like seeing, which was made in the '30s about winning your boots . . . did you ever see it?

Murray: I never saw it.

Frank: It was a commercial movie. I don't recall who was in it, it might have been a World War II movie. It was about going through Texas A&M, joining the corps of cadets, and it was all corps of cadets then, and the 12th man on the field, and business of being an upperclassman, and being able to wear the boots. Were you caught up in the mystique of all this?

Murray: I would say that the spirit of A&M is very, very similar to the Marine Corps esprit. We considered ourselves a closed brotherhood sort of thing. You're correct. The entire student body, with very few exceptions, made up the corps. Foreign students and physically unfit students were not part of the corps, but they were the only ones not part of the corps.

Frank: Of course, you had no women, no blacks, no minorities, no Mexicans . . .

Murray: That's right. Well there were Mexicans, there were Hispanics who went to school.

Frank: Oh there were? Well, it was a state school.

Murray: Yes, but still no blacks in that time. Everyone who went to school was required in the first two years to take basic ROTC training. And the entire student body wore uniforms all the time. There were no civilian clothes worn on the campus except for foreign students and physically unfit students.

Frank: It was a land grant college which required all students to take ROTC in their first two years.

Murray: That's right. Then there were, it seems to me, there were about 400 contracts available for advanced ROTC, the last two years. The student body at the time I went there was about 2500 students.

Frank: A small campus.

Murray: A fairly small campus compared to what it is today.

Frank: Gen Orm Simpson was telling me about . . .

Murray: Well, I expect Orm has told you quite a bit about A&M, then.

Frank: He was interviewed by the archivist/oral historian down there who did a dual history and did a good job, too, for a non-military historian. And I got some good viewpoints of what was going on and the changes being made over the years.

Murray: The main thing about A&M as far as I was concerned was its closeknit feeling of the student body and the fact that we lived just like a military organization. We were organized into companies, battalions, and in the case of the infantry, which I was in, a regiment, an infantry regiment. We were billeted in the barracks that way, and the upperclassmen, the seniors were all officers, the juniors were the sergeants, the sophomores were corporals, and the freshmen were privates. In those days, there was a considerable amount of hazing of freshmen, both mental and physical. The principal physical hazing was paddling with the shaved-down baseball bat, or something similar to that. It was a matter of pride to go home for Christmas, for example,

as a freshman with your behind solid and blue just to show how tough you were.

Frank: Well, you are a pretty big man, I guess you played football when you were there.

Murray: Yes, I played football.

Frank: As big as you were, as a freshman you stood and took that?

Murray: You stood and took it or you got out of school. Either way. And some people did leave the school. At that time, of course, we considered that they didn't amount to much, but in later years, maybe they were smart. I don't know (laughs). But, the vast majority took it. It was part of the game. Then, when you were a sophomore, you gave it to the freshmen. Juniors and seniors didn't participate very much, and if they did, they got on the sophomores for not keeping the freshmen in line, as we put it. So, it was part of the training, part of the military training you could say. Each rank pressing on the lower rank to see that things went right.

Another thing that I thought was very important in those days--I don't know if they do it now or not--but at the end of the first marking period which came, I've forgotten, but

came 10 weeks after we started, the first grades came out, and any freshman that was failing . . . well first of all, before I say that, let me say that for the whole campus, everyone except seniors had to be in their rooms at 7:30 and lights out at 11:00 all over the campus and that was enforced by the upperclassmen. You were supposed to be in your room studying from 7:30 to 11:00 at night. Now back to this grading period, when the first grades came out, any freshman that was failing, the seniors in his class, usually his company commander, would assign an upperclassman who was good in that subject and the freshman had to report to him every night and be tutored by him for a period of time to see if he couldn't get his grades up. This was another bit of military training, really, where you learned that you were responsible for how well the people under you did. And in that respect, I think that it was an absolutely marvelous school for young kids. I don't know how much of that it retains today. I hope that it retains some of it, but I don't know.

Frank: I guess that the campus is now pretty well divided. The corps is now the minority.

Murray: I believe that there is something on the order of 30,000 students there now, with something like 2,000, I

believe, are corps. I may be off, for I haven't kept up, but it seems to me I've seen figures like that somewhere.

Frank: What did you major in?

Murray: I majored in English Literature. I didn't know what I wanted to be when I went to college. I just knew that I wanted to go to college to get a college education. And English was a subject that was not only easy for me, but I was interested in it, and then I minored in history and education. I finally decided in my second year that I was going to be a school teacher. No, not really a school teacher. I wanted to get in school administration. I knew that I had to start out as a teacher, but I knew that I wanted eventually to get into school administration. So those were my minors. Education was my minor, and I fully intended when I got out to teach school. As a matter of fact, when I was offered this commission in the Marine Corps, one of the considerations that entered my mind, if there was a war, I would go to war, and when it was over, I could get out and go back to teach school. It took about two weeks of Marine Corps indoctrination to cure that, of course, but then I found out that I was a school teacher anyway, just what I had always wanted to be. So it worked out well. I had the best of both worlds.

Frank: Tell me about Basic School.

Murray: Basic School in those days was vastly different than the Basic School I knew when I commanded it. I haven't been back in several years, so I don't know what it's like now. But there were about 150 of us altogether.

Frank: Your Class of 1935 was the largest Basic School class to date.

Murray: I don't know what you mean.

Frank: The Basic School Class of 1935 was the largest class in size to that time.

Murray: Oh, to that time. Yes. That's right. There were generally 25 who came from the Naval Academy plus a few NCOs that were commissioned, so the class was about 30, around 30, year after year. In '35, when the Marine Corps began its expansion, there was, I guess, about 100 of us that came in from civilian colleges and 26 came in from the Naval Academy-- I remember that. Since there were so many of us, they brought the Naval Academy in right after their graduation in June, and the first group of college graduates came in in July and joined with the Naval Academy group and we went to Cape May, New Jersey, to fire the rifle, then came back for a short



period, and then went to Mt. Gretna in Pennsylvania for some field training. Came back, the Naval Academy group left, went out to duty. So they had a very short three-month Basic School. At that time, the second half of the college group came in--September that year--then we attended classes until the following March. That was it; it was all classroom work in Philadelphia. Then our group left--the first section of the college group left--and the second section then went to Cape May and they went to Indiantown Gap rather than Mt. Gretna for an additional three months of so-called field training. All of our work was in the classroom except for that relatively short period. There was very little maneuvering. I remember we had a scouting and patrolling exercise. A time or two we went out to Fairmount Park to play soldier. It wasn't very effective. It wasn't very instructive in my opinion. There wasn't any place really to conduct any field exercises.

They treated us strictly as officers. We didn't have any DIs like they had later on. There were some enlisted assistants, but they only assisted the officers. They weren't in charge like they were in later years.

Frank: Who were some of the instructors who were role models for you?

**Murray:** Well, Merrill Twining was one. Gen Turnage, or LtCol Turnage then, he was the CO, he was probably one of the best role models. He certainly looked the part.

**Frank:** He and Mrs. Turnage were "Mom" and "Pop" of the class.

**Murray:** That's right. She particularly. We were her boys, and up until her death, we were her boys. Some of the others who I admired while I was there was Karl Louther, who for some reason or another did not have a great career. But I was impressed by him at Basic School. I think that those were the ones I really looked up to--Gen Twining and Gen Turnage as what you would call role models. Some of the others didn't impress me that much.

**Frank:** Because the Naval Academy people had been to sea during their school years, they generally went to the FMF. And generally the other people were assigned to sea duty as their initial duty. Now you wound up with 1st Battalion, 6th Marines.

**Murray:** Right. I was sent to San Diego with several others to play football.

**Frank:** Did San Diego have a good football team then?

Murray: San Diego had a good football team.

Frank: Who was the CG who sponsored it?

Murray: Gen MacDougal was the CG, but I don't believe that he was the football type. Col Moses was the one most closely associated with the football team, the one who chewed us out when we didn't win football games.

Frank: What was he like? I remember him because he was CG of Parris Island when I was going through boot camp. Of course, I was pretty distant from him as a recruit in 1943.

Murray: Mink Moses? He was of rather small stature, but he looked like a Marine, but of course, I was pretty distant from him in those days. The only immediate contact I had with him was either out on the football field or when he came out to chew us out for losing, for not putting out enough, he felt. But my first contact with him was when I decided I wasn't going to go out for football, I wasn't going to play football, because I wanted to learn how to become a Marine officer. By this time, I had decided that I was going to stay a Marine. I say that it didn't take long for that brainwashing to take effect. So I wanted to learn how to be a Marine and I figured that going out everyday and playing football was not the way to do that. So I announced to the

coach that I wasn't coming out and he said, "I think that you had better see Col Moses." So I was ushered in to Col Moses' office and told him very respectfully that I had decided that I wasn't going to play football, that I was going to concentrate on learning how to become a Marine officer, and thank you very much, sir. He heard me out, dismissed me, and as I remember, didn't say much of anything. And the next day we all received an order with all our names on it saying that we would report to the football field at a certain time. So I played football.

I wasn't, I didn't have enough close contact with him to really know what kind of Marine he really was. We used to get irritated at him for jumping on us, I know that.

Frank: You were at San Diego from the time you joined the 6th Marines in April '36 til you left in August '37, and that was the time of the troubles in Shanghai. You sailed aboard the Marblehead and you were the leader of the 2d Platoon, Battery communications and athletic officer, of the 2d Antiaircraft Battalion. Now the 6th Marines was an infantry regiment.

Murray: I was transferred to Battery F, 2d Antiaircraft Battalion, oh, I don't remember when, but prior to the time we left for China. 2d Antiaircraft Battalion consisted solely of Battery F, which was .50 caliber machine guns with which

we were supposed to shoot down airplanes, and I was never able to understand how we would be able to do that, because we didn't have much success the couple of times we tried to fire at towed sleeves.

Frank: You went on board the Utah in August, 1936, which was the west coast antiaircraft training ship.

Murray: Right. It was at Long Beach, as I remember.

Frank: Was Don Weller there at that time?

Murray: Don Weller was in San Diego, I'm sure at that time. Yes. I believe that he was a captain then. I knew him but I don't recall whether he was involved yet in naval gunfire.

Frank: No, it was a little early for that, but he was about this time seagoing and I recall that about this time he got involved with the Utah, which was the practice ship.

Murray: Yes, I don't believe that he was on the Utah when I went up to that school. I don't remember seeing him there anyhow.

Frank: Let's talk about FLEX-3 at San Clemente. It was 1937. The FMF had been formed in 1933. People down at the

Marine Corps Schools, what the Navy finally developed as FTP-167, the Landing Party Manual, actually the forerunner of our amphibious doctrine. Had it permeated out to you people on the west coast so that you could incorporate it in this FLEX?

**Murray:** Probably so. I was not involved in the FLEX. By this time I was in Battery F, and we were on San Clemente Island for a two-week shooting exercise and observed the landing. We went up on the hill and watched this debacle of all the small boats breaking up on the beach. That was the first time I ever saw Brute Krulak. He, as I recall, was involved in working on the small boat business, and there was an experimental boat which came ashore, and he jumped off on the beach. And that was my first recollection of seeing him. I was not involved in that exercise except as an observer and I was an observer because we happened to be out on the island on another exercise.

**Frank:** Were you aware of what was going on in China around Shanghai at this time? And anticipated being put on the alert or going out there?

**Murray:** Well, no. I didn't anticipate that we would go out because we were an antiaircraft battery. We were not directly involved with the 6th Marines, which was the only infantry

outfit there in San Diego at the time. And in fact, the 6th Marines got orders to embark several days before our battery did, and I thought probably, as I saw it at that time, we were not going to get to go. I don't remember just how long after the 6th got their orders that we got ours. But we then got our orders to be with them as part of the brigade and sailed on the Marblehead. As far as being aware of what was going on, I read what was going on in the newspapers, of course, and then when the 6th Marines got their orders, and I was afraid that we weren't going to get to go. That was my awareness of the situation.

Frank: Had you any previous knowledge of China, the exotic living, the life of a China Marine? Had you heard anything of this?

Murray: None whatsoever. I had always had a desire to go to China. It was a place of mystery to me, and always hoped that some day--and this was even before I came in the Marine Corps--that some day I would have the opportunity to go to China. And now I find myself in China, and it was just as interesting as I expected it to be.

We were in Shanghai for about three months. Our billet was an unfinished building on Bubbling Well Road in Shanghai. Right around the corner from us on Gordon Road was the brigade headquarters, and I cannot remember where the regiment was

billeted. I remember going visiting friends, but I cannot remember where it was billeted.

**Frank:** Of course, Gen Beaumont took the brigade out. What did you do for the three months?

**Murray:** Right. Guard duty, and in our case, it was only the guarding of our own little area. We did provide men for guard duties on rice shops to prevent mobs from taking rice. There were about a million refugees in Shanghai at that time, and the majority of them were just sleeping in the streets, and of course they got hungry. Periodically I had officer of the day duty that had these sentry posts around these rice shops. We guarded our own little compound and a lot of the time we used to go to the Foofung Flour Mill along Soochow Creek, get up on the top of it, sit there and drink beer and eat peanuts while we watched the battle going on across Soochow Creek. It was a most interesting time. We used to conduct what we called basic training, which everybody did in those days. An inordinate amount of time on this so-called basic training of stripping and assembling rifles and machine guns, and first aid, and hygiene and VD, and all of those . . .

**Frank:** Make-work projects.



**Murray:** Well, I wouldn't call it make-work, but it was basic training of basic subjects that everybody had gone over so many times, practically all of them knew it by heart. Map reading, I've forgotten what all of them were, but we spent an awful lot of time on it. There wasn't any room to do anything else, anyhow.

**Frank:** Talking about the refugees, weren't they kept out of the International Settlement?

**Murray:** No, there were refugees in the International Settlement. Heavens yes. As a matter of fact, I think that that's where a great many of them came in to because it was the only safe place there was.

**Frank:** They were being pushed from both sides.

**Murray:** I don't recall seeing any in the French Concession, but downtown, in some areas of the International Settlement, I saw great mobs of people milling around. I had one assignment to go into Hongkew, which was where the Japanese were in control. There was a godown over there in which was stored canned butter and we took a fleet of trucks over there to load butter. It had been arranged with the Japanese to do this, and bring this butter back for our use, the brigade's use. I don't remember how many trucks it was, I'd say maybe

five or six, and when we crossed the Gordon Bridge into Hongkew, the Japanese sentry demanded that I leave my pistol, my sidearm with him, and I refused to do it, and we had a big argument. Finally, he let me keep it, and I wore it. There was a sentry on each truck, and he wanted them to leave their rifles. He couldn't speak English, and I couldn't speak Japanese but there was enough sign language to indicate that we were going in with our weapons, and we did. And we loaded this butter on this truck that I was on. It was a rickety old thing, and we so overloaded it that it could hardly go, and this driver finally said he wasn't going anywhere. So I pulled my pistol out and pointed it at him and said, "You're going to drive," and he drove and he got us back.

Frank: It was a Chinese driver?

Murray: It was a Russian driver. One of the Russians around Shanghai.

Frank: Did you get around to see many of the 4th Marines there?

Murray: Yes, I saw quite a few of them. It's so long ago now that it's a little hazy as to who was in which organization, but Jim Masters was one person I met there for the first time.

Frank: Wally Greene was.

Murray: I don't remember whether I met Wally there or not. I think that Jim Masters in the 4th Marines then or not? Bruce Hemphill was a classmate, and I used to go over there and see him every once in a while. I believe Ev Leek was there at that time, too. I didn't see very much of the 4th Marines personnel while I was there. About the only time I ever saw a lot of them was at the 4th and 6th Marines football game on Thanksgiving. I refereed the game.

Frank: What about the social life out there at the time. Did you . . .

Murray: There was very little social life in Shanghai in the three months I was there. We used to go, a bunch of us would go out to the dance halls occasionally. One night, Mrs. Price--Charles F. B. Price was CO of the 6th Marines--and Mrs. Price had a bunch of us over for dinner and we looked at pictures of Yangtze gorges they had taken. That's the only time I remember going out formally some place. The rest of the time we used to get together in our barracks.

Frank: Did you get to know any of the people in the Shanghai Volunteer Corps, the civilians?

**Murray:** No.

**Frank:** Now the 6th Marines stayed in Shanghai, but you were transferred to Peking.

**Murray:** There was a group of us who were transferred on a normal change of station. Let's see--Conoley, Goen--Dixon Goen--Herb Amey, I know were second lieutenants who went up at that time--Bill Coleman, Freddie Beans.

**Frank:** Was Freddie Beans a member of the Class of '35?

**Murray:** No, he was a captain at this time. So was Bill Coleman. There was another one, but I cannot remember his name at this time. These were all transferred to Peking on a regular change of station, and the people we relieved came out as we went in. So it was just individual transfers, it wasn't a unit transfer of any kind.

**Frank:** It sounded pretty exciting.

**Murray:** It was very exciting. Only one drawback. I had been married nine days before we sailed, and there were no dependents allowed. My bride joined me the day after our first wedding anniversary.

Frank: Had you had your two years probation in?

Murray: No, not yet. Yes, I take it back, I did have my two years in. We took our probationary exams just before we left for China. I'm pretty sure we did. Yes, because we finished our probationary period in July of 1937. We were still second lieutenants when we went up there.

Frank: Who was up in Peking? Was it called Peking or Peiping at that time?

Murray: The pronunciation we used at that time was "Beiping." Some people called it Peking. The Japanese called it Peking, I'm pretty sure of that. I studied Chinese on my own up there and was taught that the proper pronounciation was "Beiping."

We arrived up there in January, early in January. I forget whether we left Shanghai on the 8th, but it was early in January.

Frank: Let's see, you sailed from Shanghai on the 3d and arrived at Chingwantao on the 6th, and from the 7th on you were a company officer in Company A, Marine Detachment, American Embassy, Peking. Who had the company? That wasn't Joe Burger's company, was it?

Murray: No, Joe wasn't there then. Company commanders were Freddie Beans . . . it's strange, I can't remember who had the companies at that time. I just can't remember his name. But Col John Marston had the detachment at the time, and I can't remember if Louis de Haven was the executive officer . . . no Louie was the adjutant. It must have been Col James. Capers James. He must have been the exec, because when we split up, he took the portion that went up to Tientsin later on, so he must have been the exec at the time.

Frank: What kind of duty was it?

Murray: In what respect? Tough duty or what?

Frank: What did you do?

Murray: Stood guard. This was guard and working parties mostly, and . . .

End Tape 1/II, Side A

Begin Tape 1/II, Side B

Frank: Paul Drake was your CO?

Murray: Yes. Initially. I was talking about what we did. We did have the opportunity to get out occasionally into the outlying areas and do a little rather elementary maneuvering,

fairly restricted because it was all farmland, but we did get to do a lot more than most barracks units get to do in getting out to the field. And outside the city walls at some distance was a rifle range, and we, of course, went out every year to requalify, and in those days, requalification was a very big thing, and we spent a tremendous amount of time at it. I don't remember how many weeks actually, but it was several weeks. And units that were going to qualify, shoot for qualification, actually went out to the rifle range and billeted out there in tents, and worked for quite some time on it.

Frank: I think the Asiatic Matches were held out there.

Murray: The Asiatic Matches were held there.

Frank: And all the great shooters were out there. I think that Jim Crowe was there . . .

Murray: Jim Crowe ran the rifle range, right.

Frank: A character, personality, role model, a tremendous individual even to this day.

Murray: A tremendous individual. My very first introduction to Jim Crowe was on the troop train coming from Chingwantao

to Peking, and it was freezing cold, and there was no heat on the train. We were just absolutely miserable. And I asked Jim . . . I knew that there four lieutenants going up and only two being transferred out, and I asked who the other two of us were supposed to be relieving, and he said he didn't know. He knew that a couple of musics had been transferred out. That was my introduction to Jim Crowe. But I got to know him and love him very much. He was a great friend and I still consider him a great friend. As a matter of fact, I had a telephone call from about a year ago, in which he apologized for not writing, but he couldn't see.

Frank: Yes, his eyes were going on him the last I heard. I got to talk to him several years ago when he was in his 70s or his 80s . . .

Murray: He must be in his 90s now.

Frank: He must be close to that, but just as charming and as nice a person as you would ever want to meet. A fabulous Marine Corps personality. You were very lucky, very privileged to associate with persons like that.

Murray: I think so, I think so. But most of our time was taken up with daily routine. As I say, our basic training subjects. I've even forgotten now what they used to call it,



but there was an order that said all Marines would be trained in the following subjects, and it was a long list of subjects.

Frank: Did this come out of Washington?

Murray: I'm sure it was from Washington, but it was Marine Corps Order something or other, but I can't remember that either--I should but I can't.

Frank: Who had the Mounted Detachment at that time?

Murray: "Dutch" Schatzel had it while I was out there.

Frank: Tell me about "Dutch" Schatzel.

Murray: Well, "Dutch" was a very sharp individual. I guess really a brilliant individual in some respects. He was a mathematician. He was--I don't want to use the word "strange," that's not the right word--he was a little different.

Frank: You are absolutely right about being brilliant. He was an outstanding communicator, which was his field, and as a matter of fact, I've been told by people who knew him, who were involved with him in communications, the Army offered

him a commission, and the concensus was that had he gone into the Army, he would have wound up as Chief of the Signal Corps.

**Murray:** I wouldn't be a bit surprised. He taught a camera class in Peking--he was a pretty good amateur photographer--and I wasn't in the class, but we roomed together. A group of us, before our families came out, lived in what was known as the "Postal Mess," it was in the Peking Post Office up on the second deck of the building. There were several apartments, and we all lived in these apartments and he was working on something one day, a very complicated formula like something you would see on a physics professor's blackboard, and I guess that's what it was, physics, because it had to do with lenses. He was working out some formula for a lens that he was going to teach his class. He also was the provost marshal, and a Marine out there had gotten in with a Russian and robbed a bank. We had the Marine, but the Russian was still on the town, and somehow "Dutch," through an informer found out where this fellow was, so he went out after him, and this fellow came out of a building and came out with a weapon in his hand and I don't remember whether he actually aimed at "Dutch," whether he fired at him, or whether he threatened to fire at him. At any rate, "Dutch" fired one shot right through the heart, and killed him. The rest of us were all sitting in this one big room

in our apartments, and "Dutch" came in and didn't say anything at first, but he looked up and down the hall, closed the door, and he locked the door. "What's going on?" and he said, "I just killed a man," and he described to us what had happened, and he wanted to be sure that if this guy had any friends around, he wasn't going to get at him real easily, anyhow.

Frank: He was a pretty big man, wasn't he?

Murray: Fairly good size. He wasn't as tall as I am. But he was pretty good sized.

Frank: He was kind of large to ride these Mongolian ponies.

Murray: I don't think that the Mongolian ponies cared. There were a lot of heavy people who rode them. As a matter of fact, Freddie Beans, who was quite heavy, wasn't as tall as I but much heavier than I, he played polo on the Mongolian ponies.

Frank: Did you ever get into polo yourself?

Murray: No. "Buzz" Letcher was another one of the captains out there at that time.

Frank: Artilleryman.

Murray: Yes. In fact, I think that he had the company that had the 37mm guns. These names escape me, doggone it. It bothers me that it does, but they do. We had a couple of majors, a paymaster, I can't remember the names right now.

As I say, our military life out there was mostly routine, barracks routine. The classes in the basic subjects, we had a daily guard mount, a formal guard mount. There was a lot of drilling. We had what was known as the glacis, for some reason or other it was called the Russian Glacis, up next to the wall, adjacent to the barracks, which was like a large vacant lot, and we drilled out there. We did an inordinate amount of drilling--it seemed to me that it was inordinate at any rate. And then the rest of it was social life.

Of course, our working hours were pretty nice. In wintertime it was 0730 to 1530, I believe, and in the summertime, when it was really hot, it was 6:00 to 3:15, I believe. I know that it was 3:15 when we got off of work--I mean noon, I'm sorry, noon. These were tropical hours. 3:15 was the normal hour in wintertime.

Frank: Of course, by 3:15 it got dark up there anyway.

Murray: Yes, it got pretty dark. Well, I don't know. That's about the same latitude as I recall as Philadelphia's, and

the weather was very similar to Philadelphia weather. Very hot and steamy in the summertime and pretty chilly but not-- oh, I don't remember any subzero times. A lot of times it would get down to about 10, 12, 15 above zero, and it snowed, but the snow didn't stay on the ground very long.

**Frank:** Did you get a chance to go up to the Great Wall when you were there, do a lot of sightseeing?

**Murray:** We were very fortunate. We wouldn't have gotten to go up there except a later presidential candidate, Paul McNutt, was the High Commissioner of the Philippines, at least he was the big representative in the Philippines of the United States, and he made a trip up there and it was arranged that he go up to see the Great Wall, and the Japanese very kindly invited the officers of the detachments to go along if we wanted to. So, most of us did go, and we rode to, I think the name of the town is Kalgan, we rode the train up there. It's the same spot that Nixon and everybody else goes. Rode the train up, spent the day there, and rode the train back. We weren't allowed to go to the Ming tombs, so I didn't get to the Ming tombs while I was out there. We were allowed to go to the Summer Palace, and we frequently went to the Summer Palace for picnics, and had picnics in the big stone boat.

Frank: Did you get to the Altar of Heaven?

Murray: Well, the Altar of Heaven is not in the Summer Palace.

Frank: No, no. It's on the outskirts of Peking.

Murray: Yes. We were there a lot of the time.

Frank: And you couldn't see the Ming Tombs?

Murray: No. They wouldn't let us travel except to Summer Palace.

Frank: The Summer Palace was tremendous.

Murray: The big palace with the stairways going up either side, and the Marble Boat is there. That's very interesting.

Frank: And the covered walkways with the painted wooden beams.

Murray: Yes.

Frank: I was lucky to get there after the 1st Division landed in China after Okinawa.

You talked about the Japanese. Was there much social interchange with them?

**Murray:** Not a great deal. We did go to functions with the Japanese guard. The Japanese, the British, the French, and the Italians had regular guard detachments there for their embassies. The Japanese Army, of course, was in the city and controlled the city and that was separate from their embassy guard. And we did go to functions with the embassy guard officers as we did with the other embassy guards, but not with individual Japanese. There was no social intercourse so far as I was aware as a second lieutenant between individual Marines and individual Japanese. There was some social intercourse between individual Marines and individual Chinese, but not Japanese.

**Frank:** How about the Brits and so on?

**Murray:** Same with the Brits. The French, as I recall, that was a smaller detachment than the rest. I did not have too much social contact with them other than in large parties because we didn't form a personal relationship with any of these other officers on our second lieutenant level.

**Frank:** You made first lieutenant in August after you got up there.

Did the Japanese put much pressure on the whites?

**Murray:** The military didn't, to my knowledge, didn't. The civilians did. Apparently they sent some of their worst types overseas, because the Japanese civilian was pretty arrogant, and walking down the street, they wouldn't give way. They wouldn't even step out of the way. They just kept coming. I was big enough that I'd keep coming too, and on occasion you'd just simply bump into each other, and usually I won that contest. Then there'd be a lot of shouting which I could never understand. But there was always the feeling that, oh boy, something is going to happen here. It was a very uneasy feeling. I tried to avoid them outside of the Legation quarters. I felt reasonably safe inside the Legation quarter, but outside the Legation quarter I tried to avoid them.

**Frank:** Were there any incidents during this period?

**Murray:** Yes. We had one incident where a drunk Japanese soldier managed to get into our barracks area. He got over a wall somehow and got into our barracks area and was shot by the Marines, and this created a considerable amount of tension, but Gen Turnage, by this time, or Col Turnage at that time, by this time in command of the barracks, and he was apparently a very fine diplomat as well as a very good Marine officer and he managed to smooth this over without



. . . I don't think that the Japanese was killed, but he was shot and it was pretty tense for a while.

**Frank:** The relationship between the Japanese and the Americans was pretty professional? Was there any professional respect, would you say? Or did the Americans look at them as little brown monkeys who . . .

**Murray:** No, I think that they were respected as fighters. I don't think that at that time that we thought that we'd have any problem with them if we ever had to fight them. But we knew that they were good enough to beat the Chinese, which, of course, we didn't have too much respect for the Chinese as soldiers from what we saw. But, I think that there was a mutual respect. I am sure that they respected us, but I'm sure that they thought the same way. That if it ever came to a point where we had to fight, they could beat us.

**Frank:** Was there a feeling that the potential for war existed? That it was pretty close. What kind of contingency planning went on? What was the detachment going to do?

**Murray:** We were going to defend the embassy. That was our mission. That's all we planned for. We had a plan which we set up, barricades, had emplacements for our 37mm guns, which was the heaviest . . . no, we had some 3-inch guns, too. I

don't think they were ever fired. In fact, I'm certain that they were never fired. There wasn't any place to fire them. But we did have some 3-inch guns now that I think about it, and we had positions picked out for them to be moved to, and we were going to sandbag the positions, and so on, and I felt at the time kind of ridiculous because everyone agreed that if the Japanese wanted to take the place over, they would take it over, and I always felt that if it ever came to that, they would simply issue an ultimatum, "Surrender to us or we just wipe you out." And undoubtedly, we'd come to an accommodation with them. I don't know now that this was in the mind of Col Turnage, but I don't see how it could have been otherwise. It was always understood by me, at any rate, that we were there as a presence that if they chose to do anything serious about us, that would mean war with the United States in all probability, and that was our safety. Until they were ready to go to war with us, they really weren't going to do anything real serious.

**Frank:** As an embassy detachment, did you think that you had diplomtic status at all?

**Murray:** We did have have diplomatic status. Well, the status out there was different from anyplace else because we had extraterritorialty rights within the Legation quarter. That Legation quarters, the Chinese didn't have sovereignty over

it, we had sovereignty over it. I said "we," the international group that was there. The internal police of the place was run by the British. Outside of that, the Chinese nominally had authority, but I don't ever recall an instance of the Chinese ever arresting a foreigner and putting him in jail out there.

Frank: Not in Shanghai, certainly.

Murray: No, not in Shanghai, but I don't recall it in Peking. And there were times when they could have. Now, if our Marines committed an offense in town, and they did. Murder, beating people up, and other things, we tried them. The Chinese didn't try them, even though these things were done outside the Legation quarter, inside the town, and our MPs patrolled the town. I don't recall--in fact I was provost marshal there for about a year--and during that time, I know, no Chinese ever arrested an American or even a Marine. If there was a fight, the MPs then took charge of the offender and brought him and locked him up in our brig.

Frank: Inasmuch as you know, you had a large detachment, did Col Turnage call his officers together and say, "These are our contingency plans and if war comes, we'll break out and head to the north or to the west," or "If war comes, we have diplomatic status, and we will be repatriated."

**Murray:** No, we never had a meeting like that. I don't know that that was that firm that the detachment had diplomatic status. The language students did, and later instead of being put in prisoner of war camps, they were repatriated. One of my classmates, who lives down in San Diego, was a language student out there at the time, and he was held until such time as he could get on the Gripsholm and come home. And he was treated well. He wasn't locked up in a prison camp.

I can say categorically that we were never called together and told that if war comes we're going to break out and make our way somewhere. Not that was I was in it at any rate.

**Frank:** That was discussed later down in south, in Tientsin.

**Murray:** As I recall, didn't the two detachments move to Shanghai before the war started?

**Frank:** No, there was a working party at Chingwangtao, and the bones of Peking Man came down in that shipment from to Chingwangtao, and the Marines were supposedly responsible for them, and the bones were never rediscovered. When Pearl Harbor was attacked that morning, which was Monday, 8 December, the working party at Chinwangtao, the barracks up at Peking, and the barracks at Tientsin were surrounded. And

the story that I got, the Japanese general knew the colonel down there, and the presupposition was that the detachments had diplomatic status and that everything would be okay and they would be repatriated, but they weren't and they were all shipped down to Shanghai, and put into prison down in Shanghai.

**Murray:** Maybe that was what I was thinking about, because I had been told what was left, and I don't know how big the detachments were at the time the war started, but they had all gone to Shanghai prior to the war and then over to the Philippines . . .

**Frank:** 4th Marines from Shanghai. The 4th Marines left Shanghai in two days--November 30th and December 1st I believe it was. But they marched out with flags flying, bayonets fixed, and bands playing, people seeing them off down at the Bund to go aboard the President liners to head for the Philippines and inevitable capture there. But the detachments did not go down to Shanghai until after the war started and they went down as prisoners, again in the anticipation that they would be repatriated. They were not too badly treated initially, then they were later joined by the Wake Island Marines.

Now, in any case, you did some traveling when you were out there. Let's see. You were an officer courier to Tokyo.

This must have been an interesting trip. You returned via the railroad ferry from Pusan to Shimonoseki.

Murray: Yes. (laughs) How did you get hold of all this information? Where does this come from?

Frank: This comes from your jacket. Don't you have a copy? Would you like one?

Murray: I sure would. Periodically, the embassy in Peking sent mail to the embassy in Tokyo and then the embassy in Tokyo sent return mail to Peking. I had no idea what this was. It was diplomatic mail. Our ambassador was not in Peking at any time that I was there in his official capacity as ambassador. That is to say, he came a couple of times--Johnson was his name--he came a couple of times while I was there but his embassy de facto was where the Chinese headquarters was, and it kept shifting up the river, ultimately to Chungking. His wife and children were in Peking, but not Ambassador Johnson himself.

So, periodically this was done, and it came my turn and an embassy clerk who, by the way, had been an enlisted Marine and had gotten discharged in Peking and went to work for the embassy. We boarded the train in Peking and it was a five-day trip by train. We went all the way up to Mukden and then down through Korea, all the way through Korea to Pusan where

we boarded a train ferry to Shimonoseki, boarded a Japanese train, and overnight trip to Tokyo.

Frank: That was a hard way to go, wasn't it?

Murray: (laughs) I don't know. That was about the only way you could go in those days.

Frank: Couldn't you go down to Tientsin and catch a ship off the Taku Flats?

Murray: You could have done that but why we didn't, I don't know. But this was a very interesting trip and it wasn't a bad trip. The train was a fine train, very good Pullman-style accommodations. Very fine dining car. I anticipated when I got on the Japanese car that the berths would be too short. They weren't at all. They were adequate for me. And we saw a lot of country that we wouldn't have seen otherwise, little dreaming that I would see it again later. But interestingly enough, I took pictures out the train window the full length of Korea, the railroad of Korea . . .

Frank: That was all under Japanese control, of course.

Murray: Oh yes, it was under Japanese control and while in Japan, we were there for three days, and we, of course, first

went to the embassy and delivered our mail and met Ambassador Grew, who was ambassador at that time, who chatted with us, and then we were left to our own devices. We stayed at the--what's the Frank Lloyd Wright hotel, the Imperial?--Imperial Hotel. We decided we wanted to go to Nikko overnight. We went down, got on the train, interurban train, went to Nikko. Checked into a real nice hotel there--don't remember the name of it either. Spent the night, spent the next day in Nikko looking at all the sights. I think we spent a second night and the next day came back, never once stopped, never once questioned. The Japanese civilians the most polite, gentle people. I fell in love with Japan and fell in love with the Japanese people, even though in Peking the Japanese over there were very arrogant, nasty people. The civilians. The military were all right, but the civilians.

On the way back, at the border between Korea and Manchuria--we came back the same way, by train--somebody got on the train, showed me a card with his name, and he was a customs inspector. Well, he wanted to go through my baggage, so I opened up the baggage, and one of my 35mm rolls--I had several rolls--but he picked one of them up and started to pull it and just before he did, I did, my immediate reaction, without thinking, I knocked it out of his hand and said, "Don't you dare pull that out of there," and he looked at me kind of strangely, and then he walked out and left. And that was the last I saw him. Later on, thinking about it, I got



so scared that I almost shook out of my seat thinking what might have happened doing a thing like that. I might have been in a Korea jail 'til yet. He must have been from the Manchurian side, because he got on at this city--I can't remember the name of it--and rode on into Manchuria. Now he didn't bother me. We had diplomatic passports, by the way. That was another thing that made me think possibly we did have diplomatic status because we did have diplomatic passports.

Frank: You travelled in civilian clothes.

Murray: Travelled in civilian clothes, right.

Frank: Armed?

Murray: No, I'm quite sure that we were not armed. One of us stayed awake. We had two big mail sacks of embassy mail. We kept it right with us the whole time. But aside from that one little incident, there was no problems of any kind either on the trip or in Japan.

Frank: You were down in Tientsin a couple of times. How did you compare Tientsin with Peking?

Murray: My impression was that it was not a real honest-to-God Chinese city. Just as Shanghai was not a real honest-to-God Chinese city.

Frank: Of course, you had all the foreign concessions in each city.

Murray: Right, and Tientsin seemed to have more of a European flavor than a Chinese flavor. Whereas Peking to me was pure China.

Frank: You got detached in July of '40, which was fortuitous, so you didn't get caught there, and you sailed with your family.

Murray: We were the last group to come out of Peking together as families.

Frank: You did sail from Tangku aboard a Japanese ship, which took you to Kobe, and you were in Kobe for nine days, and sailed aboard the President Coolidge, which must have been a very nice way of traveling . . .

Murray: It was nice. The stewards were terrible to us.

Frank: Because you were service?

**Murray:** I don't know. It could have been. We had a brand new baby, 10 months old who had been born in Peking. I guess it must have been the first day out or the first night, first evening, it came time to feed the baby and my wife rang for a steward and asked if he could get the bottle of milk warmed for her, there was no way to warm it in the cabin. And he said, "You can warm your own damn milk," and turned around and walked off. They were surly. The whole bunch of stewards was a pretty surly bunch.

We traveled, I think the official expression was, "minimum first class," and on that ship it meant that the private bathroom in our cabin was locked up. We had to use a public bathroom that was down the passageway. So, to that extent it wasn't as nice as it might have been otherwise.

**Frank:** Well, the Marine Corps always traveled the cheapest way.

**Murray:** Well, it wasn't the Marine Corps alone, I think. It was government regulations that said you traveled minimum first class, and fortunately it was first class anyhow.

**Frank:** You go join the 6th Marines in September, which was to be a four-year assignment, because it wasn't until June

1944 that you were detached. Who had the 2d Battalion at that time? Arthur Worton?

**Murray:** No. Prentice Geer had it for a time, but there was one ahead of him and I don't believe I'll be able to recall his name. I can picture him, but I can't recall his name right now. He had it for a short time.

**Frank:** O. P. Smith?

**Murray:** No, no. It was an old, old timer that was a lieutenant colonel and he stayed a lieutenant colonel through the war. He would never have been a lieutenant colonel if it hadn't had been for World War I. I can't remember his name. Anyhow, then Prentice Geer took it over, and Prentice Geer would admit himself that he wasn't a world beater, and he had it for most of the rest of the time. But he didn't go to Iceland with us. Arthur Worton took it over somewhere during that time, but I don't remember exactly when.

Here the training began to become far more realistic than it had been. For one reason, we had an area where we could properly train. We were up at Camp Elliott. Previous to this time, the 6th Marines, when I had been in it, had been at the base, Marine Corps recruit depot now. And the only way we could get to a training area was to walk to it and we did a fair amount of the time. We walked out of there to Kearney

Mesa, where we would conduct a sort of a maneuver, and on one occasion--and this is going back to those days again--on one occasion we did a full, I guess what you would call, a brigade exercise because the whole regiment was out on the exercise. But the logistic part of the exercise, there was a whole bunch of milk cans filled with sand, which was hardly realistic, but a little better than nothing, I guess. It made us realize at least that we were going to have to do something about supplies once we got into combat. But now, at Camp Elliott there was lots of room and there was a little more feeling about the urgency of things. Of course, the way had been going on now in Europe for over a year, or about a year about this time. So we spent most of our time out in the field on field exercises. Did our basic training out in the field, too. We'd move out in the field and then do the basic training, still the same old basic training--personal hygiene, strip and assemble weapons, etc., etc., etc. But, in addition to that, we did quite a bit of maneuver exercises, too. One platoon of the company would be one side, which we later called aggressors, I don't think we even called it that at that time, but we just maneuvered against each other.

**Frank:** Red and blue teams?

**Murray:** Right.

Frank: But no amphibious training of any sort?

Murray: I can't remember any landing that we made, any amphibious landing that we made. I don't believe during this time, I can't recall going to the Silver Strand. We did some dry land amphibious training. I do remember that now, where we organized ourselves into boat teams and walked towards the beach. We got amphibious training to this extent. We learned how to organize boat teams and waves that go ashore. But I don't recall getting into any ships and doing any amphibious exercising.

Frank: Tell me about Arthur Worton. He certainly was a character.

Murray: (laughs) Arthur Worton was certainly a character.

Frank: Were you one of Arthur Worton's boys?

Murray: Anybody who was in his outfit was one of Arthur Worton's boys, but I guess, yes, you can call me one of his boys he was fond of. Tommy Tompkins was another.

Frank: Did you look upon him as a professional or as kind of a caricature?

**Murray:** I personally looked upon him as a very intelligent man, but an egotist, a lot of show, but I probably think that he knew his business pretty well, too, though the circumstances under which I served, did not give him too great an opportunity to show how much of a really professional soldier he was.

**Frank:** He was one of the World War I heroes.

**Murray:** Right. And I have no doubt whatsoever about his bravery, although there was no occasion to show it while I served under him. But he obviously had capabilities, because when he got out of the Marine Corps, he went up and reorganized and ran the Los Angeles Police Department for several years.

**Frank:** But he was a lot of flourishes, I mean the proper uniform, the swagger stick . . .

**Murray:** He was very flourishy, and straight showmanship.

**Frank:** He had a great deal of love of Corps, I think.

**Murray:** No doubt about it, and as I say, I'm sure he would have been a very competent commander, though I . . .

End Tape 1/II, Side B

Begin Tape 2/II, Side A

**Murray:** He used to irritate us a little bit in Iceland. He insisted that every night at evening meal we sing a lot of songs, and one of the members of the battalion, one of the young officers, wrote the words for a song called "Welcome to Baldurshaggi"--of course, I'm getting a little ahead of myself here. Maybe I ought to wait until we get to Iceland, or do you want me to just keep going.

**Frank:** Yes, while you are on a train of thought, why don't you continue. I've heard about the song.

**Murray:** "Welcome to Baldurshaggi" and it was an extremely corny song, but he loved it and we had to sing it every night.

**Frank:** Do you still have the words?

**Murray:** I can remember the words if I think about them, yes.

**Frank:** Alright, tell me about the mount-out preparations for Iceland.



**Murray:** Well, there weren't what were long-term preparations. I'm not quite sure what you mean there by preparations. When we got word when we were going to mount out, we didn't know, of course, that we were going to Iceland.

**Frank:** You went aboard ship, the Heywood in May of '41.

**Murray:** Right. My recollection is that we didn't combat load. I'm not sure if people knew too much about combat loading at that point. But at any rate . . . we may have tried to combat load. But of course, we didn't know where we were going or what we were going to do. So my recollection is that it was mainly getting all this massive amount of gear, because we used to have to carry with us so much. In fact, I believe that we carried a 30-day supply right with us, almost down to individual units. And in those days, I had a machine gun platoon, and I had a gunnery sergeant, a master gunnery sergeant named Bakke, an old, old timer, who was of the old school. He saved everything, because some day you might need it. And when we loaded to go to Iceland, I said that we had to get rid of most of the stuff that he had in his storeroom and oh, it killed him. Finally, I relented and let him take along an awful lot of stuff that we shouldn't have taken that was just excess gear.

**Frank:** You went aboard the Heywood 31 May, 1941 . . .

Murray: Sailed down around to the Panama Canal.

Frank: You were now a company commander, commanded Company A . . .

Murray: Company H, the machine gun company. We went through the canal to Charleston. We headed towards Martinique for a couple of days and we thought that that's where we were going to go. Then suddenly we changed direction. Now, I wasn't privy to what orders we had at that time. I don't know how much the senior people knew, but we didn't know, at least on my level, where we were going.

But we changed direction and sailed then around Cuba and on up the coast to Charleston . . .

Frank: Where you found the 1st Marine Division which was coming up from Cuba. You don't recall that. The whole thing nearly got compromised at that time because the 1st Division was . . . some of the people were in there. That's where you got all your supplies, your winter gear, Sears Roebuck stuff . . .

Murray: We got our supplies, right. I don't remember the 1st Division at all. I don't remember any other unit being there, but that's not to say, of course, that it wasn't there. But

I don't remember that at all. We went ashore a couple of times--I say we, two or three of us from the battalion that went into town. Tommy Tompkins and I. There were some others. We didn't do much but just stick around the ship until we were ready to sail. I can't recall when we found out that we were going to Iceland. From Charleston, we put in at Argentia, Newfoundland.

Frank: That must have been a pretty fast trip. It took just four days from Charleston to Argentia.

Murray: Well, it was 15 knots, I guess . . . 14 knots.

Frank: Were you being convoyed?

Murray: I can't recall. We must have been. At least from Argentia we must have been. I remember very well the trip back, but I don't remember going up what kind of a convoy we had. Oh, we must have had a convoy going up there, I'm sure we did.

Frank: In any case, you sailed from Argentia on 1st of July, and six days later you arrived at Reykjavik, and it was still summertime.

**Murray:** Right. We unloaded on a beach somewhere in the vicinity of Reykjavik and there were supplies all over the beach and then the tide either went out or came in--I can't remember which--I think it went out and left boats high and dry. It was much more of a tide than anybody had anticipated for some reason or another, and the beach was pretty much of a mess, it wasn't really well organized. And I remember Col Worton telling me to take a truck and go down and get whatever I could find off the beach and I didn't want to do this because I felt that that wasn't the right way to run the railroad, but he told me to go down and do it. Well, when I got down there, there was an officer I knew who was in charge of the guard and he really didn't have enough guard to guard everything I guess, because at any rate he asked me please to not go down on the beach and start grabbing stuff, so I didn't. I turned around and went back and told Col Worton that I was not able to get there because the guard prevented from it and he was pretty upset. That was the common way to do things in those days, I guess. Get whatever you could, however you could, wherever you could.

**Frank:** Do you remember Arthur Worton's famous liquor mess?

**Murray:** If I heard something else about it I might.

Frank: Out of his own pocket, he bought a whole bunch of liquor from S. S. Pierce and . . .

Murray: Oh, that's right. Yes, I do remember that.

Frank: . . . got it out of Boston because he heard liquor was scarce up there. And that liquor followed the 6th Marines all over the Pacific.

Murray: I do remember that, yes. We moved into this camp, Baldurshaggi, which had been a British camp, and it was Nissen huts, not Quonset huts, and the Nissen huts were not insulated as well as the Quonset huts were. In fact, most of their insulation, if any, was sod piled up at the side of building and they had very thin wooden ends instead of the heavy ends that the Quonset huts had. We got shaken down after a while. I remember the first or second day we were there, Col Worton, Tommy Tompkins, and I were wandering around the camps, looking at things that needed to be done. Tommy was the adjutant. And Worton turned to Tommy and saw something and said, "Get a working party right now. I want this taken care of right now," and Tommy said, "Col, it's 2:30 in the morning." We suddenly realized that it was but it was bright daylight. And for quite a while, we had an awful time going to sleep at night. People hung blankets over the windows to try to shut out the light. But after a

fairly short time we began to get used to it and got our regular routine going, which consisted again of training, our basic training, and we did go out to some outlying areas and fired, as far as my company was concerned, fired our machine guns. Set up some targets and fired the machine guns, and did guard duty at various places. There was a radio station up back of our camp called Vatinsonday, that we had a guard detachment up there. That was the name of the hill and that's what we called the radio station.

Frank: Pretty rugged terrain, was it not?

Murray: Well, I don't know whether you would call it rugged or not--it was volcanic and there were a lot of volcanic rocks which had extremely sharp edges, some of them. You had to be extremely careful. It was hilly. It wasn't what I would call real rugged. Not like Korea for example, not as rugged, but there were some mountains. It was all volcanic rock. But there were a lot of fairly level areas, too. There was a beautiful little stream that ran down through our camp that had salmon in it, and it belonged to a salmon fishing club in Iceland. My boys used to kill these salmon with rocks. Much as I tried to prevent them from doing it, they continually did it, and they'd get pretty good sized salmon out of this thing. Managed to cook it for themselves.

Iceland was a pretty miserable time, really, because either it was daylight all day or during the winter we spent there, it was dark except for an hour or so of muddy daylight in the middle of the day. During the winter, there wasn't much that we did except do classroom training. We didn't get out, we couldn't. It was pitch dark and snowy. Again, the snow wasn't heavy. I don't recall ever seeing more than a foot of snow on the ground and it didn't stay too long, generally. It would get mushy, but it was a miserable type of snow. Most of it was a soft snow that . . . I remember when I was officer of the day, going around to inspect sentries and it was just miserable to have this stuff blowing in your face. It wasn't terribly cold. I don't think it ever got much below about 10 above zero.

Gen Marston was the CG. Each of the battalions was in a different camp in a different part of the island. Right across a little hill from us we had an artillery battery.

Frank: Marine?

Murray: Yes, commanded by a fellow again whom I know very well but whose name I can't think of, and later, after the war, went back and directed quite a few B-type movies. He wasn't a famous director but, I'll remember his name too somewhere along the line here.

Frank: O. P. Smith was the other battalion commander and Maurice Holmes was the third battalion commander.

Murray: Maurice Holmes, right, was the . . . no, later Kengla took over one of the battalions.

Frank: Maurice Holmes went up to become regimental exec, I think.

Murray: That could have been it. Hermle was the regimental commander; Marston was the brigade commander.

Frank: What was the purpose of the 6th Marines being up there? Or the brigade, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade?

Murray: It was along with the British to prevent the Germans from taking over Iceland. I'd heard--I never saw anything in writing about all of this--but I had heard that we were to go up there to relieve the British and that once we got up there, the British decided that we weren't enough in case the Germans really decided they wanted to try to take the place, so they stayed with what I think was a division there. But that was our purpose. To make sure that we retained possession of Iceland rather than the Germans.



Frank: Did you get to know any of the Icelandic people. Was there any fraternization to speak of?

Murray: Very, very little fraternization. The Icelandic people were very close. They don't like foreigners to come in and take over anything. I won't say they don't like foreigners. They just don't like to have them move in on them. The men and the Icelandic women, there was virtually no social contact between the Marines and the Icelandic women. Very, very few. There were some, but very, very few. I know we used to go down--when I say "we," Tommy and a few of the younger officers--would go down to what I think was the Norge Hotel, and they did have a little orchestra that played dance music there, and Icelandic girls would sit at tables, and we'd go over and invite them to dance. They'd dance with us. They would not come back to our table. They went back and sat at their own table. They would dance, and that was all. Of course, we couldn't talk to each other because either they didn't know English, or they played like they didn't know English, because they wouldn't talk with us. They'd just danced, and that's all, go back and sit at their table. Very strange. It's apparently still true, because when I was in Iceland many years later, the air station, the Naval Air Station there, they can only go into town at certain times and only one or two days a week. So, they want to keep their Icelandic culture very pure.

Frank: How about your relationships with the Brits?

Murray: We enjoyed a good relationship with them. They enjoyed very much coming over and drinking our booze because apparently they had a difficult time getting hold of it themselves, and they liked our food, too. They had us over in their mess, too, and they didn't live anywhere near as well as we did.

Frank: Do you remember any of the regiments that involved with the division?

Murray: West Riding or East Riding was one of them. That's the one we had the most contact with, and that's all I can remember of it. Tommy probably remembers these very well, because he liked the British very much, and I'm sure that he could remember every one of the British regiments up there very well.

Frank: On 7 January, 1942, you went to a seven-day school, a British force tactical school.

Murray: Yes.

Frank: We were under the Brits for operational control.

Murray: Right.

Frank: Did that mean we came under British military law and everything else at that point?

Murray: Oh no. No, we ran our own show as far as military law was concerned.

Frank: The thing that's interesting, in September, 1941, the brigade was transferred for duty with the Army. Now an Army command came up there.

Murray: That's right, they did.

Frank: And so, it was Army military law which took effect.

Murray: That's correct. That's right, we came under whatever it was called in that time of the Army. That is right, I'd forgotten about that.

Frank: Bonesteel was the Army general.

Murray: Yes, and that's when I think the British were going to leave, I think, and did not, but I don't think that they ever did leave entirely. They still had a British force

there. Now, who took over operational control, I don't know whether it was the American army or the British.

Frank: I think that the Brits may have left when the Army came in. They needed the Brits elsewhere, the Army came in and that's why you . . . no, it couldn't have been because the Brits were still there in January.

Murray: My recollection is that there were still British there as long as we were there, but I don't know who had operational control. I know that we came under the operational control of the Army. As a matter of fact, as you say, we came under the administrative control, also, because we did have to use their military justice system as opposed to the Navy Courts and Boards. I sat on several Army courts martial, as a matter of fact during that period.

Frank: Of course, you were there when Pearl Harbor was attacked, and I imagine that there was a great deal of anxiety about getting back with the Marine Corps and back into the war.

Murray: I think that all of us felt, "Oh, my God, we're going to be stuck here for the rest of the war." I felt very strongly that that was what was probably going to happen to us. And in talking with some of the others, they felt that

way, too. The day that Pearl Harbor occurred, nothing in our camp happened very much except that everybody was talking about it, and when I first told my staff NCOs--as a matter of fact, I called a meeting of my staff NCOs--and told them that Pearl Harbor was attacked, they wouldn't believe it. One of my NCOs said, "I've done duty there, and there is no way that they can attack Pearl Harbor." Then we eventually went to sleep, and then about 2:00 in the morning, I was awakened, and Col Worton called us together and he told me to install some additional machine gun positions around the radio station up on the hill, and I had to break out my troops and move machine guns up there. I was never able to understand why, but we did it anyhow. And then it quieted down by the next day. Nobody seemed to be terribly excited.

Frank: I think that there were a couple of German air raids during the period you were there.

Murray: There were German planes over. If they dropped bombs, they never dropped them anywhere around where I was, and I don't believe, I'm not sure, but they never dropped bombs. I think they were probably reconnaissance planes. But they were German planes that came over two or three times while we were there.

**Frank:** You left finally in March of '42. How much of an alert did you have before you were gone?

**Murray:** We knew for a while. I know there wasn't any immediate rush like there had been on other occasions to get stuff packed and ready. We knew for a while that we were going, and we had time to pack up and just before we left, I don't remember why, but Dave Shoup took over the battalion, relieved Worton. I don't remember the reason for it, and I don't remember where Arthur Worton went, but Dave did take over the battalion just before we re-embarked.

**Frank:** You sailed from Reykjavik and arrived in New York, just briefly, and some people got off. I think that Tommy Tompkins got off in New York to either get married . . .

**Murray:** I think that's right. Well, we all got off in New York, and went cross-country by train.

**Frank:** The whole battalion?

**Murray:** The whole battalion. Well, there were a lot of people went on leave, as I recall, from there. Probably about half the battalion went on leave, but the rest of us went across on a troop train.

Frank: The east coast Marines got leave.

Murray: I expect that that was what it was. They went on leave from there. Now, incidentally, you asked about the convoy going out. The convoy coming back I remember very well because there were three battleships, there were several cruisers, and a tremendous number of destroyers that started out from Reykjavik going back to New York. One was the New York, as I remember, and I believe the Arkansas was one of them also. But at any rate, we were probably the best protected troop convoy that you ever saw in your life.. About midway back, most of the destroyers left us to pick up a big convoy going one way or another--either going to Britain--it was coming from Britain going to New York, and the Brits had convoyed it part way, and our destroyers picked up the convoy the rest of the way. Then when we got to New York, we got off, boarded the troop train, and while I was the junior captain, the senior captain told me I was going to run that troop train back. He was a reserve captain that was in battalion, and he didn't want any part of it and told me I was going to run it.

Frank: That's right. The 6th Marines brought reservists along with them.

Murray: We had, of our company commanders, I had H Company, a fellow named Jack Store had, I think, G Company. Jim, he was a Los Angeles policeman, had one of the other companies, and a reserve captain, who had been a corporal in World War I, had the other company and as company commanders, they were pretty worthless.

Frank: Was that their fault or the fault of the system?

Murray: I think that we were just unlucky enough to get a bunch, to get a whole bunch that didn't amount to much. I don't know what happened to them later on in the war. Jim, the policeman, never did command anything in combat. In fact, when he was selected for major, he called me up and he had tears in his eyes, his voice was quivering, he said, "I don't know how to be a major, Ray. Why did they ever select me as major? As a captain, maybe I can get the boys to do something. But I don't know how to be a major." I guess that in wartime, everybody just went up a notch, when they needed some more.

Frank: Of course, you made major in May of '42.

Murray: Yes.



Frank: You got back to California on 30-31 March. You went on leave, and then you went to division Officers' School. The 2d Division was now established at Camp Elliott. And you were an instructor out at Green's Farm for a while . . .

Murray: Green's Farm, yes . . .

Frank: There was an OCS . . . I guess that this was a division OCS.

Murray: Yes, it was for newly commissioned staff NCOs. We had selection boards that selected staff NCOs, and when they received their commissions, they were sent out to this school. They were either sent there after they received their commissions, or they were sent there having been selected. They were sent there, and those who satisfactorily completed the school were then commissioned. I can't remember which.

Frank: A pretty good crop of people?

Murray: We had a pretty good crop of people, yes, particularly amongst the reserves, because there were a lot of very capable reserves who were businessmen in various businesses that were staff NCOs in the Marine Corps Reserve. There were quite a few of those.

Frank: They weren't chickens by any means . . .

Murray: No, but they weren't real old either. There were a lot of young capable people.

Frank: You were how old at this time?

Murray: I was 27 or 28 in '42.

Frank: And you joined the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines in July of '42 and you're going between Exec and CO.

Murray: Yes. I was . . . Dave left the battalion in New York. He went on leave from New York. That's how one of the captains happened to be in command of the troop train. When we got back to Elliott, not too long after that, Dave moved on to some other job somewhere and a Max Smith was, for a short time, commander. This was the time in which the old units of the Marine Corps were being all split up and they were organizing new units. And the 2d Battalion was decimated, really, by taking people away and it was really a time of turmoil. I was the exec of the battalion by this time. It was Max Smith, and then I took command of it I think after Max Smith left and never did get another lieutenant colonel. After Max Smith left, "Shad" Miller (I can't remember his initials) took command of the battalion and I

remained as exec until we reached New Zealand. Shortly after our arrival in New Zealand, the 6th Marines' executive officer was transferred, and Shad Miller took his place. I assumed command of the battalion and retained that position until I was wounded and evacuated on Saipan. I remained the battalion commander as a major until I finally got promoted during the war, later on during the war. We finally received more and more replacements, we rebuilt, got re-equipped and managed to do some training, some pretty good training during the next several months. I have forgotten how many months it was that this turmoil went on of breaking people off, but it was quite a period of turmoil.

Frank: By this time, the 8th Marines had gone down to Samoa, the 1st Division had landed on Guadalcanal, and in October the 2d Division, part of it, what was left of it . . .

Murray: What was left of it. The 8th Marines, as you said, were in Samoa, so it was the 2d and 6th. Even the 2d Marines weren't there . . .

Frank: That's right. The 2d Marines . . .

Murray: The 2d Marines had gone down, and they made the landing on Guadalcanal.

Frank: It was always a matter of heartburn to 2d Division Marines that the 1st Division got all the glory without recognizing that a portion of the 2d Division had participated in the operation.

Murray: Could be. I always thought that there was plenty of glory to go around for everybody.

Frank: As it turned out, there was, sure.

Murray: But anyway, the 6th Marines then embarked. I know that the 2d Battalion embarked on the Monterey or the Mariposa. It was one of the two.

Frank: Matsonia.

Murray: Were we on the Matsonia?

Frank: Yes.

Murray: Well, I knew it was the Matson Line, but I thought it was one of the others.

Frank: No. At this time, you were H&S Company, 6th Marines loading officer, and went on board the Matsonia, sailed the

18th of October, got to New Zealand in November, and then went out to MacKay's Crossing.

**Murray:** Yes, but I had the battalion.

**Frank:** Well, on the 12th, you rejoined the battalion and took over as exec again. At least that's how they had it on the muster roll. You rejoined the battalion on 12 November, you were the exec from 12 November to 15 December, when you took over as CO again and remained CO until you left the division.

**Murray:** Boy, my memory is bad. I was the loading officer, but I thought that was as additional duty, but I guess that it wasn't. I don't remember who the CO was at that time. It escapes me.

**Frank:** Maybe there was someone acting. But in any case, you left New Zealand in December on the Jackson to go to Noumea and from Noumea, you were in Noumea only a couple of days, and then you went up to Guadalcanal in January, and I guess you participated in the final days of the operation, on the sweep . . .

**Murray:** On the final days of the operation. We went up the coast northeasterly, north I guess it was, wiping out the

last resistance. We actually left before it was finally declared secured. We were only there about six weeks, I believe it was.

Frank: You had sort of a jump CP, because Marston didn't come up. Gen De Carre was up there. Toots Henderson was the 3.

Murray: Right.

Frank: There were of course some politics involved which you may or may not know of.

Murray: I heard about it, but I didn't involve myself in it that much. I didn't want to. I knew that somebody didn't want Gen Marston to go up there.

Frank: Marston didn't want to go up there because he would have been under the command of the Americal Division, and he was senior to him and that's why he didn't go up.

Murray: Oh, I see. Well, I heard that it was the other way around, but I didn't involve myself in it so I didn't know. My recollection is that we had six men killed the whole time we were up there, and one of those was an accidental death. We did not have a whole lot of fighting. By this time, the

Japanese were so sick from malaria that, as Tommy Tompkins said one time, you had to feed them a can of C-rations to get them alive enough to shoot them, facetiously. But, they were in pretty bad shape.

However, just being on Guadalcanal and climbing those bloody hills was a very rough experience for everybody involved. Most of the time, my battalion was inland. Whitey Lloyd had the 1st Battalion, and he was along the coastline. I was next to him inland, and we had some very rough area to go over. And it was a way to get our feet wet and getting bloodied a little bit, and getting some actual experience in unloading a ship for real and so on. We had on our ship a tremendous number of stakes, barbed wire stakes. I can't remember how much it was, but they were terrible things to get unloaded, and frankly, I don't think we did a very good job of it. It took us a long, long time to get it off. But after that experience, we did a much better job after that.

Frank: What were your thoughts about being a battalion commander in a combat situation? You were a professional, you had gone up through the ranks, accelerated promotions, but now it's for real, it's not parade ground anymore. You're in a situation where you have nearly a thousand men to worry about, commanding in combat. How did you feel about it?

**Murray:** I felt a tremendous sense of responsibility and hoped that I could measure up and meet those responsibilities. Like everyone, I suppose, when you hear a round coming at you, you wonder if it's going to get you or not. I did discover that I wouldn't break and run under fire, which I suppose most everybody wonders before they ever go into combat, "Will I really, in truth, be able to stay there and take it?" And you find out that you can, you do. I don't think it bothered me all that much maybe after the first day or two because things did happen the way they were supposed.

**Frank:** After six weeks you were withdrawn back to New Zealand where you remained for almost a year.

**Murray:** Almost a year, about nine months or something like that.

**Frank:** How did you like New Zealand?

**Murray:** I enjoyed New Zealand very much. The people were very friendly. They had nothing, but they were willing to share what little they had with you. They'd take you into their homes. They tried to make life a little easier for everybody. They had organized a USO-type group which used to come out and put on shows in the camps all the time. Just the opposite of Iceland, they took the Marines into their



hearts and there must have been thousands of Marine-New Zealand marriages. We didn't have the best training area in the world, but it was adequate.

Frank: Were you up at MacKay's Crossing again?

Murray: Well, we were at MacKay's Crossing. The first time we were at a place called Paekakariki, which is in the same vicinity, but came back to MacKay's Crossing and we trained back in an area not too far away from camp, back in some hills. We had an adequate firing area where we could fire all our weapons. We conducted a lot of battalion schools and we now did begin a lot of amphibious training, not so much in ships but I mean practice in loading plans and landing plans and all this sort of thing to get everyone familiar with it, and in fact had--I don't think we had one before we went to Guadalcanal--but before we left then for Tarawa we did have a big landing, we didn't actually go ashore, but we did everything but go ashore in a bay somewhere up the coast there in New Zealand.

Frank: The harbor of Wellington, it says. There was a four-day period in December that you went aboard the Feland . . .

Murray: Oh, this was another time from what I'm talking about. Every battalion, as I remember it was, had this ship,

I guess, for a period of days, for three or four days, and we made all of our plans, loading plans and everything, and in Wellington Bay we headed for the beach. We didn't stay on the beach, I'm pretty sure, but we went through everything up to getting on the beach, and then we came off and another battalion . . .

End Tape 2/II, Side A

Begin Tape 2/II, Side B

Frank: Now that we've returned from lunch, and I think that it was a good time to break so that now we can talk about getting ready for Tarawa. You went aboard the J. Franklin Bell for rehearsals at Efate, I guess.

Murray: We rehearsed at Efate.

Frank: In the early part of November.

Murray: We went to the beach. We didn't land. We went to the beach and returned just to rehearse our landing plan.

Frank: What were the preliminary words about Tarawa? What were you told about Tarawa? Did you anticipate that it was going to be as rough as an operation as it turned out to be?

Murray: No. We didn't expect it to be that rough. We didn't know, of course, at least I didn't, and I don't think anyone else on my level that we were going to Tarawa.

Frank: Who had the 6th Marines at this time?

Murray: Maurice Holmes.

Frank: An old World War I hero, and the 1st Battalion was commanded by Willie K. Jones.

Murray: Right. He had 1/6, I had 2/6, and who had the 3d Battalion? It escapes me right now who had the 3d Battalion. But, anyway, we rehearsed at Efate and I think we went up to Noumea for a day or so. We went from Efate to somewhere else . . . oh, we were talking about how much we knew. We were, of course, issued maps of Tarawa, but I made no effort, I don't think anybody made any effort to try to discover what that particular atoll was. We knew we were going to an atoll, but we didn't know exactly where. The intelligence was, I thought, excellent, and I was amazed that they were able to get as much intelligence as they were. Most of it was gotten from aerial photographs. I know that Jack Colley was the G-2, and Jack and I have been friends for a great many years, and he told me that practically everything they knew about that island they had gotten from aerial photographs. They

had figured out the number of people on the island by the number of heads that were around the periphery of the island. And although it looked like a very formidable place, we knew there was going to be a very heavy preparation.

In fact, I don't remember whether it was at Efate, possibly it was, at any rate, somewhere before we made the actual landing, we went aboard the Maryland, which was the flagship of the operation, and Adm Hill, "Handsome Harry" Hill, gave a talk about . . . I can't remember his exact words, but it was something on the order of, "We're not only going to annihilate, we're going to obliterate the island." And they talked about the very heavy pre-landing aerial strikes that were being made with 2,000-pound bombs and daisy cutters, the naval gunfire that was going to be placed, the number of 16-inch guns that were going to be fired, and we actually began to think--certainly I did--"My God, there is not going to be anybody left to fight when we get on that island. We're just going to be able to walk over it."

The 6th Marines was in reserve. We didn't make the assault landings. Jim Crowe had a battalion in, I believe, the 2d Marines, and was one of the assault battalions . . .

Frank: 8th Marines.

Murray: Maybe it was the 8th Marines that Jim Crowe was in, and I remember kidding with Jim and saying, "Please leave

enough Japs so that when the 6th Marines get ashore, we'll have a few to shoot." Of course, later on it turned out we almost lost Jim. And then I remember sitting out on the bow and watching what was going on and suddenly realizing that things were not going as well as everybody thought. We were listening in on the message traffic and began to realize that this was a very, very serious situation, indeed, and wondering how soon we were going to have to go in and where. We did go ashore, then--at least my battalion went ashore. We didn't go ashore as a regiment, we went ashore separately, and I believe mine was the last battalion to go ashore. I came ashore on Green Beach, and I'm sorry but I can't remember whether it was D Day or D+1--I believe it was D+1--I came ashore on Green Beach and was to move up behind the 1st Battalion, which had been landed there prior to my battalion and was advancing on Betio Island. About the time I thought I was going to go up and relieve Bill Jones and his battalion, I got word to report to regimental headquarters actually, and I guess I don't remember whether division had come ashore by this time or not. But any rate, I went over to where Dave Shoup had set up his CP, and the battalion was to get ready to re-embark, and I got orders then to re-embark and go around and land on the next island up from Betio, Buariki, and to clean out the rest of the island, which we did. We re-embarked and went around into the lagoon, landed from the lagoon side on Buariki, and moved up the island. It took

us, I believe, three days to move up to the other end of the island.

Frank: Buariki then Banrabapa.

Murray: We didn't call them by those names. We called them by their code names, which I don't remember. Edith and Laura, women's names. Betio was Helena, I remember. I think that you're probably aware of an interesting aftermath of this affair. Did you get in on the story of Tony?

Frank: Yes, the native boy. Why don't you go ahead and tell it on the tape here.

Murray: OK. Before we moved around to land and then move up the island, the night before, I was in Dave Shoup's CP receiving some instructions, and I had asked if I could have a guide or someone who spoke English and who could tell me where the Japanese were on the island and was provided this young, 17-year-old boy, a native.

Frank: What were they? Melanesians? Micronesians? Polynesians?

Murray: I believe they were Micronesians. I'm not really sure which group they fall into.

Frank: Gilbertese.

Murray: Gilbertese, right. He accompanied me then on the rest of the trip, and some 40 years later I received a letter from Headquarters enclosing a letter from . . . His name was a name I couldn't pronounce but part of it sounded like "Tony." So I told him I couldn't pronounce his name, and I was going to call him Tony. Then this 40 years later I received this letter from Headquarters enclosing a letter from this man, same man, who was trying to get in touch with a Col Murray, and they deduced in Headquarters that it must be me, so they sent it on to me. I then wrote him a letter and have since corresponded with him fairly regularly. In fact, got a letter from him just the other day. He has sent me pictures, and I have sent him pictures, and we correspond two or three times a year generally.

Frank: I think the Commandant sent him a letter of commendation.

Murray: Yes. In the first letter he implied that he ought to get some recognition for providing me with services that helped me out, so I wrote back to Gen Simmons and suggested that perhaps the Commandant would be willing to write him a letter, which the Commandant very graciously did and I'm

sure he's probably the proudest Gilbertese you can find. The last letter he wrote me he indicated he had pictures of Gen Kelley, a picture of me, and a picture of someone else, a naval officer whom he apparently knew there too, upon the wall of his home.

But to get back to the main story. We moved up the island without any fight until we reached the last island of the atoll, where we had a short, rather sharp fight, and killed approximately 150 Japanese and Koreans. Two Koreans surrendered to us, and one of them was pretty badly wounded, and we eventually got him evacuated to the hospital. The other one wasn't wounded, was perfectly sound, and wanted to become, in effect, our slave. He wanted to stay with us and do anything we wanted him to do. He wanted to work for us.

Frank: Were these Korean laborers?

Murray: They were Korean laborers. They were not military people.

Frank: Did you suffer any casualties?

Murray: Yes. We had several killed, eight or ten killed and quite a few wounded in that fight. It was a real sharp fight for about an hour. It was very dense undergrowth and as our leading units came upon them, they just opened up and killed



and wounded quite a few immediately. And then the rest of this fighting was in this heavy stuff, but you just had to work your way through it very carefully and quite a few people got hurt. I don't remember the exact numbers.

**Frank:** No artillery or naval gunfire support?

**Murray:** No, we didn't use it because it was at such close quarters we couldn't make use of it. We did have an artillery battery with us. But to my best recollection, we didn't use it because it was just too close quarters and a lot of trees and heavy underbrush. So, no way we could use it and it was very close quarters. The island wasn't a big island, it was very small. The night before, I sent a message requesting a patrol off the island to prevent anybody attempting to move from that island around to any of the others, and a destroyer was sent over there, but they didn't try to get away. They apparently had no means of getting away.

**Frank:** Actually, your battalion was rather lucky in that it didn't involved in the heavier fighting on Betio.

**Murray:** Oh, as it turned out, of course. Although we were disappointed that we were not in the assault initially. I think that everybody always wants to be in the main assault. We were fortunate that we weren't.

Frank: Dave Shoup did a magnificent job . . .

Murray: Magnificent job . . .

Frank: . . . by all accounts for which he won the Medal of Honor.

Murray: Medal of Honor. He, of course, had taken over actually while we were en route, because Col Marshall had the regiment and became ill, and Dave relieved him at the last minute. Dave was the 3 of the division, supervised all the planning, was the major planner for the whole operation, so he was thoroughly familiar with everything.

Frank: How about Julian Smith? Did you ever get to know him when he had the division?

Murray: Oh, I knew him and I wasn't real close because there weren't too many opportunities to get to be real close with him. But he was a fine old gentleman, kindly person, not an inspiring leader in the sense of a "Follow me, let's go," hard charger, but a fine leader nevertheless in that his moral fibre, so to speak, was such that you could just love him, and we did. You'd fight for him.

Frank: The battalion leaves Tarawa . . .

Murray  
3

Murray: We didn't leave Tarawa initially. We stayed behind after the division left, and we acted as a ground defense force for the Navy who established, well, there were two airfields. One on Betio proper, and one where the atoll made a sharp angle. If I had a map, I could tell the names. I don't remember right now, but at any rate, there were two airfields run by the Navy, and they had some kind of an installation there. I presume it was a supply . . . they were building a supply . . . There were SeaBees there I know, because we bummed an awful lot of stuff off of SeaBees. We found an old Japanese truck and one of my communicators cut the drive shaft off and welded--it wasn't a generator, it was called something else, maybe like they have on cars today. They don't call them generators, they call them something else. But at any rate, whatever this was, it generated electricity, and you'd start the motor and run this thing, and we had lights strung all over everywhere. We had screened-in dining rooms. We fixed ourselves up real well with the help of the SeaBees, but it was a quid pro quo because we did things for them they liked done, too.

Frank: Did a Japanese submarine come in at any time and shell the island?

**Murray:** No. Japanese bombers came over periodically and dropped sticks of bombs, but it was always only one run. We also had elements of one of our defense battalions on the island. That defense battalion was split between Tarawa and Apamama, and we had 90mm guns, antiaircraft guns on Tarawa and searchlights. And these planes would come over and the searchlights would pick them out up there and there would be explosions all over the sky, but never, while I was there, did we bring down an airplane for some reason or other. Never managed it.

**Frank:** The 8th of January 1944 you sailed aboard the S.S. Prince George's . . .

**Murray:** This was a Liberty ship that happened to be in the harbor and we got word, oh it was some time 8:00 or 9:00 in the morning, that we were to aboard that ship and it was going to sail about 3:30 that afternoon. I had dengue fever, a temperature of 104, and hoping I was going to die soon to get out of my misery, and I told Dick Nutting, my exec, "Get 'em aboard if you can, and I don't care whether I'm here or there. Just do whatever you can." He decided to put me aboard, put me on the ship and I went into the sickbay and agonized there while Dick got all the troops, of course, and most of the gear, although we did leave quite a bit of gear

on the beach, and that's what we were told to do. "Just leave what you can load."

Frank: Why the hurry-up? Was that the only ship available?

Murray: That was a ship that was going back to Honolulu, it was, and it was time for us to get back there and get to work. So other than that I don't know of any other reason that was it. This was interesting because in the hurry-up of loading, they loaded everything in the holds willy-nilly. After I recovered . . . after a few days on the trip, I recovered, and I went down and took a look in the holds and it was a shambles. There were empty 55-gallon drums, ammunition stacked all over the place. It's a wonder the ship didn't blow up, and we started out--no, I guess we made that whole trip with one escort and I believe that that was what it was, a destroyer escort. It wasn't a big destroyer--a destroyer escort. It at least took us most of the way if not all the way. We were never bothered. We didn't zig-zag, as I recall, just sailed at about 14 knots. But we were never bothered.

Frank: It took a long time, 12 days, to get back.

Murray: Right, about half of which I was in the sick bay.

I finally recovered enough that I then the rest of the time I slept out on the deck, because it was real, real hot.

Frank: You didn't have a cabin aboard?

Murray: Yes, I had a cabin, but it was damned hot that . . .

Frank: If you were that hot in the cabin, then the troops must have been uncomfortable.

Murray: Oh, most of them slept topside. Yes, it was miserable. It wasn't a troop ship.

Frank: You land and go to Camp Tarawa at Hilo on the big island. Had it been built up for you while you were away?

Murray: Yes. Our camp was ready for us. Everything was set, including I believe they even had the bunks made up for us. I'm quite sure they did, yes. Everything was all set up for us beautifully when we came in. The first and only time I guess that had ever happened for us.

Frank: Who met you when you got there? Julian Smith or Tommy Watson?

**Murray:** I don't remember seeing either one of them there. Whitey Lloyd, I know, was there down on the dock. And Jim Riseley, he was the regimental commander. Yes, I believe that that was the senior officer that met us down there. I wouldn't say that positively, but that is all that I remember meeting us.

**Frank:** I imagine that you spent a time of rehabilitating, retraining, taking in new troops.

**Murray:** We did. It started in fairly soon after that though, some pretty serious training, and we had to find training areas. That was on the Parker Ranch, where there was plenty of room for everybody to train, and we set up a regular training program and went right to work. We did get to know some of the local people. The ranch manager of the Parker Ranch--whose name will come to me later--had us over in his home frequently--Hartwell Carter was his name--and he frequently had us over for parties in his house, and we met some of his relatives who lived on Oahu, and we occasionally would go down to Hilo and spend the night in the inn--I don't mean Hilo, I mean Kona. Occasionally we'd get over to Hilo, too. Not very often. Most of the time was spent in training. We had a regimental mess, a regimental billeting area for the regimental commander and the three battalion commanders

all lived together and had our own little mess. It was a reasonably pleasant stay. I enjoyed it.

Frank: Did you get a chance to exchange stories and views with the other battalion commanders? What happened to the 8th Marines? The 2d Marines? And so on.

Murray: Well, we were together, yes. I don't recall that we talked too much about what had gone on. But we talked some, yes. Not in terms of trying to analyze and say, "Could we have done this differently?" As a matter of fact, I don't know of any different way you can make a landing on a small island than make the landing and butt your head up against, push them over to the other side of the island.

Frank: More naval gunfire, perhaps, more preparation?

Murray: Well, possibly. In the next operation, which I believe was Eniwetok, they did do just that. They had . . . in fact they landed the artillery on an adjacent island and shelled it for a fairly extended period of time. That might have done some more good at Tarawa.

Frank: Yes, that was one of the things that was said, that they could have landed artillery at the point and rolled up the Japanese with enfilade fire.



**Murray:** Yes, there was an island, I believe, across the entrance to the lagoon. It might have been taken and placed artillery on it. I don't know what the defenses were on Eniwetok, exactly how they were constructed. But on Tarawa, these reinforced concrete bunkers, they were huge things, had sand piled up on them, so these big shells would hit in the sand and blow sand everywhere, but apparently was unable to get through it and get through the concrete.

**Frank:** That and the coconut palm logs . . .

**Murray:** There was a lot of naval gunfire put on that island. I watched a lot of it early in the morning before the thing got started and I wondered how anybody could live through it. But I discovered then that people can live through a tremendous amount of artillery fire. As a short aside, I remember here in Pendleton one time a reserve unit, an air unit, was out here and we had a bunch of VIPs up on Cone Hill to watch the demonstration and they dropped 500-pound bombs in the impact area, one after another for quite a while, and the narrator finally said, "As you can see, nobody could live through a thing like this," and he had hardly gotten the words out of his mouth when a deer jumped up out of all of this and ran away. And there were no emplacements or anything for it, just hadn't gotten hit. So, I think that

it's obvious if we'd had more gunfire, more bombs, we probably would have knocked out some more things, but I don't know how long it would have taken. It might have taken a long time.

**Frank:** How about the use of amtracs in the operation? This was unique.

**Murray:** Yes, this was the first time, I guess. While we were still in New Zealand, Jim Riseley was sent to the Fiji Islands to test the amtracs, and he came back and said that they would work alright. We didn't use them in the 6th Marines because we were the reserve.

**Frank:** The assault waves used them.

**Murray:** The assault waves used them to get over the reef and they were successful. This was the first time they were used.

**Frank:** You got your second Silver Star for Tarawa.

**Murray:** I have to say that both the first and second Silver Stars, as far as I was concerned, the battalion did its job and I didn't get killed, so I got a Silver Star. I don't like to say that, but I don't know of anything that I personally did that really and truly rated the Silver Star.

Frank: At what time did you get the warning for Saipan?

Murray: It was sometime in advance of going to Saipan, because we had a major land rehearsal, didn't do it on the beach, but we did do a land rehearsal of the thing. Again, at this point, we didn't know where we were going. But it was quite a big operation the entire division participated in. So it had to be several weeks, it had to be several weeks before, because we did an awful lot of planning which took an awful lot of time to do, and it was thorough planning for the operation. So we knew quite some time in advance; how far in advance, I don't remember.

Frank: They had some sort of crazy idea, the Northern Troops and Landing Force command, they were going to use one of the battalions of the 6th Marines to go round to Magicienne Bay to go up . . .

Frank: Woody Kyle's battalion was supposed to go, land on Magicienne Bay, and seize Mount Tapotchau at night before the landing, and of course, it took weeks before they were ever able to take Tapotchau. Well, reason prevailed and they called that off, of course.

There was another thing that was tried for the first time in this landing, and we were supposed to do it, too. This was

to stay in the amtracs and go to Objective 1. Somehow, somebody was able to talk Gen Watson, and presumably Gen Smith, out of this as far as we were concerned in the 6th Marines. Some other units did do it. I didn't feel it would work, because the idea was to just ride past all this opposition until you got up there and not wipe them out, not flank them--just go through them and get up there. This would mean that whatever troops were up there were isolated. You had enemy between the beach and your troops, then. Bypassing is an altogether different thing. We bypassed islands out there, and you can bypass on the ground, too. You can go around the flank. But to just go right through and drop a bunch of people on the ground didn't seem to make very good sense to me. And it didn't make good sense to Jim Riseley, and he managed to talk them out of us doing it. So we just went to the beach, debarked, and fought our way in.

I didn't fight very far in, but the battalion did. I had just landed on the beach and had just gotten out of my tractor with the group that was with me. At that time there was a sand berm on the beach, and I went up to the top of the berm and was looking over it just to size up the landscape, to see where I might move my CP, and picked a spot out on the ground. But as it turned out, we landed considerably north of the Red Beach on the map. So I was trying to find a place where I could put in a CP, when a mortar shell landed right behind me, I guess, very close anyhow. It killed two officers

who were kneeling beside me and wounded a bunch of us, wounded me, and I was knocked out for a few moments--how long, I don't know--but when I came to I know I felt very weak and my trousers had been blown completely off of me. There were just some tatters hanging, and blood all over, and I thought, "Well, this is it. This is what it means to get killed in the war."

My little orderly was just scared to death, and he was trying to put some morphine in my arm and he was shaking so, he couldn't even get the morphine in my arm. But, I remember telling him, I said, "Well, Zutz, I guess I don't have much longer." I was very dramatic about it, and time went on, and I began to feel better and better and better, and all of a sudden I said, "Oh, God, I'm not going to die after all." So I said, "Come on Zutz, let's run across the road here." There was an area across the road which looked like it had plenty of cover. So we jumped up and ran across the road, and as we did, a ricochet bullet hit me in the hip, and I had my wallet in my hip pocket. It just left an impression of a flat bullet on the wallet. It cut through about half the wallet. The next day, my hip was all black and blue from the bruise. Other than that, it didn't hurt me any.

We got on the other side of the road, and Zutz saw a corpsman and called him over, and the corpsman looked at me and I said, "How bad is it?" And he said, "Oh God, Colonel,

it looks bad." Well again I thought, "Jesus, maybe I've had the course here."

Frank: Were you in pain?

Murray: No, I wasn't in any pain. No pain at all. The only sensation I had when I came to was somebody had taken a 4x4 and like a battering ram had hit me in the rear end with it, and that's the only sensation I had. No pain at all. So then, I picked out an area I wanted the CP to go in, and I sent Zutz back across the road to get my exec and some of the others to come across to show them where it was, and he didn't come back, and he didn't come back, and he didn't come back. So finally I jumped up and ran back across the road myself. When I got back across the road, I saw Zutz' body there. He had been just decapitated. Another mortar shell had landed and caught him.

So, I found the rest of the battalion there and told them where I wanted them to go. About that time, Col Riseley had hit the beach, and he told me I was going to be evacuated, and I told him I didn't think I needed to be evacuated. I was doing alright. He said, "No, you're going back," so he insisted that I get in an amtrac and go back, which I did then. And found out later that I had shrapnel in my legs and shrapnel in my buttocks that caused no serious damage. I was

very fortunate that it didn't, but it didn't cause me any serious damage.

Frank: You were picking shrapnel out for years, eh?

Murray: Well, not really that. But they never did treat me really. They put some bandages on me on the ship. I didn't go to a hospital ship, I went to one of the transports and stayed aboard that until that transport then came back to Hawaii, just loaded with wounded people.

Frank: The Monrovia.

Murray: Yes, loaded with wounded people. We got back to Hawaii, and I was sent up to Aeia. By this time I was walking alright, although I was real stiff, and they never did treat me at all in Aeia, and finally, after several days, a doctor came in and I said, "Look, how about either sending me back to Saipan with my unit, and if I can't go back there, let me go home to a hospital near my home to recuperate." He said, "Well, you can't go back up there so I'll see if I can't get you home."

So a couple of days later, I got a set of orders and I flew the old Boeing Clipper ship back to San Francisco. I reported in to 1100 Harrison Street and told the old adjutant that used to be there, a name again I can't recall--McCabe or

something like that--I said, "I want to go down to the hospital at San Diego." He said, "Hospital? You're not going to a hospital." I said, "My God! Why not?" and I showed him I was all bandaged up and I'd been draining from my rear end--actually I was wearing a Kotex--and he said, "Well, I'm sorry. These orders are for you to go to Quantico to go to duty and you have 15 days' leave."

So I went home for 15 days, and then I drove to Quantico with my family.

Frank: Drove? To Quantico?

Murray: Yes, drove back to Quantico, and I kept hurting every once in a while. Every once in a while I had a real sharp pain. When I got to Quantico, I went to the hospital. They took an X-ray, and there was a piece of shrapnel about this big around and this thick lodged back in there, but it was not doing any damage except hurting occasionally. So a doctor told me, "I can take it out now, or if you want . . ."

I attended the short course there, Command and Staff, because I was going to be assigned as an instructor, but they wanted me to go through the course first. So I finished that course, and then I went to the hospital and had this thing removed and then stayed on as an instructor.

Frank: You stayed on as an instructor there . . .



**Murray:** I was head of the Tactics Section and . . .

**Frank:** You went to the Advanced Naval Intelligence School in New York in March, 1945 in connection with intelligence matters.

**Murray:** That was to give a lecture to this intelligence school.

**Frank:** By the way, you got your third Silver Star for Tarawa, no that was the second one. I'm just reading the citation here.

**Murray:** No, I got a Navy Cross at Saipan. Again, I don't know really what for, but got it anyhow.

**Frank:** You must have had temporary duty up at Hyde Park for President Roosevelt's funeral.

**Murray:** I did. I took a group, it was a battalion, sort of a temporary battalion--half of it were some of the enlisted complement from Basic School and the other half were students at one of the officers' school. I don't remember whether it was Basic School or what it was, ROC, I guess is what they called it in those days. At any rate, there was a company

from each and we were to go up and participate in the parade, not the parade but the funeral procession for President Roosevelt. When I got up there [Washington], I was supposed to participate and return to Quantico. When I got up there, I was told that we were going to go on to Hyde Park and participate in the ceremonies at Hyde Park. So we quick made arrangements with the Navy Yard, as soon as this was over, to have troops go back there, and be able to relax a little bit and arrange for them to show some movies to keep them occupied. And then we got on a train and went up to Hyde Park on the train. We were overnight on the train and without being told, these Marines, all of them, took a good part of the night, and took their trousers off and they'd run their fingers through it to get a good sharp crease on it and kept themselves in as good a state of repair as they possibly could to look decent for the next day, because we hadn't prepared for this at all.

Frank: All in greens?

Murray: All in greens. When I got up there, I was told that I was to command the honor guard in the Rose Garden, and they gave me a mimeographed sheet of paper and said that this is the sequence of events. So, I had a composite group of sailors, soldiers, and Marines, which made up a total of about 150, as I recall. There were about 50 of each that

were lined around the whole Rose Garden. All we did was presented arms when the body was brought in and during the funeral. It was quite exciting because I got to see a good part of the people who were running the world at that time who were at the funeral. The entire cabinet, of course, was there, and his whole Supreme Court was standing where I was standing, so I was very impressed.

Frank: Going back to Iceland, the famous march past Winston Churchill, what was that like?

Murray: Very thrilling. First we lined up a long road, and I don't know how many troops were there, but the troops seemed like miles, but it couldn't have been that much, because Churchill walked the line, and I remember we were standing at attention, supposed to be looking straight forward, of course. As we knew that he was approaching, every eye in the column turned over and watched him go by. Then he stood on a platform, and then we marched past him. And it was quite a thrill to see Churchill. He was on his way home from the Argentia meeting with Roosevelt. And he looked exactly like he did in his pictures, he looked every bit as bulldoggish as his pictures.

Frank: You had been promoted to lieutenant colonel out in the Pacific.

**Murray:** Yes, this was before we went to Tarawa. This was after Guadalcanal that I was promoted to lieutenant colonel.

**Frank:** You remained at the Command and Staff School until January of '46 when you joined the 1st Special Marine Brigade, which I guess was O. P. Smith's.

**Murray:** O. P. Smith originally had it, yes.

**Frank:** What was the purpose . . .

End Tape 2/II, Side B

Begin Tape 3/II, Side A

**Frank:** We were talking about the organization of the 1st Special Marine Brigade, the purpose of it.

**Murray:** One of the perennial uprisings of one sort or another in Haiti, and it was thought that it might be necessary to send a unit in to evacuate Americans. So we were very hastily organized. We had one battalion in Quantico and I guess it was two other battalions organized at Camp Lejeune. The headquarters initially was in Quantico. I became the G-3 of the brigade, and our initial business, as far as the G-3 section was concerned, was to organize a training syllabus

for the troops. Not too long after we were organized, I don't recall exactly the time period, but it wasn't too long after we were organized that Gen Smith was relieved by Gen David Nimmer, and shortly thereafter we moved our headquarters and the one battalion we had in Quantico down to Camp Lejeune, where we remained for the balance of the time we were organized. Nothing ever came of the trouble in Haiti, so we were eventually broken up. However, we did conduct an amphibious exercise in Puerto Rico during this time.

Frank: On Culebra?

Murray: No, we didn't go to Culebra. It was on the eastern end of the island. It's probably about where Roosevelt Roads is now. I don't recall Roosevelt Roads being there at that time.

Frank: There's an El Murello beach, no, it was Rosy Roads. "Participated in operational maneuvers at Roosevelt Roads, Puerto."

Murray: Roosevelt Roads, right. But I don't know if that was the name of the base or the name of the . . .

Frank: No, Naval Operating Base, Roosevelt Roads.

**Murray:** OK, then it was there. We didn't land right at Roosevelt Roads, however. We landed up the coast from there and then moved down the coast. It was not a very satisfactory landing operation for a couple of reasons. There was no maneuver room inland. We had to move down . . . that's right, it was Roosevelt Roads; I remember now because we did some exercises in the Roosevelt Roads area after the landing operation was over, and we marched down this road to Roosevelt Roads. One reason it wasn't satisfactory was that there were still houses right behind the beach and all we could do was get on the beach. The other reason was the weather was extremely bad and the admiral, who was in command of the operation, did not want to land, but he let Gen Nimmer decide, yes, we wanted to land, so he let it go ahead. They lost a lot of boats that day on the beach because it was a real rough day. But we stayed down there a week or so and conducted various kinds of exercises in the training areas before we came back. It seems to me that we came back through New York for some reason or another, and I can't remember why.

**Frank:** Yes, arrived and anchored in New York. Six days, and then you flew down from Floyd Bennett to Peterfield Point, which is now Marine Corps Air Station, New River, and then you went on to Norfolk, went to Quantico. You were in Quantico in July of '46 and then I guess went back. In August you were detached to Camp Lejeune as IG for a short

period of time, and then you went out to FMFPac, where you were the . . .

**Murray:** No, not FMFPac. It was Marine Garrison Forces, Pacific.

**Frank:** Which were all the Marine posts and stations in the Pacific.

**Murray:** Yes. Very shortly after that brigade broke up, I transferred out to Hawaii. I actually had orders to go out to China, and when I arrived in Pearl Harbor, Gen Worton was commanding general of Garrison Forces, Pacific, and he wanted someone to go around to all these various island commands that were in his Garrison Forces, Pacific, to sort of help them out, get them on the right track, and he needed a lieutenant colonel and he knew me. Now, they had excess lieutenant colonels in China at that time. I was told that battalion executive officers were lieutenant colonels. So he talked with CG, FMPac, who was Gen Turnage. He talked with him and got his OK and went back to Washington, and he had a first lieutenant he thought he could spare, so he traded a first lieutenant for a lieutenant colonel. This first lieutenant then was ordered then to go out to China, and I was in Garrison Forces, Pacific, and my orders were changed to report to Garrison Forces, Pacific.

Garrison Forces, Pacific, was all the little island detachments throughout the Pacific that were left over after the war where there were naval forces, and they were anywhere from just a very small outfit to some pretty good sized detachments. For the most part, they were commanded by lieutenants, captains, majors who had gone through a school in Quantico teaching them to be a platoon leader, gone out to war and fought the war, and had gotten promoted in the meantime, and after the war, were dropped off with these little detachments, most of them with very few publications, any real knowledge of how to run a barracks detachment at all. My job was to fly to all these various islands, get with them, find out what they needed in the way of publications, see if they had any problems, help them out in any way I could. So, that's what I did for the next couple of years. I was in the air for a good part of the time.

**Frank:** Your family was out there with you?

**Murray:** The family finally got out to Hawaii. I was out there seven months before they were allowed out because at that time you couldn't have a family out there unless you had a place to keep them and there were very few places to live. I finally managed to get a place and brought them out.

**Frank:** You weren't entitled to quarters?



**Murray:** I was entitled to quarters, but there weren't any. None available at that time. This was right after the war, and it was pretty much of a mess out there at that time. These young kids and these islands were for the most part were commanded by naval officers that were never going anywhere. They were drunks, they were a mess, most of them, with a few exceptions. The one at Johnston Island and the one at Saipan were real top-flight naval officers, I thought.

**Frank:** These were major bases, anyway. Guam?

**Murray:** Yes, Guam. It was a very interesting two years. I saw a good bit of the Pacific.

**Frank:** Then you went back to the 1st Division, which had now come back from Guam itself, to become Assistant 4.

**Murray:** Yes, all but the 5th Marines.

**Frank:** Then G-4, and you had that job until you were transferred to the 3d Marines, 1st Marine Division. What did they do? Bring the 3d Marines back and make it part of the division?

**Murray:** Yes, the 3d Marines and the 7th Marines. This was the time of the J-Tables, where there wasn't a regimental organization there. It was reinforced battalion organizations. I'm sure that you're familiar with that period. Division had very little in the way of division facilities. They were all parcelled out to these . . .

**Frank:** BLTs?

**Murray:** They were quite a bit larger than a battalion but not as large as a regiment, and the 3d Marines was one of these. The 7th Marines was the other and they were at Camp Pendleton. The 5th Marines was still out on Guam. We had our own motor transport. We had . . . in fact, all the motor transport was divided up amongst these units. While I was the G-4 . . .

**Frank:** Graves Erskine had the division at this time, did he not?

**Murray:** Yes, he had both the division and the base, which was very interesting. But while I was G-4, some of the elements came back from China. They weren't all there, apparently.

Frank: No, there were still elements of the 4th Marines. By this time, the division had dwindled and was in Guam. There was the 4th Marines, or maybe the 3d Marines, down at Tsingtao under FMFWesPac. The perimeter shrunk, and so the last Marines were down in that area, and in February of '49 is when the last elements of the Marines in China were withdrawn.

Murray: Whoever it was that was left, it was the last Marines that came out of China that came to San Diego while I was G-4 of the division. My job was to organize the debarkation of these ships and the movement of the troops and the equipment from the ships to Camp Pendleton and the billeting and all of the rest. So, what I didn't know was that the ships had to be unloaded on a 24-hour-a-day basis. It didn't occur to me that they had to be, and I guess that it didn't occur to anybody else that I wouldn't know that. At any rate, I didn't know it. The other thing I didn't know was that the division was going to bring back a mass of junk, a large part of which was motor transport type stuff. It wouldn't roll of its own accord, it had to be hauled.

So, when they landed, I had to organize the motor transport which moved them from the assets of these BLTs. That's all there was. Each truck had one driver, which I thought was going to be enough, since we'd unload during the day and at night we wouldn't unload. Soon as they got in, I

was told we had to unload 24 hours a day because the government had to pay demurrage on these ships otherwise. They were civilian ships. It was fine the first day and part of the next day. Meanwhile, I started to organize a pool of drivers. I had to go around and search for people that had licenses, and whatnot. By the second day, things were beginning to fall apart, and I went in and reported to Tex Butler the situation, and he said, "I think you had better go in and see Gen Erskine." I went in to see Gen Erskine, wondered whether I should take my sword or not because knowing his reputation, he was pretty rough. I went in and told him what the situation was and told him what I was doing about it, and he just looked up at me and smiled, and said, "Keep plugging." So we went back, and we finally got through this. How we did it, I don't know, but it was a jolly mess, I'll tell you. Finally got everybody off the ship and all the gear off the ship and safely into Pendleton. And it was after that, then, that I took the 3d Marines.

Frank: That was in July of '49. In two months' time, in October, the 3d Marines was redesignated the 5th Marines.

Murray: Right. There was a 5th Marines that came back from Guam during this period of time, and we went from the J-tables to the K-tables, which was back to the conventional

. . .

**Frank:** Triangular division.

**Murray:** Right, three battalions with a regimental headquarters, and as a part of this whole reorganization, the 5th Marines that were there plus, I suppose, the 3d Marines and parts of the 7th, too, probably, were reorganized into the 5th Marines. Brute, of course, took command of the 5th Marines, and I was his exec.

**Frank:** Had you known him from before?

**Murray:** Oh, yes, I had known him. I had never worked for him or even around him, but I had known him before. For almost the next year, then, we trained, we trained, and we trained, and the training was outstanding. Brute did an absolutely outstanding job of preparing that unit for combat, and we spent hours and hours out in the field. I never worked harder in my life then I did that one year working for him. He's a very able person and he's also a very demanding person. I found it extremely difficult, though rewarding, to work for him. Rewarding in the sense that you saw things get done, and we trained very hard in all the conventional things. We trained in amphibious operations. We conducted, during that period, an exercise called DEMON III, which was Demonstration III, a huge exercise which some pretty top flight people were

going to attend and then didn't attend. Kennedy, I believe, was going to attend this, and Sam Rayburn died just about the time we were going to run this thing.

**Frank:** Kennedy? Truman, not Kennedy. You're getting way ahead of yourself. We're talking about '50, '49.

**Murray:** That's right. Oh, of course. I'm thinking of another exercise, right. This was to be, I guess that this was attended by a bunch of bigwigs. Not what I was thinking about. But, under Brute's direction, we organized this landing on a scenario basis. Everything was scripted from the time they left the ship until the exercise was over, where tanks would go, where this would happen, where that would happen; it was a demonstration, and it was scripted right down to the last detail. All of the fireworks part of it was laid on to fit in with everything else that was scripted, and it was a beautiful demonstration. And you learned a helluva lot from it, too, because it was scripted the way you should have done it, anyhow.

**Frank:** During this time, President Truman ordered the integration of the armed forces. How did it work in the 5th Marines? Do you recall?

Murray: I don't recall that we had any blacks at this time. The first blacks I remember, I first remember, is when we got to Korea. There were blacks then. We probably had some. We had no problem with it in any case. But I know that I remember blacks in Korea.

Frank: Well, at this time, given the nature of society, given the nature of the armed forces, I don't think that there were any black Marines in combat units. They were probably in some sort of support, labor units, this type of thing.

Murray: That's right. Now, yes, we had them in the combat service group, there were some Marine units, but they were negro units still. I don't remember, since I wasn't directly involved with it. I mean, since we didn't have a quota of blacks to take into the 5th Marines, I don't know how they did it in the combat service group.

Frank: Now this operation that the Brute had was when? In '49, '50?

Murray: It would have been '49, or early '50.

Frank: Okay, so you made no other preparations for Korea until June, the invasion. Now, you, as a lieutenant colonel were commanding the regiment.

Murray: Yes. Brute was transferred out about 10 days before we got orders to Korea, maybe two weeks. He was ordered to FMFPac.

Frank: Gen Erskine had left because he was put on a special Southeast Asia survey . . .

Murray: He was still nominally in command of the division, but he wasn't there. Eddie Craig was the assistant division commander.

Frank: Was he on the scene or was O. P. Smith on the scene?

Murray: I don't think O. P. Smith was there at that time. O. P. Smith was with the rest of the division. I think what it was is Eddie Craig was acting. Erskine still nominally had the division, and he was on detached duty, and it wasn't until when the division had to go to Korea that O. P. Smith came out.

Frank: Now, you had a very hectic period of time there. Did you anticipate that you were going to be able to keep the regiment?



**Murray:** I anticipated that I wouldn't keep it. I just hoped that I could. I was sure that a colonel would be brought in. It wasn't until some time later when I was talking Gen Erskine--this was after he retired--and I was back in Washington and I was talking with him one time, and he told me that when this broke, Gen Cates told him, "I'll get you a colonel as soon as I can to get out and take the regiment," and Gen Erskine said he told Gen Cates, "Don't need one. I've got somebody who can take the regiment." And so apparently it was Gen Erskine who had enough confidence in me that he convinced Gen Cates that I could take it out. He didn't have to get another colonel. But I expected to be relieved at any time, from before we left 'til shortly after we got there. It wasn't until I'd had it for quite some time that I finally began to figure, "Well, maybe they're going to let me keep it," because nobody ever told me for sure that, "By God, you've got this regiment and nobody else is going to get it."

**Frank:** Was the regiment now up to strength with three battalions?

**Murray:** No. I had three battalions, but each battalion had only two companies and each company had only two platoons and the other supporting elements were similarly reduced. We didn't have the tanks for our antitank platoon. In those

days, we had three tanks in the antitank platoon. I don't know what they have now. We lacked a section of mortars. Everything had been cut down somewhat. Now, before we left, though, we made up a third platoon for each rifle company from bits and pieces from around Pendleton. So that when we left San Diego, I had three battalions of two companies each. The companies each had three platoons, but we still didn't have all of our reinforcing elements. That's what we went to Korea with.

**Frank:** Now this was a hectic period of marking boxes, equipment, and everything else.

**Murray:** Extremely hectic, plus, on top of everything else, the big annual rodeo carnival was going on, and I was involved with the carnival part of that, and had to close that down at the same time that we were packing up ready to go. It was an exciting time, but this outfit, this 5th Marines, was so well trained that there were just no hitches. Everything just went like it was supposed to go. Another way we had been extremely lucky, in the previous year we had virtually no turnover. It happened to be a period--I don't know, probably just coincidental--happened to be a period of time when there was very little turnover of personnel, so that we had a regiment which, for all intents and purposes, had been together for a full year, training

together for a full year when it went out. It was an extremely well-trained outfit.

**Frank:** You had Hal Roise as one of your battalion commanders.

**Murray:** Hal Roise had the 2d Battalion; George Newton had the 1st; and Bob Taplett had the 3d. Originally, Larry Hays was my exec. When Larry was wounded outside of Seoul, Joe Stewart, they gave me Joe from the 3 Section, to be my exec, so I had a lot of real capable people in that outfit. And each of them had strengths I could use in different situations. I've often said that if war can be fun, that came as close to fun as you can have in war, because we did everything almost you can do in combat. In fact, one day out there, I heard a couple of young kids walking by and one of them was saying he was getting scared now and the other asked him why, and he said, "Well, we've done everything but jump out of planes in parachutes, and I don't like to jump out of planes in parachutes." And we did, we did just about everything.

**Frank:** Tell me about the other regimental commanders. Both of them were senior to you. Considerably senior.

**Murray:** Yes.

Frank: Litzenberg and Puller.

Murray: The first time I ever laid eyes on Chesty Puller was at his CP outside of Seoul.

Frank: Oh, you didn't even match up with him until then.

Murray: Oh, no. No, we didn't see the rest of the division until . . .

Frank: The 5th Marines went on ahead. You went to Pusan . . .

Murray: We were there for six weeks or so before the rest of the division came.

Frank: The Battle of the Naktong, and so on.

Murray: Right.

Frank: You had Ike Fenton as one of your company commanders. Kenny Houghton, I guess.

Murray: Kenny Houghton had the division reconnaissance company.

Frank: You had some real stellar individuals out there.

Murray: Yes, there was a real lot of fine people. Bob Barrow, of course, wasn't in the 5th Marines, but he was out there; 1st Marines.

Frank: Back to the 5th Marines. You didn't meet Litzenberg or . . .

Murray: No, I didn't meet either of them before I was in Korea.

Frank: Why don't you go on ahead and tell me the nightmares, if they were, of getting mounted and going to Korea. Eddie Craig was the ADC and running the operation.

Murray: Yes. He was the designated brigade commander.

Frank: You were going out as a brigade rather than a division, but would form up when the units came in from the Med and so on, as a division later in Korea. Or wasn't even that concept proposed?

Murray: Not initially. Initially, when we went out, as far as we knew, we were all that was going out. I don't think, as a matter of fact, that the Joint Chiefs had even approved

the division at that point. I'm not sure about that, but in any case, we augmented ourselves. That is, got third platoons for each of the companies, mostly from local people who were there. There were some reserves who were ordered in.

**Frank:** You pretty well cleaned out Camp Pendleton.

**Murray:** We did. We pretty well cleaned out Camp Pendleton. There were a certain number of people who were ineligible to go out there--too short a term on their enlistment and wouldn't agree to re-enlist. The usual things which prevent you from taking everybody you've got right now. But we went out at full peacetime strength. We weren't short of personnel for our peacetime strength. And as I said, we had the extra platoons beyond peacetime strength. There were no real headaches about getting embarked. I did my best to not take any more than we absolutely had to. A lot of people, even though it wasn't authorized, tried to take a lot of excess junk. I made sure that we didn't do that. So, we went out with just what we had to have. Our initial supplies and a certain amount of replacements, but not too heavy. We did not combat load. Well, we were going to Japan. We did not combat load. Another reason, we had no mission, no landing areas, no nothing designated, so you didn't know what you were going to need.

Frank: You didn't know where you were going?

Murray: We thought we were going to Japan initially. We knew that we were going to get to Korea, eventually, but we were going to go to Japan, and I think the original idea was we were going to there and . . . I don't really know except that I knew he [MacArthur] wanted Marines for the amphibious landing. Even then he had it in his mind. I guess they did know the division was going out, too, but that didn't affect our planning because we knew we were going out as a brigade. And that was that.

Frank: Who was the 3 of the brigade?

Murray: Joe Stewart was the 3.

Frank: Al Bowser was the 3 for the division.

Murray: Right. A classmate of mine was the 4. I wish I could remember names, but anyway, we knew we were going to Korea, but as my recollection is, we thought we were originally going to Japan, and then go on over to Korea. But in any case, we found out that we were going to Japan.

Now, as I say, we didn't have any particular problems with embarkation. Everything went, as far as I knew, pretty smoothly. At least nobody was coming to me and saying we

had a problem. I was around and about all the time checking on things. There were no serious problems. The first problem we had was just off San Clemente Island out here, one of the ships developed some problems, and we thought we were going to lose the ship. They later managed to fix it and came on along, as I remember, rejoined us just as we entered Pusan harbor. But we did some juggling. We moved some of the troops from the ship we thought was going to have to stay behind and put some extra people on the other ship, and then sailed uneventfully and finally got to Pusan.

**Frank:** How about the equipment? Now all the equipment that came back from China went up to Barstow. A lot of it was junk. There were crates filled with junk and everything else. When you mounted out, the equipment that you drew from Barstow, was it in pretty good shape?

**Murray:** To the best of my recollection it was, yes. To the best of my knowledge, yes.

**Frank:** All the wheeled stock and everything else. Your weapons . . .

**Murray:** Yes, we had no problem with it. The weapons were okay.



Frank: Did you draw new weapons or did you take what you had?

Murray: We took what we had, I'm sure. I don't remember any problems with weapons. We had pretty good weapons. We were using them regularly in all the exercises.

Frank: Where did the ammunition come from?

Murray: Some of it came from Fallbrook, here, and I think that some of it came from Crane, Nevada. I don't know whether Crane is in Nevada or not, but at any rate we got all the ammunition we rated, as I recall. I just don't remember any major problems. A lot of minor problems, to be sure, but I don't remember any major problems we had.

Frank: You had full support of the base, which Gen Twining had at the time.

Murray: Oh, absolutely. No, I guess Erskine still had the base; he had both the base and the division. Now he had as a deputy commander for the base Omar Pfeiffer, who probably was still there, though I don't recall now. And I think he was the base commander. There were no problems with anybody. Everybody cooperated to the fullest in getting us everything we needed.

Frank: I don't know that date that you left . . . it's not on what I have here.

Murray: Well, it had to be sometime in the middle of July, or the early part of July because we arrived, I believe, the 1st of August at Pusan.

Frank: You didn't even stop in Japan.

Murray: No, we didn't stop anywhere. Went right straight across.

Frank: I believe that the Army was then fighting for its life there at the bulge at the Naktong.

Murray: Well, not at the Naktong at that time. They were losing ground all over and gradually contracting back into the perimeter which included, at that time and by the time we got there, they held the Naktong. It wasn't until after we were there for a while that the North Koreans broke through on the Naktong. But I do recall in going across, each day, they had a map in the wardroom of the ship I was in, and each day they would plot from the news reports the lines the best they could, and it kept shrinking, shrinking.

We began to wonder if there was going to be anything left by the time we got there.

We did make an administrative landing at Pusan and immediately moved towards Masan. The anchor of the perimeter was near a town called Chindong-ni and we moved out in back of that town. We were there a day or so, then our first movement into combat was, we were ordered to attack towards a town named Sachon. The Army 5th RCT was to our north by several miles moving up a road to a town called Chinju, and we were to take Sachon and drive the North Koreans back. I never could figure out exactly why we were doing what we were doing, but anyhow that what we were ordered to do.

And we moved out along our road, and after an initial fight of getting out of the perimeter, we moved pretty well along this road for a day, I guess, when we ran into an ambush. Shouldn't have been ambushed, we should have discovered it, but didn't. The advance guard failed to spot these people and got hit. Fortunately, though, the bulk of the regiment didn't get involved initially. This was early in the evening, and we stopped that night. And the next day, had a bit of a fight, then they left and moved out, the North Koreans did, and we captured a large number of jeeps, and motorcycles; it was a motorized regiment of some sort that we had run into and run off. We continued to advance and were not very far from Sachon when we got . . . One afternoon, a helicopter came up to my CP and said that I was

wanted back in the brigade CP, so I flew back to the brigade CP where I got orders to hold where I was and that we were going to have to return to the perimeter because an Army artillery battalion in support of the 5th RCT had been cut off, surrounded, and wiped out.

Frank: The weather was terribly hot at this time.

Murray: Oh, it was miserably hot and humid. One time I figured I had about at least a third of my regiment lying at the side of the road with heat prostration.

Frank: And the hills in this area . . . even though you were down near the coastline, the terrain was pretty rugged, was it not?

Murray: It was very rugged, and I did not have any flank security out on the hills because had I tried to put flank security out on the hills, they'd never been able to keep up with us. We'd have gone at an absolute snail's pace, so I said, "Okay, we'll go down the road." The sides of the hills were far enough off, if we did get hit, we'd probably be able to react alright; which is exactly what happened. At one point, while we were on our way to Sachon, we got hit from the sides and didn't lose very many people, were able to react very quickly and were able to drive them off very

quickly. But I recall on one occasion as we were moving up that Joe Stewart came up and asked me where my security was on the flanks, and I said we don't have any. And he said, "My God, Ray, you're liable to get yourself wiped out," and I said, "Well, Joe, there's nothing I can do. I can't put people out there on these hills and have them . . . ." You couldn't put them out on the flank in the rice paddies, either. They couldn't keep up. The rice paddies went in every which direction. If you followed a rice paddy along, it was impossible. So, we just went up the middle, and it worked out, fortunately.

At any rate, I got my orders to withdraw and go back inside the perimeter to Masan, as it turned out. Then, by the time we were through talking and I had gotten my orders and everything, it was too dark for the helicopter to fly so I was going back up by jeep. It was about 10 miles up the road, and so I asked Gen Craig if I could borrow a couple of troopers to give me a little assistance in case I needed it, so he gave a jeep-load of reconnaissance troops. So two jeeps drove up that road blacked out, and I was remembering all the way in World War II--if you moved after dark, you got shot. Well, I had insisted in all of our training and everything our sentries were not to shoot at the first noise they heard or even the first people they saw. They either stopped them and had them identify themselves, or if it was a large group, sound the alarm and let them get in to where

we could get at them. Apparently it took, because all of a sudden, in the middle of the road was this Marine . . .

End Tape 3/II, Side A

Begin Tape 3/II, Side B

Frank: You were saying you gave him the password and he let you on through.

Murray: Yes, I had visions of getting shot at as we got back in my own perimeter, but we didn't, which pleased me very much because it showed me that the training had taken hold. So we then moved back to Masan, and I don't know if you want a narration of what went on out there. I mean, it's all in the history.

Frank: It is all in the history, but I think just broad impressions as you recall.

Murray: Okay. Our next mission of course was to move to Miryang where, for the first time since we first hit the beach, we all got to bathe in the Miryang River, and it was quite a sight to see a whole regiment of naked men in this river. Maggie Higgins arrived about the same time.

Frank: Did she become a pain in the neck?

**Murray:** No, Maggie was never a pain in the neck to anybody I know of, except maybe O. P. Smith thought she was a pain in the neck. She never bothered me in the slightest, then or later. She stayed out of our way. She was trying to get her story, and that was it. She asked no favors, of me, at any rate. I'll bring her into the story a couple of places later on.

But, when I was given my orders for the Naktong Battle, it was to drive the enemy back across the Naktong River, and it gave some objectives to capture. And I decided, particularly since I only had two companies per battalion, that to ensure that I had enough strength to last this thing out, I would attack in a column of battalions. Later, some people asked me why I didn't try flank the enemy. Well, the reason I didn't try to flank them was because there really wasn't a flank. They were on a long ridge line. To flank them, I would have had to send a battalion several miles down and around to try to flank them, and there were others beyond them. So, I didn't want to get the regiment too widely separated at any point, because, as I say, we lacked a fair amount of strength. So, I attacked in a column of battalions, and I had coordinated with the Army unit next to us, with the colonel of that Army unit, and said, "When I jump off, I want you to support my attack by fire initially, rather than jumping off simultaneously with it. You support by fire and

when we capture our first objective, we'll then support your attack by fire." I thought that gave each of us a little better chance of doing the job. Unfortunately, either the battalion that was on our left flank didn't know what support by fire meant or they totally ignored any orders they may have received, because when we jumped off, we got no support from them at all, and I don't know who to blame particularly for this. I don't think that it was anybody who just totally ignored what we were trying to do, but whatever the reason, we got no support from them, and we immediately ran into a hellfire coming from our flank in front of the Army unit. I didn't know this initially. I knew that we were receiving some heavy casualties, but I didn't know where it was coming from initially. Finally, when I did find out that it was from across in front of the Army, I sent word to this Army colonel then that I wished him to launch his attack, which he did. But by this time, it was pretty late and we'd had a lot of casualties.

Well, then, up on the ridge itself was the most heavily occupied of all the objectives that we had and this North Korean division, the 4th, as I remember--it was either the 4th or the 10th, I think it was the 4th--they fought as hard as anybody I'd ever seen fight, and they were determined that we weren't going to take that ridge. 2d Battalion had launched the attack, and I held it as long as I thought that they could do anything. Then I passed, I'm sure it was the



1st Battalion through the 2d Battalion, and they also had a real rough go of it. But they finally captured Obong-ni Ridge and were able to hold it. Then I passed the 3d Battalion through the 1st, and they then went on to clean up all the rest of the place. And it was an exciting sight to see the large numbers of enemy running, retreating across the hills, everybody shooting at them. That was the first Obong-ni.

Then we came back to Masan, licked our wounds, and re-equipped a bit, and then had to go back up again. The second time, the North Koreans had taken more ground than they did the first time. However, we did not know this initially. We were to pass through an Army outfit and launch the attack. We gave them a line of departure. This time I attacked with two battalions abreast, and one in reserve. It turned out that they had to fight to get to the line of departure but without too much difficulty, and got there and then took Obong-ni again without near the casualties we'd had the first time. The second time around was a much easier go than the first time.

Obong-ni was as far as we got then when we got orders, and this was on the 6th of September, we got orders that we were to be relieved at midnight that night by an Army unit, and an Army battalion relieved the whole regiment, and we thought, "Oh, they're gone; they're finished," but the Koreans didn't attack again.

At midnight that night we withdrew in a heavy, heavy rain, mud, miserable, but I was real proud that we were good enough that we could do this, where in World War II, I don't think anybody could ever have thought of doing something like that.

Frank: A passage of lines at night and a heavy downpour.

Murray: A heavy, heavy downpour. We got back to Pusan, where we then . . . Now, at this point, our third company arrived. We integrated that company into the battalions. We also were told that the Korean Marine Corps, which was one regiment at that time, was going to be attached to us for the landing and one of the battalions of the Korean Marine Corps had never been issued rifles. They had trained with sticks. So they were issued their rifles, and we took them out on the range and let them shoot some rounds--didn't try to qualify them or anything--just let them shoot some rounds. In the meantime, the battalions did a little training, while everybody else was busy making the final plans for the landing.

While we were still on Obong-ni the second time, representatives from the division had come over from Japan and on a map and an aerial photo, I showed them scheme of maneuver I wanted to use to make the landing, and they went back, and instead of me making the landing plan, the division

made the landing plan and included it in an annex to their order, which is just the opposite of the way you usually do it. We usually made the landing plan, gave it to the division, and they included it in their operation order. They made the plan, set up the waves, and everything, and this was the only way it could be done. Between the 6th and the 12th, we had to do all the planning. And we embarked on the 12th and sailed and landed on the 15th on Inchon, so I don't how we managed to get it done.

Frank: I was going to ask, did you wonder about the feasibility of the whole thing at the time?

Murray: I wondered who in their right mind would try to land somebody against a city, a pretty good-sized city, over a sea wall with 30-foot tides, having only six days of intensive planning to plan the operation.

Frank: No rehearsal or anything else.

Murray: No rehearsal, no nothing. It was simply that there were Marines who knew how to do this that did it. I did issue instructions on the ship on the three days we had moving around from Pusan around to Inchon that . . . In the small boats on the ship they put the ladders, and they had people play like they were putting the ladders up against the sea

wall and clamber up as best they could on these ladders to give them some idea of what they were going to have to do when they got on the beach.

Frank: Was Sam Jaskilka in one of the companies which joined you?

Murray: Yes. Oh, joined us?

Frank: Or was he with you all the time?

Murray: Ha! That's a good question. I think Sam was with me all the time because he was a captain then. Now that you mention it, I don't know.

Frank: Okay, the plans for the invasion had been made by Al Bowser in Japan. I guess that O. P. Smith had gotten involved then also. Had you known him from before?

Murray: Yes. O. P. had one of the battalions in Iceland, and before that at Camp Elliott.

Frank: So it wasn't a meeting of strangers.

Murray: Oh no. Although as I said, I had never met either one of the other regimental commanders before. I think that

was one of the most remarkable operations in the history of warfare, when you think that, the very short time we had to plan a fairly complicated operation and landing, I had made it even more complicated because I wanted to land with two battalions abreast, each battalion a column of companies, which meant that each wave was comprised of troops from two different ships. But, we did it.

Frank: Bob Taplett's battalion had Wolmi-do to take.

Murray: He had that to take, and that was exciting because to capture a little island off the coast where there's a causeway that connects it to the coast and sit there all day long, waiting for the rest of your troops to come in is not the most comfortable feeling in the world, I am sure. But that, plus the 1st Marines, who, I believe, had been gathered from posts and stations throughout the world really, I don't know whether they had a rehearsal or not.

Frank: The 7th Marines, part of which came through the canal from the Mediterranean . . .

Murray: Yes, it was coming from the Mediterranean, from gathering them from all over, and putting this whole thing together . . . of course, they didn't land with us, the 7th Marines landed later, a day or so later. But it's just

unbelievable that that landing was as successful as it was. Granted the opposition was not like a Tarawa or Saipan or Okinawa, or any of those places, but there was still opposition, and just the mechanics of carrying out the landing were difficult in the extreme. As it happened, everything went exactly according to plan . . . Our beach, we had no problem hitting the proper beach at all, because there was just one beach. There was that beach and no other. I understand the 1st Marines had some problems finding the right beach, but we didn't have any problem at all in that respect. To have these LSTs right with the later waves of the main landing and sit up there, it was amazing.

The only real problem we had in the actual landing, once we got ashore and were moving out, Hal Roise called me and said, "I can keep on going, would like to keep on going and get on the other side of the city before daylight," and I said, "Fine. Go ahead." So he did, and while he was doing this, the sailors on their LSTs were shooting their 20mm guns out in the city. They were receiving some fire and they were receiving some mortar fire. So they were just wildly firing these 20mms, some of which were hitting in Hal's battalion. I don't know that he had anybody killed, but he had a few casualties, several wounded.

Frank: The 20s can do a lot of damage.

Murray: Oh yes. So, it all went very smoothly and we moved out, and the next day moved right on out, captured our objectives, moved on towards Ascom City. We had a minor skirmish in Ascom, and on to Kimpo Airfield, where we had some problems, too. There was, between Ascom City and Kimpo Airfield, there was a beautiful ambush set and carried out. The 2d Battalion was along a road which was really a cul de sac. The road made a turn into this long corridor with hills on each side and 2d Battalion occupied the hills on one side of this road, and at the far end of the cul de sac, Hal had set up I think it was five or six tanks, which were supporting him. We got word that the North Koreans were coming in early the next morning with many, many tanks and many, many people. That was standard; they couldn't give us a number so they'd give us many, many. So, just about daylight the next morning, five or six North Korean tanks came in, entered this road, this cul de sac, with about 200 North Korean soldiers behind them. Hal had directed that there be no firing except when the order was given. They let these people get their nose well into this thing when they sprung the trap, and in minutes, all the tanks and all the troops were gone--dead. It was the damndest sight you ever saw. North Koreans like a carpet on the road, and Gen MacArthur chose this moment to arrive on the scene. So that was one highlight of that operation.

Frank: What did he have to say?

Murray: He just said it was a marvelous thing, and then he turned to somebody behind him and said, "Get this young man's name. I'm going to give him a Silver Star." That's how I got my other Silver Star.

Frank: Wasn't this about the time that there was this conflict about the 3.5 bazooka?

Murray: The word that we had was that the Army said that the 2.36 rocket launcher would not stop a tank. I've since discovered that that's not true. In reading other histories, I found that the Army was stopping tanks with a 2.36; but the word was they claimed you couldn't stop them, and our people were stopping them with 2.36 rockets. They'd let the tank get right up to them, almost, and then let it go.

After Kimpo we crossed the Han. Our plan was to have Kenny Houghton and his reconnaissance people cross during the night, about 10:00 at night, and search out the opposite side. We didn't think anybody was over there, but wanted him to go and search it out, make sure there was no one there. Then we were going to cross administratively . . .

Frank: In boats?



Murray: No, we were going to cross in amtracs, but we weren't organized for a landing party. We were just going to cross at this particular spot. So, Kenny and his boys got on the other side, took a look around, didn't find anybody, and gave the signal for the rest of his crew to come across. They were crossing in amtracs, and they got about half way across when the whole hillside erupted. There was a whole battalion of North Koreans on this hill on the other side of the river. So we called . . . this happened at about 10:00 at night.

We called off the administrative landing, and between then and the following morning at about 6:30, we organized--the 3d Battalion was the one I designated to do it--organized a regular landing operation to cross the river; assault landing. When they started to plan this thing, there must have been about 50 war correspondents, just milling around and asking questions. Finally, I got up and said, "Gentlemen, I would appreciate it very much if you would all leave and let us do our planning. We've got very little time to do this, and we cannot do it with all of you around." Every one of them walked out, not a word, and let us do out planning.

I never had any trouble with correspondents. I had, on the ship, the night before we landed at Inchon, I had all the correspondents on our ship, including Maggie, in for a briefing, and I briefed them on the whole landing, told them exactly how we were going to do it. There wasn't anything then they could do to harm us. I figured that the more they

knew about it, the less they would trouble us with questions. So, we gave them a complete briefing, answered all their questions, and the only thing was that Maggie asked me that night. She said, "Would you object if I went ashore in one of the boats?" And I said, "I don't object if you want to go ashore in the assault, as long as it's in the last wave, I don't care if you go in." So she went to see one of the captains--I don't know which one it was--who had one of the assault companies and said that Col Murray said she could go ashore with him, and she'd like to go in about the fourth or fifth wave. He said, "It's alright with me if it's alright with the colonel." So she went in the fifth wave; real gutsy. But again, she didn't bother anybody, she just did her business.

**Frank:** What about the fight for Seoul?

**Murray:** We came in from the north, we crossed the Han north of the city. The 1st Marines came into Yongdongpo, and they had quite a battle for Yongdongpo. Then they were to cross the river right at the city of Seoul, and when we got into the outskirts, and we had been fighting for a couple of days for a ridge in front of us that was real tough. We'd get people on it, and they'd be driven off; put the South Koreans out there, and they were driven off. At about this time, then, we got an order that the 1st and 5th would make a

coordinated attack against the city and capture it. And there wasn't a whole lot of details about the coordination, so I called up Al Bowser and asked, "What about this coordination here?" We were still quite aways apart and I'd been sending out patrols to try to make contact with the 1st Marines, and everyone of them got driven back, and I assume that he did the same thing. And he said, "Well, get a helicopter and fly over to his CP and the two of you can get together on how you are going to do this."

So I did that. Got a helicopter and flew down, and this is the first time I laid eyes on Chesty Puller. The first question he asked me was how many casualties did we have. And I said, "Well, I've got quite a few," and as soon as I convinced him that I had quite a few casualties, why he figured, okay, you can join the group then. He determined how good a fighter you were by how many casualties you had.

So, we agreed on the way we were going to do this, and I flew back to my CP, and it worked out. We finally made contact with them, went through the city. I tried to use artillery as little as possible. I didn't see that just firing a lot of artillery willy-nilly into the place was going to do us a great deal of good unless I knew there was somebody there. So, what I did, instead of firing artillery preparation in the city, this I left it up to the FOs and the frontline commanders to decide when they wanted artillery and where they wanted it. As a result, they used very little

artillery in my sector. On the other hand, Chesty used a lot of artillery and you could almost see a boundary line between the two of . . . the smoke coming up from his sector and very little smoke coming up from mine. I'm not saying that I was right and he was wrong by any manner of means. I'm just saying that this was two different philosophies and we did use artillery, but didn't use very much of it. We made out alright because it was mainly house-to-house fighting until we got to the other side of the city.

Frank: Now, you hadn't trained for house-to-house fighting, had you?

Murray: We had done some training, but not much. Out here in Pendleton there is a little combat village, combat town. We had several exercises out there in the course of our training. So that everyone had been exposed to the theory but no one had any real practice in it. That house-to-house fighting was, I am sure, not like anything of the house-to-house fighting that went on in Europe in World War II. It bore some resemblance to it, but it wasn't the well-organized, interlacing defenses throughout the city that there was over in Europe.

Frank: The Marine Corps had only a slight experience in that, and that would have been Okinawa. Guam and Saipan . . .

**Murray:** They had road barricades all through the city, which took some doing to knock down. The tanks did a lot of that work, knocking those out. There wasn't a whole lot of organized defenses within the buildings themselves. There were people in the buildings, and our people had to get into the buildings and root them out. But it wasn't a really well-organized defensive system. We went through the city much faster than they ever did, I am sure, in the European war.

**Frank:** How long did it take for you to get Seoul secured? Not very long.

**Murray:** Not very long. It depends upon from when you started. I think that from the time we crossed the river, it took us almost a week. I know Almond was raising hell that we weren't going faster, because MacArthur wanted to recapture Seoul on the 25th, I think was the date, which would have been the third month since they started the war. So he wanted it recaptured on the anniversary and turn it back over to Syngman Rhee on the anniversary. We didn't make that, although I think he claims we did, but we didn't make it on the 25th. We were in the city on the 25th, but I'm sure we didn't have it fully captured on that date. It wasn't long after that, the 26th or the 27th. But we had a

difficult time on the outskirts of the city. There were two hills we were trying to take in the 5th Marines that were very difficult to take, and we suffered quite a number of casualties in trying to take them. There we used a helluva lot of artillery fire. Once we got past those two hills, we didn't have all that much difficulty in the city itself. That moved along pretty well.

Now, the 1st Marines, I know, had a lot of trouble in Yongdongpo, but once they got on the other side of the river, I don't think that they had that much trouble, either. We got through the city very well. So, in taking Seoul, if you count it from the day we started from the outskirts, it didn't take us very long to take it. But if you count it from the time we crossed the river and he [Puller] got into Yongdongpo trying to get into the city, it took us, I'm sure, about a week.

**Frank:** Tell me about the ceremonies. Did you get up to the town hall?

**Murray:** I was in on the ceremony, I mean I was there when MacArthur turned the capitol back over to Syngman Rhee. I remember because I hadn't used a whole lot of artillery and destroyed a lot of things, the Blue House--which is their White House--the blue slate-roof house, which is the president's own home, was not damaged at all, and they were

very, very grateful for that and thanked me profusely for not having destroyed that house. Most of the rest of the city was pretty well beat up, but we didn't touch that house.

Frank: There were broad boulevards and streets, and so on.

Murray: Oh, there were some beautiful broad boulevards in Seoul, yes. Keyes Beech was at this ceremony, and he said he was going to write an article--and I'm sure he did, I never saw it--he was going to write a scathing article about MacArthur turning the city back over and not giving the Marines much credit for anything. And strangely enough, I think MacArthur thought a great deal of the Marines. I think he thought that they were pretty damned good troops.

Frank: By this time he did.

Murray: Well, he'd asked for Marines to come over and make the landing. He apparently didn't trust the Army to do it. I personally think MacArthur was a brilliant man, but like Fiorello LaGuardia, when he made a mistake, it was a beaut. And everybody thought he'd made a big mistake by going into Inchon, and it turned out it was brilliant. I thought that we should never have gone beyond the 38th Parallel. It was ridiculous to think that we could go up north with impunity and just say, "Alright, here's North Korea. Now we turn this

over to you and everything's fine and dandy." I was convinced we couldn't do it, but here's this brilliant man who said we could, and it turned out we couldn't, after all.

Frank: I think that we've gotten to a point now where ought to quit and start fresh on Chosin, if that's alright with you. But I wanted to ask you if you were wondering where the Chinese were and whether they were coming in?

Murray: Not at Seoul, because I assumed at Seoul that we were going to stop, that this was it. We'd retaken that portion of Korea they'd invaded, and we were going to say now, in effect, "Don't try this again or you're going to get beat again," and give South Korea back to the South Koreans. I had no idea we were going to go into North Korea. I didn't. I don't know what anybody else knew, but I didn't. Joe Alsop had lunch with me at Inchon, right after Inchon, and he was talking about how now we ought to go north and wind this thing up, and I told him then, "I don't think we ought to go north." He asked me why I thought so, and I said, "What are we going to do if we do go north? Get up to the Yalu River and sit there for the rest of our lives? Because they're surely not going to let us get by just going up to the Yalu and then getting out and saying 'here it is'; that the North Koreans would go back up into Manchuria if we got that far and just come back when we got through. At that time I wasn't



even thinking about the Chinese coming into it. Now, when we did get our orders, in fact, to go around to Wonsan and start north, I don't think I even wondered about the Chinese at that point, but it wasn't long after that I began to wonder about the Chinese, particularly when the 7th Marines began to run into some of them as they began to move up the road.

**Frank:** How did you feel personally? Here you were, a lieutenant colonel fighting a regiment; generally the Marine Corps has colonels fighting a regiment. You're the junior of the regimental commanders, and you'd seen more fighting than either the 1st or the 7th Marines so far. What were your personal feelings at this point?

**Murray:** About my relationship with the regimental commanders?

**Frank:** No, about your own performance and the performance of the regiment.

**Murray:** Oh! I knew the regiment had performed magnificently, and I still feel there has never been a regiment in the Marine Corps that was better than the 5th Marines was at that time. Brute had trained that regiment, and he had done a magnificent job of training it. I had been a part of it only in the sense that I was his exec and was carrying out his orders. I think that I did an acceptable job of

commanding the regiment while . . . though he trained it, I did an acceptable job of commanding it. I wasn't thinking at that time, "Gee, I'm doing a great job here" or "I wonder if I'm doing a great job?" I was just doing the job. But in retrospect, I think I did as well as anybody else might have done in commanding the regiment, or as any colonel might have done.

**Frank:** Did Gen Krulak ever tell you later on, sounding any regrets that he hadn't had the regiment to fight it?

**Murray:** He never mentioned a word.

**Frank:** Of course, he was G-3 for FMFPac, and he'd come out with Gen Shepherd.

**Murray:** Right. He never said a word about, "Gee, I wish I had not been transferred; I wish I had this regiment." Of course I know he would have loved to had it, but no, he never said it or never indicated in any way that he was sorry I had it instead of him, no way.

I have a tremendous respect for Brute Krulak's abilities. I know he's rubbed a lot of people the wrong way, but he's always treated me fairly, and I know that he is an extremely able person, even though, at the same time, as I said before, it was the hardest job I think I ever had to be his exec.

He's an extremely demanding person and for his his exec, at least for me, it was very difficult because he demands to know what's going on all the time, and it was very difficult for me to determine what should I not bother to tell him, just not bother him with it, or what should I tell him. I finally wound up telling him everything I knew all the time, because that's the way he wanted it. He wanted to know what was going on everywhere all the time. In that respect, it was very difficult to work for him. But, as I say, he always treated me very fairly. He gave me very fine fitness reports, and I'm a person who respects him. I don't know whether Brute would have made a good Commandant or not. As far as his intellect is concerned, he would have made a great one, I think. Whether he would have been good in other respects, I just don't know.

Frank: Well, I think that this is a good place to stop.

End Tape 3/II, Side B

End Session II

Session III; 11 February, 1986

Begin Tape 1/III, Side A

Murray  
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Frank: When we were talking about the time you had 2/6. Of course, out of the experiences of 2/6, Leon Uris, the author, who had been a Marine and I guess had been in the comm section, wrote Battle Cry and "High Pockets" Huxley was a thinly disguised characterization of you. Did you recognize yourself in the book at all?

Murray: I didn't recognize myself. I recognized everyone else. I assume that was their impression of me, but it was very easy to recognize everyone else in the book.

Frank: And you remembered Uris?

Murray: Oh, yes, very well. In 1946, I believe it was, I was heading out to--that's when I was going to China but was held off in Honolulu for the Garrison Forces, Pacific job--I was awaiting transportation on the Boxer to Hawaii. I was in San Francisco and had stopped to take some pictures back over the harbor when I noticed a man in civilian clothes standing a little distance away, and he looked very familiar. So I took my pictures, and when I was through, I walked over to him and I said, "Don't I know you?" And he said, "Yes sir. My name is Leon Uris and I was in your communications

platoon." Well, as soon as he mentioned his name, I remembered him. So we chatted for a while, and I asked him what he was doing and he said, "Well, I'm actually working as a cub reporter on a newspaper here in San Francisco at the moment, but what I'm really doing is writing a book about our battalion." And I thought that was interesting, and we chatted a while about this. Then I went back to where my family was and told my wife who he was and what he was doing, and I said that "I've heard this story before. Everybody is going to write a book. So, I doubt very seriously if he gets a book out." About 1952, I received a book in the mail, it was Battle Cry and inscribed on the inside to me from Leon Uris. I read it and was fascinated by it because it was the story of the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, correct in every detail as to the chronology of the battalion, and every character in the book recognizable, though some poetic license had been taken, of course. I told my wife back then that "This is a great book, but I don't think he's going to sell but about 500 copies because only the people who were in the battalion will be interested in the thing." Of course, history proved that I was wrong about that. Then I told my wife, "I guess that's it. He lived that book and I doubt if he writes another book, because you have to live the book to write it." So, as a literary critic, I've struck out 100 percent on Leon Uris. But I've kept in touch with him through the years, and he visited us when we were in Washington, and

my wife and I stopped off and stayed in house on one occasion when we were coming across country. In Aspen. He wasn't there, but he insisted that we stop by and spend a day or two in his home, which we did, which was very lovely.

Frank: They went on to make a good movie, but I thought that the choice of Van Heflin as a battalion commander, he just didn't do it. It was a very weak . . .

Murray: I wasn't very much impressed myself, but I've talked to many people who've seen the picture, and they thought he was great. So there again, I'm not a very good movie critic either probably.

Frank: Well, I guess that I'm not. Over the years . . . I've known you for I guess quite a few years and known of you for quite a few years, and you apparently have been able to engender a great deal of affection from people with whom you've served and who have served under you. Leon Uris is a case in point. Have you run into many old timers who have served with you in one campaign or served in Korea, who have retained that respect and affection?

Murray: I've never really understood the chemistry, but apparently I did inspire a certain amount of respect and affection in most of the people I've commanded through my

career. While still on active duty, I never failed, when I made a cross-country trip on a change of station to run into somebody somewhere--either pumping gas in a gas station or walking into a restaurant where I was having a bite to eat or someplace along the trip that someone didn't come up to me and say, "Aren't you Col Murray?" or even "Aren't you Lt Murray?" "I served under you at such and such a place," and it's always been a big thrill to have them remember me and say that about me. And at the Chosin Few reunion here recently in San Diego, I had many men I hadn't seen in 35 years come up and say that they were pleased and proud to have served in my command. I can't explain it, but that is a fact, yes.

**Frank:** I guess a retired general hasn't much . . . You have got your medals, you have got your promotions. You retire and go on to something else, but what is most important are the memories of the campaigns you had and the people with whom you served.

**Murray:** That's correct. I think all retired generals have that same respect from the people who served with them. They might at the time have been upset a time or two with their commanders, but in retrospect they seem to all have a considerable amount of respect. It was interesting to me, the other day I had a call from a man who had served with me

in Korea who wasn't at the reunion. A corpsman, with whom he had served with in Korea, had somehow found out where he lived and stopped by to see him. He lives up in San Jose, and they got to talking about Korea, and he just decided he was going to call me up and rehash a few old times, and he did. And he told me something that was interesting to me. He said, "I don't know whether you know what we used to call you or not," and I said, "No, but I imagine that I've been called lots of things, and it really doesn't bother me much what they called me." "Well," he said, "I don't know whether to tell you or not, but by God, I'm going to tell you. We used to call you 'Mad as Hell' Murray." Where that came from, I don't know, but apparently somebody started it and it caught on. I don't suppose many commanders know what their troops call them, maybe sometimes they do.

**Frank:** No, I don't think so. Old Lester Dessez, whom you may or may not have known, and we were talking during an interview session about nicknames, and he said, "Well, I'm going to make up a list," and he did.

We were talking about Chosin Few and I think that that's where we are in this interview session.

**Murray:** Okay. Those are additional maps you may or may not be interested in. These have very few marks on them because I had them in a map case under glassine.



Frank: There's the official history.

Murray: Yes, I brought this along. It just occurred to me this morning that I get so hazy on dates that maybe I can quickly refer to this if a question of a date comes up.

Frank: We wound up yesterday talking about the recapture of Seoul, the ceremony, and everything that surrounded it, and it wasn't but shortly after that the division was brought together to be ferried around to Wonsan to go up to the border, I guess. That was the order?

Murray: Well, I don't think that we had any orders at this particular time about going to the border, but that was the assumption, that if we went up there, that would be where we would go, head for the border, yes.

Frank: And you indicated earlier that you thought it was a frivolous move.

Murray: Well, I thought we should not go beyond the 38th Parallel unless we were prepared to go into a considerable more of a war than we seemed to be prepared to go into at that time. And, in fact, I felt for a long time that any war in Asia would be a very difficult thing. I had seen what

happened to the Japanese in China, where they fought for many years and still never did conquer China. As a matter of fact, all they controlled was the major cities, as far as I know. Around Peking I know that was true. So, it didn't seem like a very good place to get into a war.

Frank: They never controlled the countryside.

Murray: They never did control the countryside around Peking.

Frank: I think that it has been a standing dictum, or whatever you want to call it, on the part of thinking military men that the United States should never get involved in a major war on the Asian mainland.

Murray: I believe that is true, however, I don't believe MacArthur felt that . . . It seems to me that he must not have felt that he'd ever get himself involved in a major war. He must have felt that he had the North Koreans beaten and they'd just quit.

Before we crossed the Han on our way into Seoul, Gen MacArthur came up to my OP and we were looking over the battlefield, and I've forgotten how it came up, but I made the remark that I was a little concerned about what was going to happen to all these North Koreans that we had cut off, because there seemed to be no plan at that point to either

defeat or capture, destroy or capture them, and MacArthur made the statement, "Don't worry, young man, they'll melt into the hills." And I thought that's fine. They'll melt into the hills but they'll just go back somewhere else, get rearmed, and fight us again. I could never understand why we didn't try to destroy the North Korean Army that we had cut off and blocked in South Korea, but we didn't. And I felt particularly that way when I found out we were going around to Wonsan without any more trying to destroy this bunch of people in the South. I grant, it would have been a difficult thing. They threw their arms away, they got into civilian clothes, and it was extremely difficult to tell them from South Koreans.

Frank: Nothing was yet thought about the Chinese Communists?

Murray: At this point, I don't know about Headquarters, CinCFE; I don't even know about division headquarters. I know that I wasn't thinking anything about Chinese Communists coming into the war at this point, while we were at Inchon, because there was no reason to think about them coming in. At least, I didn't think about them.

Frank: Well, you know, when the division went around and in effect started capturing Chinese, Willoughby refused to . . .

**Murray:** That's right, but this was later on. My concern was not with the Chinese so much but with . . . I thought, if we do go all the way to the Yalu, and then withdraw, what's to prevent . . . The South Koreans didn't, in my opinion, didn't have an army that was either large enough or capable enough to hold on to what they had. So what was to prevent the North Koreans from coming right back in and taking over again? They could get rearmed, I knew that they could get rearmed in China. It just didn't make sense to me to try to isolate this little place and say we can recapture North Korea, turn it over to the South Koreans, and go home.

**Frank:** Have you always been a good student of the terrain?

**Murray:** I really don't know how to answer that. I could read a map, and I can understand adequately the advantages and disadvantages of the terrain as I'm fighting over it. I've never thought too much in strategic terms, however.

**Frank:** A lot of people have, a lot of people are good students of the terrain. They go beyond making a hasty terrain profile. They can just visualize . . . and the reason I ask you this is as you proceeded north and as you looked at your map, were you aware of the more difficult terrain you were getting into?

**Murray:** Oh, absolutely.

**Frank:** And perhaps we ought to go back to the beginning of the movement from Wonsan up before I get involved too much into hypothetical questions. But if you'll answer that one about recognizing the difficulty of the terrain that you were getting into.

**Murray:** Oh, of course. All of Korea is very difficult terrain, and it became more difficult the further north you went. There were very few roads. You were limited for your MSR to single roads in most cases, which are very vulnerable. Another thing that concerned me, not so much from, well I can say not so much from a fear of being personally wiped out, because that is always a possibility. You are always likely to get it anywhere. But from a standpoint of making sense, I never could see why we were going up in isolation, dividing ourselves into smaller and smaller elements, with wide, wide distances in very difficult terrain. Not only was the terrain difficult, but Americans, unfortunately, are not all that great in that difficult terrain. As the Chinese proved later, they can go almost anywhere; they can stand almost any kind of hardship which Americans don't like to do, to be perfectly frank.

Frank: Were you aware at this time of any of the problems Gen Smith was having with Gen Almond?

Murray: Yes, I was. I was aware through talking with friends of mine on division staff--Al Bowser, Buzz Winecoff, and even in Seoul when we got an order that the enemy was withdrawing and we were to initiate the pursuit immediately. At that moment, my 3d Battalion--Taplett's battalion--was engaged in a very hard fight for a portion of Seoul and nobody was withdrawing or retreating or doing anything else, and I called division--and I don't remember who I talked to, whether it was Al Bowser or not, probably was--and said "I can't pursue anybody. I'm having a helluva fight to take what I'm supposed to take right now." Gen Smith came on the line and said in effect, "I understand your problem, but I have received a direct order to launch a pursuit, and I have to issue that direct order to launch a pursuit." I said, "Aye, aye, sir," and continued to do just what we were doing--fighting to try to take what we were supposed to take. Now they did break the next day or so. So I knew at this time that for sure there were some problems between division and corps.

I wondered at Inchon, if we were going to go north, why we didn't go up the corridor between Wonsan and Seoul. There was a big corridor right across the country. Why we wanted to get back aboard ship and go down around the bottom of the

peninsula and come around and make another landing at Wonsan, when we're already on the ground. It's not very broad, the peninsula is not very wide at that point. I don't know what division headquarters thought about this, but it was my opinion at the time that the reason we were doing this was because Almond wanted to make another amphibious landing. He was going to make an amphibious landing come hell or high water. That may not have been the truth at all. This is what I felt.

Of course, when we got around to Wonsan, then we couldn't make our landing. The harbor was mined. We all called it Operation Yo-Yo. We went back and forth off the course there for several days, and I remember when we did make the landing, the 3d Wing was already on the ground and Bob Hope had had his crew there the day before we made our landing. But then, when we started north, I was concerned all the time about this stretching ourselves out with a supply base at Hamhung and then we were going to be God-knows-where up in these mountains and it was getting more wintery all the time.

**Frank:** What kind of cold weather clothing did you have?

**Murray:** We had parkas and these mukluk boots, not the kind that they later had, the thermal boots, we didn't have those. We had the old mukluk boots, the kind you snapped over, not very much different from the ones we had in Iceland, galoshes.

However, they did do the job pretty well. We had cases of frostbite as we went up. As time went on, we had more cases of frostbite, but not an inordinate number and the frostbite cases we had were from carelessness more than the type of equipment. People didn't take care of themselves properly. But for the most part we had good discipline in this respect, but there were a few kids that didn't take care of themselves and did get frostbite.

Later on, the further up we got, the more difficult it became to take care of themselves, particularly after the Chinese hit us, you were spending all your time fighting, walking.

**Frank:** The terrain up there was much more difficult, higher.

**Murray:** It was higher, the hills seemed to be a lot steeper than they were in the south, too. And in some cases, on the road between, I guess it was just below Hagaru-ri a ways, there was a power plant built right into the side of the mountain, and the road ran over a part of the roof of this thing. Very easy to blow it out, which was done, done twice as a matter of fact by the Chinese later on. There were several places along that road where it was very easy to interdict the road and here we were, going further and further north, further away from our supplies, more and more difficult to plan anything--particularly in the way of



supplies. Olin Beall had the Motor Transport Battalion and as we reached the position where we were close enough to the 7th Marines, where I could get with Litzenberg, Olin Beall and Litzenberg and I would sit down and decide what we would need in the way of supplies, how we were going to do it. And Olin Beall would do it. He was a terrific Marine, too; another one of the oldtime characters, but did an outstanding job up there. Of course, the 7th Marines were the first ones to run into the Chinese, and they kept sending back reports that they were running into the Chinese. It was reported to X Corps and to ComFE, and Willoughby, I guess, just insisted that there were no Chinese and MacArthur agreed with him, I suppose, because they didn't seem to be concerned.

We did not have . . . well, of course we weren't in the lead--the 7th Marines was in the lead so as we moved up, we didn't have any great amount of trouble with them. In fact I don't think we did any fighting on the way up until we got up to the Hagaru area. I don't recall that we did any fighting at all, then we, the 5th Marines, did not run into any Chinese until we were actually hit by the big mob of them.

**Frank:** I guess that it was Bill Barber's outfit that was way up front that really got hit and surrounded, Company F, 2/7.

**Murray:** Well, they were actually behind us at Yudam-ni and Hagaru-ri. They had been left on that hill to guard the

pass. You went up a fairly high hill and down the other side into Yudam-ni, which was down in the valley. There were higher hills, then, above the road. That's where F Company was left to guard that road and where they were surrounded and a terrible fight until we could get back to them.

**Frank:** Ray Davis' battalion . . .

**Murray:** Yes, Ray Davis' battalion cut across the mountains . . .

**Frank:** Maintaining flank security really must have been difficult.

**Murray:** Well, on the road, there wasn't any flank security, really. You just . . . But then, on the other hand, on our left flank as we went up, for the most part, if I recall correctly, the road was along a rather very deep, almost like a chasm, and then up on the other side, only very long range, pretty long range fire could have come from the other side. There wasn't too much to worry about over there. Now, on the right side, of course, the mountain went on up, and we could have been attacked from that side. It was always a worry, but there wasn't much you could do about it. I don't know what Litzenberg did about his flank security, but on that road I didn't have much of it in the 5th Marines. The

same as it had been in the south. You go down the road and hope for the best.

Frank: As the temperature went down, and conditions grew heavier, the amount of leadership needed grew greater. Is that a valid statement?

Murray: I think that that's a valid statement. Yes.

Frank: I think that there have been studies about the efficiency of the fighting man; for each degree of temperature you go down, the efficiency decreases. Aside from fighting the regiment, mothering the regiment must have been . . .

Murray: I didn't think of it too much in those terms, but I did try to visit the units constantly. Not always up in the front lines, of course, but although on several occasions I did get up in the front lines or very near the front lines inadvertently a couple of times. But I tried to be seen and we had a great thing going for us. Nothing succeeds like success. We'd been highly successful in the south, and we had a lot of this carry over as we went up north. There wasn't anybody any better than we were, that was the general feeling in the regiment.

Frank: You had Hal Roise; you had Bob Taplett; and you had  
. . .

Murray: George Newton. Well, George went up part of the way with us. George left before we went all the way up. Anyway, George Newton was relieved by a pretty good leader. But I did have very good battalion commanders, we had an excellent staff. The main thing as I say is that we had been successful in the south, and all that was needed was to keep this going.

Frank: You were still a lieutenant colonel.

Murray: Yes, at this point I was. In fact, interestingly enough, every command I've had in combat, at least I started out one rank junior than I should have. I had the battalion as a major and the regiment as a lieutenant colonel, and I had the Marine Corps Base at Pendleton as a brigadier general. That's not combat, but . . . So I was frequently a rank junior to what the T/O called for. But, I always felt about that, though I wanted very badly to have my eagles--in fact, the last time that Gen Smith pinned an award, I don't remember what it was, one of the awards he pinned on me, I said to him, "I'd give this and all my other awards back to you if you could pin eagles on me," and he actually said, "Well I'm sorry. That's something I can't do for you." I wanted so badly to have my eagles. I don't know why,

particularly, but I just did. But, now this commanding a regiment as a lieutenant colonel in combat occurred for seven or eight months before I did get my promotion. So, what with that promotion made me any better qualified to command the regiment than I had been seven months before?

**Frank:** Nothing really except recognition of your worth is an important thing . . .

**Murray:** You see, when Gen Cates told Gen Erskine that he was trying to get him a colonel to command the regiment, I've often wondered about this, why it's so important that you have this specific rank for this specific job. The rank generally signifies experience, but when it was so close, I didn't see that it made any difference as far as capability of commanding is concerned. I wanted it for my personal reasons. I just wanted to be a colonel.

**Frank:** The fact that you were the junior regimental commander made no difference because everybody was fully committed.

**Murray:** That's right, it made no difference, and the other two regimental commanders, in each of their cases, it didn't seem to make any difference to them either that I was only a lieutenant colonel . . . but circumstances just worked out

that way. If had been just a little bit earlier, Brute Krulak would have undoubtedly taken the regiment out.

Frank: You get up to Hagaru-ri . . .

Murray: Yes, and our first assignment was to go to the east side of the reservoir and here again I wondered, why are they splitting us up like this. We go up the east side of the reservoir, and we were to seize some town 20 miles up the road and then some more up the road, and then go up to the Yalu, the regiment, all by itself up there. The 7th Marines were . . . I guess their orders were to move on out of Hagaru-ri up another road and go on up to the Yalu, and the 1st Marines, even at this point, were split up. Part of them at Koto-ri, part of them at Hagaru-ri. There was one battalion at Hagaru-ri, and I think the other two battalions were at Koto-ri, and I believe that as we moved on up, the 1st Marines were going to move units up and hold places along the road to protect the MSR. Well, here's an MSR that winds back, I don't know how many miles back to Hamhung, up a little, almost single-lane road--well, really, it was a single-lane road--in the dead of winter or at the beginning of the worst part of the winter. It was going to get worse the further along you went. Isolated. It was unbelievable. The more you think about it, the more unreal it becomes. Well, anyhow, those were the orders and that's what we

started to do. Then somewhere around the 25th of November, we were relieved by an Army unit . . .

Frank: Task Force Faith?

Murray: Faith had the unit. I don't think it was a full regiment, and he took over my CP, and started out from there. I don't think they ever moved out.

Frank: They did start moving and the reservoir was frozen, and they got their asses waxed and he was killed.

Murray: I know he was killed.

Frank: And Olin Beall got the Navy Cross for going out and rescuing the survivors.

Murray: Speaking of Olin Beall again, I had known him earlier and he used to tell stories that we all agreed that he would have had to lived a thousand years to have done all the things he claimed to have done. But when people began checking up on some of the things that he said he had done, by God, he had done them. He was a braggart who apparently had done a great many of the things he claimed to have done. And here was another one he could have told his grandchildren, "And I

went out on the ice up there and I rescued a bunch of Army people and so on," by God, that's exactly what he did.

We moved then from the east side down through Hagaru and over the pass into Yudam-ni between the 25th and the 27, I think it was.

**Frank:** The 27th is the day that's given officially when the Chinese hit.

**Murray:** That period right in there, I think it was the 28th when they hit. I know that we must have gotten it early, but I know that we got a Thanksgiving dinner. Came in on the strip at Hagaru-ri, and we were able to serve at least a large number of the regiment turkey, mashed potatoes, and all sorts of good things. But we got around to Yudamni and I coordinated then with Litzenberg in the immediate defense of the area, while in preparation for us to move out. If he had troops on some hills, then I put troops then on some other hills, so that we had a good perimeter defense of the area.

**Frank:** What was Litzenberg like?

**Murray:** The only contact, intimate contact, I had with him was right there at Yudam-ni. I had met him outside of Seoul. He came up to my CP one day, the first time I ever laid eyes on him, and we chatted a little bit. I never saw him again



to my knowledge until we got up to Yudam-ni. Oh, I must have seen him at division headquarters at conferences, but I don't remember him. I didn't see him again until we got up there. I knew he had a reputation of being sort of a fussbudget, a stickler, and I did note a couple of places where he stopped for any length of time, he'd put up a guard tent. I guess he gave non-judicial punishment or something and put people in there. I don't know this for a fact, but I know I saw tents with a sentry around them and I assumed that this was what it was for. But, I would say from what I know of him that he seemed to be a sort of a studious type of person, knew his business, and as far as I could tell from talking with people in the 7th Marines, it seemed to me that everyone respected him and his abilities. But I really didn't know him long enough to be able to say that he was absolutely this or absolutely that.

**Frank:** We haven't talked about the 11th Marines. Who had the 11th Marines at this time? And I'm trying to remember if the artillery went up with you.

**Murray:** Yes, they did. Carl Youngdale had it. We had artillery. But I thought Youngdale was the artillery officer at division headquarters, but I guess he was double-hatted. I guess that was it. The CO of the 11th Marines was the

division artillery officer. Here, in the book, Brewer had the 11th Marines.

Frank: For what period?

Murray: In the task organization for the advance to the reservoir, Brewer had the 11th Marines.

End Tape 1/III, Side A

Begin Tape 1/III, Side B

Frank: We were talking about who had the artillery and Jim Brewer had it, then Carl Youngdale relieved him, and your battalion commander, George Newton, was relieved by John Stephen. Why was he relieved?

Murray: We could nominate a certain number of people in certain ranks to go home upon regular rotation . . .

Frank: Already?

Murray: Yes, well, this was November, we'd been there since August, and George Newton had been a prisoner of war during World War II. He was a very competent battalion commander, but he was, I felt, almost killing himself trying to be a good battalion commander. He seemed to stay awake most of

the time and he was trying to prove himself that he could do the job. At any rate, I felt, since I had the opportunity to send somebody home, he was a good candidate to get some rest and go home. Certainly not because he had not commanded his battalion well or had done any specific thing at all. I just felt it was a real good time for him to get some rest as long as he had the opportunity to do it.

**Frank:** How did most of the people prove out under this . . . This was perhaps some of the most rugged conditions under which Marines ever fought.

**Murray:** No one in my regiment had to be relieved for incompetence. If there was anyone in any of the battalions that was not carrying their weight, I never knew about it. Certainly everybody on the regimental staff and all the battalion commanders not only carried their weight, but did outstanding jobs.

**Frank:** It called for leadership at the highest degree.

**Murray:** There is no question about that and the training that we had gone through the year before we went to Korea, I think in very large measure, was one of the very main reasons why we were as successful as we were. The units had a feeling of unity. They'd been together so long, they all knew each

other very well, and then, strangely enough, when we began receiving replacements, very early in the game, of course, they seemed to fit right in. In this respect the reserves we got, I was determined to consider them Marines, not to worry whether they were regular or reserve, and told everybody in the regiment that that's the way it was to be. And as far as I could see, you couldn't tell any difference. They fit right in, and down on the squad level, of course, I couldn't see what was happening, but I never had a report from anyone, "Oh God, these reserves can't do the job." It was quite the opposite. They were all high in their praise of the reserves that came in and I think that this, in turn, was the result of the policies that had developed since World War II in the training of reserves, where their training was far superior to what it had been prior to World War II. We didn't get a single foul ball that I am aware of. There was some real fine covering up if anybody was dissatisfied with anyone down the line. And this was true through all ranks.

Now in World War II, I had to relieve two or three very senior staff NCOs early in the game. They had spent their life in the barracks and they were top flight staff NCOs in the barracks, but when it came to combat, they hadn't had to think fast or solve problems in a hurry for so long that they just sort of fell apart.

**Frank:** Out of condition, too?

**Murray:** Partly that, I guess. Of course, when we went into combat, it was in a terrible hot, humid area, but of course that was true when we went into combat in Korea in the early days. But we didn't have to relieve anybody for incompetence. They knew their job and they did it.

**Frank:** I guess it was about the 1st of December that Gen Smith made the decision to fight in the other direction.

**Murray:** I guess it was the 1st of December that we began to pull out. Now, in the couple or three days before the 1st of December, we had sat in this perimeter, and this is when Litzenberg and I got together and decided that we were going to coordinate. Many people have asked why he didn't just assume command up there. I can't answer that question definitively. After all, there was a division headquarters over the hill from us, and we were still part of that division, so we had a common head. But in any case, we decided to operate very closely together, and we did. We intermeshed, we planned together what we were going to do to come out, and everything worked fine. He never did say, "I'm going to take charge here. I'm the senior regimental commander." It worked very well the way it worked.

Frank: The fighting began to get more rugged as you turned around to start leaving.

Murray: I don't know that it was any more rugged. It was pretty rugged from the time they began to hit us. The night that they hit us, of course, they hit my E Company of the 2d Battalion, which was leading out in the attack in the direction we were supposed to be going. They got hit. Then Taplett's 3d Battalion got hit. He was at the head of the valley, and they had a terrible fight most of the night. In fact, they got into Taplett's CP and killed the executive officer and finally were driven off. Then, for the next couple of days, they would attack more or less continuously, although it didn't seem to be coordinated. They'd hit us in one spot, and then they'd hit us in another spot. I remember one day, sitting in my CP in the valley in Yudam-ni and looking up the hill and watching. The first Chinese would come over the crest and shoot down at the Marines, then the Marines would drive them off, go back up, stand up at the crest and shoot down the other side. This went on for some time. The top of the hill changed hands three or four times. It wasn't a major engagement. It was a engagement of a small unit that was fighting over a little piece of ground.

Then when we started back on the 1st, Taplett was to lead out. Now, he did put some flank security out up in the hills, and he moved down the road and had several good stiff fights

going down the road. Then, I don't remember which night, it was probably the first night that Litz called me over and said that he was going to send Davis up over the hill, Ray Davis. He went up over the hill to relieve Barber's company, F/2/7, while Taplett was going down the road. Well, finally Taplett ran into or reached where the 7th Marines were, too, where F Company was, also, and then they moved down into Yudam-ni. My 2d Battalion, Hal Roise's battalion, was the rear guard. We folded units in, I've forgotten now in which order, but depending on where they were in the hills, they were folded into the column. We had all of our motor transport. We didn't have a tank up there. A tank had tried to get over and I don't believe it ever got there, and if it did, there was only one tank. I can't remember for sure. But in any case, we had all the motor transport and the engines ran most of the time. We moved very slowly. In fact, it took us at least two days to get back. We got back to Hagaru-ri . . .

We left the 1st, but one of the nights we were on the road, I was in my jeep in the column and the column stopped. It was pitch black and snowing, snowing pretty hard. We waited and waited and waited and I tried to contact somebody at the head of the column by radio, but I couldn't contact anybody. So finally, I said, "I'm going on up there to see what's going on." So I walked up the road, and I walked up three trucks beyond where my jeep was and there were no more

trucks ahead of us. I got up on the running board of this truck and the driver was sound asleep and so was the man riding beside him, both sound asleep. So I shook him and woke him up and I never saw a more frightened person in all my life. I told him, "Let's get going down this road." So, we had no idea of how far ahead the rest of the column was, but it wasn't too long before we caught up with the rest of the trucks. They weren't moving that fast. It was a real thrill, and there were Chinese in the hills, and if they had known, we would have had a marvellous time. But I kept on going and finally moved on into Hagaru-ri. And fighting all the way. There was some fighting with the rear guard, but not as much as I would have expected. I would have thought that once we started to move, they really would have hit us.

**Frank:** How far behind you was Litz' outfit?

**Murray:** We were intermixed along the road. His CP group . . . I can't remember whether it was ahead of mine or behind mine. 3/5 was leading the way out, but that didn't mean that the 5th Marines was going to be together going out because we, as I say, we were intermixed, depending on where units were located. We had them kind of mixed up, because the 7th Marines had been there, and they held some ground. When we came in, Litz asked me to put some troops on other ground, which was intermingled with his regiment, which was



fine and worked fine, because had we gone ahead and moved out the way we originally planned, we simply would have peeled off and gone in our direction. So, going back, we did the same thing. We peeled off the way units were situated in the hills and gone down in the road and it was a mixture, 5th and 7th Marines going back to Hagaru-ri.

I felt at the time and have felt since that if the Chinese had really been smart, there was no way we would have gotten out of there. They employed their units piecemeal. They had a tremendous disadvantage in that they had no resupply. They had what they brought with them across the Yalu apparently. There was no resupply, and as they used a unit up against us, then another unit came in, and I assume that this was the reason they didn't hit us with everything they had at once. They were sort of using it as resupply, so to speak, their other units. Furthermore, although they did hit us in the middle of our columns several times, they didn't hit with enough strength to really break us up and divide us into little tiny pieces. So we were very fortunate in that respect. They had enough troops up there to really manhandle us if they'd done it right, but they didn't do it right.

Frank: What was it like to hear the bugles blowing and the flares going off . . .

Murray: Eerie. Scarey. The first night they hit, I heard all these bugles and all the hell raising. They were screaming and shouting and then I heard the firing start, and as a matter of fact about this time, a machine gun, which was just firing wildly down into the valley, happened to--it was almost pitch black; you could see a little bit but it was pretty dark--and I know they didn't see my CP tent, but it happened to be aimed right at it and it was putting bullets right through the top of my tent. So Joe Stewart and I, who were in the same tent--this wasn't the CP tent itself, it was a personal tent--we crawled out from under the thing and grabbed the telephone and moved out a ways and then decided, and we were right out on open frozen ground, figured we couldn't stay there. So I called to the 3 section, and said we were going to move over a little way cross the road where I knew there was a little mound I had seen earlier over there and to get wireman to put a wire over there. So Joe and I ran across the road, nobody shot at us, I guess they knew who we were. We got over behind this little hump and they ran a telephone line over. My radioman was with me, so we operated from there then. But it was a real surprise to be hit by that much, to be hit that hard. And then, after a bit, we recovered from the surprise and kept hoping for the best. I kept maintaining contact with Taplett, how things were going, and the 1st Battalion had just moved, it was the last unit to move from the east side over to the west side

and it had just gotten into the perimeter late that evening. So I had Stephens move the battalion up into an assembly area behind the 3d Battalion in case they broke through, we'd have another battalion there to take them on, but they never did break through. Then we moved back into the perimeter at Hagaru-ri. There wasn't a whole lot heavy that went on then for about a day or so.

Frank: A lot of planes coming in and out?

Murray: There were planes coming in and out evacuating the wounded, quite a few managed to clear and get out. And we weren't hit by very much. Then, when we were ordered to move out, and I've forgotten which day it was, December the 6th or thereabouts, I guess, we were ordered to move out of Hagaru-ri down to Koto-ri, and Litz was to lead out, the 5th Marines the rear guard. So by this time, the division CP was at Hagaru, in addition to all our transport--that is the 5th and the 7th transport--we now had all of the division transport that was up that far. The rear echelon, of course, was still down at Hamhung, and a lot of transport down there. We had a helluva lot of motor transport, and we had tanks.

So we just started out with 7th Marines leading out and the first truck getting into the column and this long, long line of trucks down the road with troops marching along the road at the side of the trucks and not a whole lot . . .

Well, I guess the 7th Marines did have some flank security out, but by the time we moved down . . . We had flank security but it wasn't very far out because the going was just too rough. It was snow, just too difficult to move except along the road. That night, after the 7th Marines had moved out in the morning . . . Oh, before the 7th Marines moved out, I had been ordered to take a little hill that covered the road, and I had Hal Roise do that job. When he got over there, he found about 200 Chinese in a mass, and he captured the whole crowd of them. So we had about 200 prisoners we had to take care of, too, to try to bring down. A lot of them were in such bad shape that we left them there, left some medical supplies, and left them there for the Chinese to come along and take care of them after we left. Here I saw Chinese prisoners walking with feet that looked like huge globs. They were frostbitten and the frostbite blisters just looked like a huge glob. They weren't complaining. They would sit there. I know that if they lived, their legs would have had to be amputated. The most stoic people you ever saw in your life. I really felt sorry for them.

That night, the first night after the 7th Marines had moved out, we had a big attack against two portions of our line. Up on the hill where the division headquarters had been, and down the road from the east side of the reservoir. And it went on all night. I had my CP at the end of the

bridge which led out of Hagaru-ri, and I had a tank moved up so this tank was between where all the firing was coming from. We never got hit. Then I sent a couple of tanks up along the road to be behind our defensive line on the road leading in from the east side and had them use their machine guns, just firing down the road as these people came.

Frank: How many tanks did you have?

Murray: We had a platoon of tanks attached to us, and they just fired all night long. In fact, they burned out barrels of machine guns and replaced them. The troopers used . . . We had some 3.6 rockets with phosphorous shells. They fired those phosphorous shells into them. The next morning, this was after dawn, there were two or three Chinese that had gotten pretty close in that started to run back and everybody in the whole area started firing at them with everything that they had, and first one, then the next one, and finally the last one got hit and dropped. Then a group of my staff and I went out to the edge of the perimeter and almost as far as we could see there were dead Chinese on both sides of the road, in the road, just littered the place. We walked out about 500 yards and down the road 'til I suddenly realized that we were getting pretty far away from home, and we'd better go back. There were still dead Chinese out there; almost a regiment of Chinese lying out there dead. The tanks

had gotten a lot of them; the troops that were along the line had gotten a lot of them. There were a lot of them burned to death. This white phosphorus got into the cotton batting of the uniforms they had, and literally just burned them up. It was a horrible sight, and yet, in a sense, it was a pleasant sight for us because . . . The same thing was true over on the other side up on the hill, just windrows of dead Chinese out there.

Frank: Were they wearing white uniforms?

Murray: No, it was sort of a mustard colored uniform . . .

Frank: So you could see them against the snow.

Murray: Yes, we could see them. That was the last heavy attack we had at Hagaru-ri. And finally this line slowly moved out and we finally got into line and moved out with them. Then on the road, between Hagaru and Koto-ri, we in the 5th Marines were not hit along the road. The 7th Marines ahead of us the night before had been hit. In fact, for a while, the column had been split, but Litz counterattacked and drove them back off. So as we moved along, we saw off on the flank, a pretty large group of Chinese, right out in the open, moving down across this white snow. We called in an air strike and several aircraft came in and started shooting

at these people, strafing them, and it was like a school of fish that something's after. They dart one way and another. These Chinese would dart one way and back, and all of them running, trying to get back over the hill, and these planes, one after another coming in and firing at them, and finally a few did get over the top, but there were hardly any of them left by the time . . . and we were sitting here watching this on the road.

We got down to Koto-ri without any further serious difficulty and joined up with the 1st Marines. So now the whole division is back together again. Again, as we left Koto-ri, the 5th Marines was the rear guard, and we were the last out of Koto-ri.

Frank: Who were the very last of the 5th Marines out of there?

Murray: Probably the 2d Battalion. I know that was who was at the tail end at Hagaru-ri, and I think I just left them there, and I believe they were the last ones out. Then going down from Koto-ri down to Hamhung, we didn't have any serious fighting at any rate. In fact, we didn't have any fighting. As we got closer to Hamhung, there was a lot of fighting during the night coming from the hill off our flank, but we found out that was the Puerto Rican outfit. I don't know whether they had Chinese attacking them, I don't think so.

I don't know what they were firing at, but they weren't firing in our direction in any case, so it didn't bother us. And we managed to get ourselves back to Hamhung and lick our wounds a bit. Then I thought, well, when we were ordered to evacuate back aboard ship and move out--by this time I was angry enough at the whole thing--I thought we should have stayed there at Hamhung, which I think we could have done. It wouldn't have done any good, though, but I just hated to feel that they had just driven us out of there.

Frank: Of course, the whole port was blown.

Murray: Yes, as we left, we blew the whole thing. Jim Treadway claimed to me one time to be the last man off the beach. He said he and his amtrac were the last off the beach. Whether that's true or not, I don't know.

Frank: You went aboard ships at this time and went down to Masan to the Bean Patch.

Murray: Masan, right, the Bean Patch, where we'd started some six weeks before, and this was to me a rather crushing feeling. Here, we'd fought all this hard fight all the way into Inchon and Seoul, and had gone all the way up to the reservoir, only to find ourselves back in the same spot where we'd been at the very beginning. It was very depressing



and times were very depressing, and I . . . morale was shot. They were making plans for the evacuation of Korea. The Marines were to have been the rear guard to protect everybody else getting out of Korea, and then pull out. Gen Walker was killed in a jeep accident, and Gen Ridgway took over. Within a week or so I was called to a meeting at division headquarters, and Gen Ridgway got up and gave a firebrand speech. He put his fist up on the map, and he said, "I don't know of any reason why we can't hold here and here and here," and I thought to myself, it sounds like another Almond here, all the grandiose things we're going to do and everything, and I was pretty cynical about the whole thing. I changed my tune very, very quickly, and I think that it was within about two weeks. He had the whole Eighth Army turned around and going in the other direction and believing that they could lick anybody, and I finally concluded that I have never, ever met a leader like Gen Ridgway. At any time, unannounced, he'd drop in in a helicopter. Several times he dropped in on my CP, "How are things going?" and just gave everybody a tremendous lift.

**Frank:** He is by all accounts one of the better combat leaders to have emerged from the Korean War.

**Murray:** I've never seen anybody like him. I've not seen a lot of the others, great leaders. I never saw Patton, I never

saw Bradley, or any of those, but he's the greatest I've ever seen. He took a thoroughly beaten army and turned it around in an extremely short period of time by sheer force of personality.

Frank: Now, did you leave before O. P. Smith left the division?

Murray: No.

Frank: You were there when Jerry Thomas took over?

Murray: No, I don't think so. I was there until March, 1951.

Frank: So O. P. Smith still had the division.

Murray: I think so, yes, he did.

Frank: You hadn't started up through the center yet.

Murray: We did. We started up . . . We went near Pohang  
. . .

Frank: Did you get involved with the Pohang guerrilla hunt?

Murray: Yes.

Frank: What was that like? Who were the guerrillas?

Murray: Well, there was alleged--not only alleged--there was a North Korean unit, they said a division (we ran across elements of it; we never ran across the whole division), operating behind the lines and just tearing things up in general and so we were assigned very large sectors to operate in and we were to hunt down and eliminate this unit that was behind the lines. I developed a patrolling plan for the whole area, divided it up amongst the units, had the units placed at fairly widely separated areas and each then, from their own base, patrolled. We ran into several battles. We didn't eliminate the unit, we were never able to kill that many of them. We always killed a few of them when we ran into them, but they managed to kill a few of our people, too. Ultimately, they either disappeared or we got orders to move out, one of the two, because we finally secured that operation, but it gave a lot of good training, I thought, particularly to replacements.

Frank: I think the 1st Marines . . .

Murray: The 1st Marines had a great big area, too, to patrol, and so did the 7th. They divided a great big hunk of South Korea amongst the three of us, and we patrolled in this area.

I gave all kinds of people a chance, including my driver, and people in the headquarters that wanted to go on a patrol, let them all go out on a patrol and get a little excitement out of the thing. But it was kind of a rest and training period that was very useful.

**Frank:** Now, you left the division in March of '51. Home on leave. Commanded Headquarters Battalion at Henderson Hall, which was strictly a holding . . . Then you went to National War College.

**Murray:** Right. Platt, Wesley Platt had Headquarters Battalion, and he was real anxious to get to Korea. So they had me take command of the battalion on an interim basis, pending National War College, so he could get out to Korea, and then I participated in his funeral before I ever left the job.

**Frank:** That's right. He was a World War II POW from Wake and he got killed in Korea.

**Murray:** Yes--and he was a classmate of mine--right after he got out there, within three months, because I had command of H&S Battalion for three months and, as I say, I participated in his funeral at Arlington before I left that job. Very sad thing.

Frank: Did he have a battalion out there?

Murray: I don't think so. I think he was on a staff, I'm not certain though. I understand he was riding in a jeep when a shell hit, and a piece of it went into his lung and killed him.

My next tour of duty at the National War College was one of the more pleasant experiences of my career. It was a very interesting experience. I don't know how they run it now, but at that time the day started off with a lecture by some one noted in his field of diplomacy, military, geography, geopolitics, etc., etc., and following the lecture we had discussion groups, divided up into discussion groups and discussed what the lecturer talked about. Then in the afternoons, we were able to work on individual projects they gave us.

Frank: Did you make one of the major trips?

Murray: Yes, I made the trip to Europe, one of the European trips. We went to Paris, Rome, Naples, Athens, Trieste, a place in Austria--not Vienna--Salzburg. That night they split us into two parts. One part stayed in Salzburg to be billeted; the other half of us went to Berchestgarten and

spent the night in Berchestgarten, which was interesting.  
And then back to Munich and on to home.

Frank: Did you have to write a paper?

Murray: Not on the trip, no. When we got back, my paper was on the Arab League. It was very interesting. The title of my paper was "The Rise and Fall of the Arab League."

Frank: You predicted their fall.

Murray: Well, there never was a whole lot of rise, so there wasn't much of a fall. I discovered then, as far as I could see, the Arabs will never get along. They all fight each other, all the time. The only thing that holds them together at all is Israel. If it weren't for Israel, there wouldn't be any Arab League or any kind of cooperation amongst them.

Frank: That was a good year away from the Marine Corps.

Murray: A very good year. Relaxing and informative.

Frank: You next commanded the Basic School.

Murray: Right. This was a disappointment in this respect: when I had gone to Basic School, there were, as I said

earlier, a maximum of 100 of us at a time, and the CO of Basic School got to know very intimately every officer in the school. There was a close feeling of camaraderie. We were treated like officers. I had always looked forward to commanding Basic School; it was one of my ambitions in the Marine Corps. When I finally was given that opportunity, the school varied in size--well, at that time, the CO of Basic School not only had the Basic School school itself, but had all of the pre-Basic courses too under his command and control. I relieved Dave Shoup. NROTC, ROTC, PLC, the OCSs: everything came under the CO of Basic School. There were never fewer than a couple of thousand candidates and officers there, and in the summertime it would go up to 6,000. I never got to know any of the students personally--oh, a few, there were a few juniors I had known before they ever got there, most of them. It was a very hurry-up, short school, three months, as I remember, was the length of the Basic School at that time. We were spewing out officers to go to Korea. While it was rewarding in the sense that I, as a person who had just come back from Korea, was, I think, what you would call a good role model for them--they heard about the 5th Marines in Korea and all, and I think this was good--but it about the only influence I could have over them. I was out in the field all the time, visiting classes, and so on, but I just felt that I didn't have the kind of influence I would like to have had and which LtCol Turnage had had on our class.

Furthermore, these poor kids were going to school at all hours of day and night. Everytime I tried to reduce the schedule somewhat, more things came down that we were supposed to do; things that happened in Korea. They'd say, "Well, we've got to get an hour" or "we've got to get two hours or three hours of this in the Basic School." It wound up that it was almost impossible, the curriculum that they were trying to absorb. They were living in quonset huts. It wasn't the kind of Basic School I wanted to command all my life.

**Frank:** Did you have much of a problem with reluctant dragons in there?

**Murray:** Not too much. There were a few. But for the most part they appeared to be pretty eager young men ready to go. I was shocked on several occasions when they'd bring in some of the essays these students would write in their classes. This is the first time that college graduates of that era and I guess up until now, many of them don't know how to spell, don't know how to express themselves . . .

End Tape 1/III, Side B

Begin Tape 2/III, Side A



**Murray:** Regarding the so-called reluctant dragons you mentioned, I think later on in the 60s this was true. I'm sure there were a lot of reluctant lieutenants, but they didn't so indicate in Basic School to the extent that we thought we had to kick them out. There was no one who said, "I'm not going to carry out these orders" at Basic School. Now maybe a little later on, I'm a little surprised to hear that later on they did have some problems. Now, when we spoke off tape was this the Korean War or the Vietnamese War we were talking about?

**Frank:** Vietnamese War.

**Murray:** Vietnamese War, yes, I know. But, no, during the time I had Basic School, we didn't have that kind of a problem. There wasn't that much of an antiwar feeling in the states for the Korean War as there was, of course, later on in Vietnam.

But one of the big problems I had at Basic School was how to treat these officers as officers rather than as boots. There seemed to have developed an idea somewhere along the line, maybe it was because of the speed with which they had to be trained, maybe it was because of the general press of circumstances at the time, but there had grown up an idea, apparently, that this was a boot camp as much as it was an officer's school. I think that a great many of the young

lieutenants were treating, I mean the instructors, were treating the newly commissioned officers like boots, and I had an awful time trying to convince people that this is not the way you should do it.

One day, I looked out on the parade ground and saw this young lieutenant walking around with a great, big wooden rifle, replica rifle, about 8 feet long. He was marching around out there in front of everybody. I went out and asked, "What in the world is going on here? Why is this man doing this?" The young lieutenant said, "Well, he made a mistake with his rifle so I'm making him march with this to make him realize that he has to do it right." So I told him to stop it right now and said, "I want to see you later on." I called him in and talked to him and said that in my opinion that was not the way to train young officers.

But it was difficult. These people felt somehow you should treat them like boots, and they were feeling that way pretty much anyhow. They were having to give up quarters allowance and live mobbed in these quonset huts. So it wasn't the best of times, but they seemed to do a real good job when they got out to Korea.

Frank: Were your instructors, for the most part Korean veterans?

Murray: For the most part, yes.

Frank: Which may have influenced their way of thinking, not to haze them, but to . . .

Murray: Yes, could be, but I didn't think it was good. I didn't think it was the way to raise the young lieutenant. I hadn't been raised that way and I didn't think it was good for them to be raised that way.

Frank: Did you at this time--you had it for 25 months--consider Basic School as a stepping stone to a star?

Murray: I don't think that I thought of it in those terms. I never thought of any particular job moving on to a star. I don't know. I suppose that everyone comes into the Marine Corps--I've been told this--their objective should be, "I'm going to be the Commandant." I never had that objective. My sole objective in the Marine Corps was to do the best job I could do in whatever job I was given and whatever happened would happen. So, it never occurred to me to think of this, of the Basic School in terms, "Boy, this is another mark now towards getting a star later on."

Frank: You are one of those unique individuals in the Marine Corps, of which we have a number, who have been either an east coast or a west coast Marine. You have been a west

coast Marine for most of your career, and after you left Basic School you took over another leadership instructional job as CO of the Infantry Training Regiment.

**Murray:** I was a west coast Marine. Yes, Gen Selden, John Selden, had the base. He told me, when I came out there, that he had asked for me to come out there. He wanted me as his chief of staff of the base.

**Frank:** Where had you known Gen Selden before?

**Murray:** I had never known Gen Selden before, so I presume . . . I don't know why he decided he wanted me to come out as his chief of staff. This is what he told me. But Ran Victory was his chief of staff, and Ran Victory had been selected but not yet promoted to brigadier general. So he told me that in the interim, "I'm going to send you out to command the 1st Infantry Training Regiment." It was out at Camp Pulgas, and so I went out there and ran that for five months.

**Frank:** Your ITR course was the first stop for the boots before they went into the FMF.

**Murray:** This is the advance training course for recruits for training in their MOS specialties, and it was a very well

set up organization and very effective organization in training the new recruits in their MOS specialty. At that time, Camp Matthews was still in operation, so they had finished their rifle training before they came up here. Later on, of course, Edson was built and the X range was built and they were brought up here, but they were still under control of the recruit depot even while they were up here for their rifle marksmanship. So the ITR was strictly the advanced training. I enjoyed that period of time. We had good instructors; it was well run; there were no problems with it, and I was able to spend most of my time out in the field observing what was going on.

Frank: You are now going up to become chief of staff, but I want to go back to the time when Gen Erskine was both base and division commander. He had some problems with the city of Oceanside, and I think you kind of alluded to it, but we passed it over. The school system . . .

Murray: Yes. The base had had the base school for I don't know how many years. It had been here, under the Title something-or-other which authorized the base to run the program.

Frank: The teachers were government employees . . .

**Murray:** That's right. They were Civil Service employees, as a matter of fact, and this law which governed this stated that when a (among other things)--I think I'm pretty sure I'm right on this--that when a local school system could accommodate these students of a military base, then the students should go to that school and not run a school on the military base itself. This particular year, which was about '48-'50, plans had gone forward to run the school for the coming school year, and the base had coordinated with the local school authorities and the county school authorities on text books and whatnot. So everything seemed to be all set up, when almost at the last moment the local school authorities--and I don't think it was Oceanside, I think it was beyond Oceanside--the local authorities decided they could take the children and that we shouldn't have this school on the base. Gen Erskine was obviously terribly upset about this, and there were some pretty harsh words said back and forth between the base and the Oceanside School officials. The people on the base were up in arms because they wanted their children to go to the base school rather than the school in town. Gen Erskine did not put the city out of bounds, but there was sort of an unofficial city out of bounds, just the people on the base said, "We're not going into town and spend any money if this is the way they're going to act." There was quite a lot of hard feeling for a while which eventually smoothed out. But at any rate, we did send our

kids to school in town. Later on, there was a school established on the base, but under the control of the California school system. There are three or four now, I guess, but all under the local control.

Frank: What was the situation then when you took over as chief of staff of the base? Of course, within the seven years since you had been there, it had expanded--a larger organization--and you had the division aboard.

Murray: That's right. The division was here. Well, the base did the same thing it had always done. It provided the facilities for the division. Really, its only reason for being is to provide all the necessary facilities for FMF troops that are stationed here and other tenant organizations. Gen Selden was in command very briefly, and then Gen Good, Frank Good, relieved him. So, really I was chief of staff for Frank Good for the rest of the time I was chief of staff here.

There were some rocky times with Oceanside and some good times with Oceanside. We had some minor arguments about things, most of which didn't really amount to too much. Part of it was personal between the general and the editor-publisher of the newspaper: Tom Braden, who now is one of the people on "Crossfire" on CNN. The Blade-Tribune had run some editorials that were very critical of the G-4 on the

base. I remember that much but I can't remember what the argument was about, but the G-4, according to the Blade-Tribune, wasn't very cooperative, and this set Gen Good off and there was a big fight. At this time, a fellow named Elm Glazer in town, who is sort of a Mr. Oceanside, has been for years--he's been a leader in Oceanside for many years--came out to the base to see me and see Gen Good, too, but he talked to me about what can we do to smooth things out. He set up what he called a Military Affairs Committee, and from that time on, we met periodically once in town and once out here--I mean alternately in town and out here--in which we talked over things of mutual concern to the city and the base. And we really didn't have any serious problems with the city. I worked very closely with the city manager, a fellow named Frank Lilly, who was most cooperative. Any time any potential problems looked like they would rise, he and I would get together and talk it over and solve most of them.

One I remember was the toilets in Sterling Housing. There wasn't enough pressure to flush the toilets properly and so I got hold of Frank, and he said that he thought he could fix that up. So he somehow managed to acquire a pump that was installed and gave some extra boost to the pressure for Sterling Housing and solved that problem. Now, there are times in the past when maybe the solution would have been to raise hell back and forth and there would have been a big



fight about it and so on, but with Frank Lilly, no problem. We'd get together and solve this. Things went very smoothly during the time I was chief of staff. I got to know quite a few people in town very well, and we were always on a very friendly basis.

There were no major problems on the base that I recall. Gen Twining had the division and on occasion he demanded things we thought were unreasonable in which there was a little discussion back and forth between he and Gen Good, but other than that, we didn't have any serious problems in providing the division with what they needed.

One thing I recall. Gen Twining sent over a study that he had made of areas on the base that he felt we should cancel leases, and this was a considerable number of old-time leases the farmers had ever since the base was bought. Gen Good agreed in part with it and said, "Alright, if that's what they want, we'll try to get it through," but Headquarters vetoed it. We never did cancel any leases.

**Frank:** One of the problems which was a constant thorn in the side to anyone who had command of the base was the matter of riparian rights and the Santa Margarita river between the town of Fallbrook and the base. Of course, you had this guy, "Ace" Bowen, who was the expert until he retired and went to work for the city of Fallbrook.

**Murray:** This really wasn't so much between the base command and Fallbrook as it was between the federal government, really, and Fallbrook. There was a federal lawyer back in Washington that was running the thing from the government standpoint. Ace was the local expert that was trying to resolve problems by having people come to agreements. The Indians, for example, would have rights, too, to this water, and had never been considered by anybody before, and Ace was trying to see that everything got tied up. He was the liaison between the local situation and the people back in Washington that were fighting the thing. I believe that it was the Justice Department that was involved with this. I don't believe it was the Department of the Navy that was involved. I think it was the Justice Department from which this lawyer came that was handling the thing. It was really the guy that representing the government interest in court. So the base itself really didn't enter into this.

**Frank:** I'd heard that because of this problem over riparian rights and the fact that Fallbrook had won its case, the base would have been deprived of water, and because this thing was so constantly in litigation, that over the years the Quartermasters General of the Marine Corps limited the amount of money that would go into military construction on the base, and that is the reason you'll find as many wooden buildings that have been up for as long as they have been.

Murray: I don't think it was the Quartermaster General. I think it was Mr. Vinson on the Armed Services Committee, who said, "I'll see that no money is ever appropriated out there until they can resolve these water rights." I think that that's what it was; I don't think it was the Quartermaster General that was preventing it. We kept putting in for buildings, but they wouldn't get approved because the water rights thing hadn't been settled.

The base never ran short of water. We had the underground basins that managed to keep sufficiently full so we had water all the time. Plus, there was . . . during the war, there had been an extra barrel from the aqueduct put in here where we could have gotten water from the Colorado River, and I think there for a while we were getting water from the Colorado River through the connection with the big aqueduct that comes down.

Frank: After 30 months then you have got another 12 months remaining on the base with the division. Division inspector for four months; assistant to the ADC; chief of staff for two months; you were the G-3.

Murray: When I first went to the division, Dave Shoup had it, and so he made me the Inspector General for four months. Then he brought me in as chief of staff, and just about that time

he was transferred from the division to go out and take, I believe the name of it was, BLUE STAR, a big exercise out in the Philippines. He was relieved by Ed Snedeker, and Ed wanted another classmate of mine to be his chief of staff. So he was transferred in here and he became chief of staff, and then I became the G-3 and was G-3 for that period of time then.

Frank: How was working with Gen Shoup?

Murray: I always enjoyed working for him. Dave was a guy that, if he liked you, you got along fine. If he didn't like you, you had problems. For some reason or other, he liked me, so I got along with him fine. I first knew him when I was a second lieutenant and he was a captain way back. Of course, all through World War II, when he was with the division, we were in the same division. I found working for him very easy, but I didn't work for him in this capacity but for just a very short time. He was transferred, and Gen Snedeker came along.

Frank: Gen Snedeker had to be a pleasant person to work with.

Murray: He was a very pleasant person to work with. Then later on Dick Weede became the chief of staff. So I worked under Dick Weede also as the 3.

Frank: Then in July '58 you go out to Camp Lejeune, I guess it's about your only tour on the east coast, I mean at Camp Lejeune.

Murray: I'd been at Camp Lejeune a short time with that brigade that was organized for a few months, but this was my first real tour of duty out there. Jim Riseley had the base, and he wanted me to come out and be his chief of staff. I'd been one of Jim Riseley's battalion commanders in World War II, so I was his chief of staff then for a year. Jim was both an easy and a difficult man to work for. He told me when he came there, when we got together there, he was going to let me run the base and he was going just going to oversee things.

But, every once in a while he'd get an idea he wanted done, like building a fishing pier, and I thought that was not a very good idea so I dragged my feet and told the staff to drag their feet about getting the plans ready. And one day Gen Riseley called me into his office and said, "Where are those plans I told you to get for the fishing pier?" and I said, "Well, they're not quite ready yet, general. They're still working on them." He banged his fist on his desk and said, "Goddammit, I told you I wanted those plans and I want them. Now get them." I said, "Yes sir," and went out and told the boys let's get with it. So we got with it and got

the plans together; very expensive, which later got washed away, which we were sure it would be. It was one of those things. He thought it was a great idea. We didn't think it was a great idea, but we tried to sabotage it, but weren't able to. As it turned out, we were right, but who knows? Under other circumstances, the damned thing might have stayed there forever.

**Frank:** I guess in '59 you were promoted to BG and went out to Okinawa. Who was division commander out there then?

**Murray:** Bob Luckey. Bob was a great guy to work for; an amazing person. He didn't seem to do any work at all, yet he knew everything that was going on all the time. I've never yet been able to figure out exactly how he managed to know so much about what was going on without appearing to work very hard at it. I enjoyed very much working for him. During that year, we trained on the island. We didn't have any amphibious training. Towards the end of my tour, there was going to be a brigade exercise in Korea, and I was designated the brigade commander and in fact made a trip to Korea on a preplanning trip . . .

**Frank:** May to June of '60, 7th Provisional Marine Brigade.

Murray: Right. As I said, we were going to make a landing in the Pohang area in Korea, and just about the time we were really getting into the planning of this thing, I got word that my wife was very seriously ill. Brute had the recruit depot back here, and he sent me a message recommending that I get emergency leave and come home, and so I did. While I was back here, she died. In the meantime, Ben Robertshaw was named my replacement on the brigade exercise, and carried out the exercise. I was home for a month on emergency leave, and after my wife's funeral and everything was taken care of, I went back to Okinawa for about three more months.

Gen Shoup was Commandant then, and he asked me where I'd like to go. I told him it didn't make any difference. "I'd like to go somewhere where there's stewards," because I wanted to get my children back together. I'd split them up amongst my family for the time that I went back to Okinawa, but I knew that it couldn't work this way forever. So I wanted to get them all back together. I wanted to raise them as a family anyway. So I was then ordered back here to Camp Pendleton and initially was assistant base commander to Alan Shapley. Then, in that capacity spent, most of my time out in the field, observing the training and making any comments I might have had. Gen Shapley gave me a free hand to do whatever I wanted to do. Then he was assigned as CG, FMFPac and I assumed command of the base. At the time I assumed command, Gen Shoup had told Gen Shapley not to let me move

into the Ranch House, but in his own inimitable way, he didn't say why. He just said, "Don't let Murray move in." So I was living in the 17 area at the time, up in the general officers' quarters. So, fine, I didn't move into the quarters and stayed up there in the 17 area. Later on, when I met my present wife, who lived in Vista, I met her at a pre-Marine Corps Birthday Ball party that a local organization holds every year and about six months later after we met, we were married.

Frank: Had she been married before?

Murray: She had been married before, and she was a widow. She had no children. She acquired the five children, four of whom were still living at home. The twins were six years old when we were married. So she took on quite a chore, never having been around the military very much, other than living near this base, never having participated in the social activities of anybody on the base, she became commanding general's wife with five brand new kids. We continued to live up there for over a year, then I finally decided that as base commander, I am responsible for seeing that government quarters are filled up, so I am going to move into the Ranch House. I sent a crew over to clean it up, get ready to move in . . .



Frank: Had anyone been living there?

Murray: Nobody had been living there. We had used it on occasion for big parties. The rodeo party that the CG used to hold every year. When the president of Finland visited the base, we used the Ranch House to entertain. But that was the only time it had been used. So I decided to move in, and Gen Shoup was out here to observe a landing exercise the division was conducting. I told him that I was going to move into the Ranch House. He said, "I told you not to move into the Ranch House, and that's what I meant." Again, no explanation. So I didn't move into the Ranch House. So I'm the only CG, I guess, that's ever been here that didn't live in the Ranch House. But, as it turned out, I'm glad. I was sorry at the time, but I was glad because I had these young children who would have been isolated over there, and it would have been quite a chore to either transport them or have other kids transported to have any companionship at all. So it worked out okay. Oh, and then later on, he told me why he never let me move into the Ranch House. He said when I first took over the base here, his plan was that I was going to relieve Brute as CG of the recruit depot in San Diego, so he didn't want me to just move in and move out again. Then later on, he didn't tell me why, he changed his mind and had Sid Wade relieve Brute and left me here. Time went on and I guess he still thought that he was going to

send me somewhere. I don't know but at the time that I told him I was going to move into the Ranch House and he said, "No, I told you not to," he had already made up his mind then that he was going to send me to Parris Island, but he didn't tell me this at the time. I didn't know it 'til much later on.

Frank: When did you make your second star?

Murray: After I got to Parris Island. I was a brigadier general here the whole time.

Frank: I heard that the rodeo out here had gotten out of hand, that it had become a big deal for which there was no real basis for the Marine Corps sponsoring it.

Murray: Well, here was the situation. It started out sometime . . . I guess Gen Erskine was the one who started it when he was here, to have a rodeo along with a carnival to raise money for Navy Relief. Each year it got a little bigger, a little better, and when Gen Good was here, they used to sit out on the hillside near the rodeo grounds there, and the rodeo grounds was a very minimum installation with the fences and all were not much. While he was here, he and Ace Bowen, who was involved in all this because Ace was a horseman and been in rodeos when he was in college. They

built what is the current rodeo grounds. The hillside that people just used to sit on, by the thousands, sit on the hill to watch this thing, Gen Good had terraced and these bleachers brought in. So it was a big installation then finally. Then the year I took over the base . . . Oh, the whole thing was run by base personnel augmented by division personnel, and it had gotten to where it took a huge number of people to run this thing and it took a long time to run it. So the year I was here, I decided to check to see what it cost us to put this thing on. So I had the comptroller actually keep a set of books on this and charged everything that was done for that rodeo, including the salary of a colonel who was in charge of organizing the thing for three months. That was his sole duty. Every time we used government transportation, we charged it off. We kept a real good set of books on that. I don't know where those books ever went. We kept a good set of books, and I discovered that it cost about \$3 of government money for every dollar that we gave to the Navy Relief. And I said that, "This is ridiculous. We are going to get into trouble if we keep this up." So the next year we cut the thing down. Still had a rodeo and still had a carnival, but we cut it way down and I've forgotten the details of it now, but we didn't spend all this big amount of money on this thing. Then later on, Bob Cushman, when he was CG of the base, he stopped the thing altogether. That is, they still had the rodeo, but he

stopped the carnival I guess. It was just a rodeo, and it had nothing to do with Navy Relief anymore. It had to be self-supporting.

Frank: It got to be an onerous thing.

Murray: Oh, it got to be a terrible thing. The year, that I mentioned that we went to Korea, and I was in charge of the carnival part of it, we used to have slot machines, which used to make a tremendous amount of money. That was the year that slot machines were outlawed in California, so we were allowed to--and I guess it was because the law didn't go into effect until a certain date--and we had until midnight of the last night of the carnival to get those things out of the state, and whoever it was providing them, took them all to Las Vegas, I understand. That was one way you made an awful lot of money, but then in later years, when you didn't have that, it began to cost a tremendous amount of money.

Frank: Tell me about Parris Island.

Murray: Parris Island was a very pleasant two-year tour of duty, and I enjoyed the type of job it was: training young Marines. I had no particular problems the two years I was there. I had very fine relationships with the city, with all the people in the city, Beaufort. The actual training of the

recruits was a pretty set procedure. Not too many changes made in the training as you went along. It was mainly trying to ensure that there wasn't any maltreatment going on and when there was, trying to contain it. The worst case that I had was a case where a young recruit kept going to sleep in class and this DI came up and hit alongside the head and hit his head into a stanchion room to wake him up and told him to stay awake. And later on, when he got to Camp Lejeune, he died, a week or so after he got there to ITR training. In the course of the investigation they discovered that he had died from a rather deep wound in his head. We also discovered that he had an automobile accident just before he reported for duty to the Marine Corps, and in all probability this is what caused it. But discovering that this DI had hit him, which might have caused it too--the doctors couldn't tell us one way or another--it had the potential of becoming a pretty serious thing. But I'd had a policy with my informational services officer that any time anything happened on Parris Island, we felt that the newspapers would like to get hold of, call them up and tell them, "This is what happened. If we get any more information, we call you and tell you as soon as we get the information." So, this particular day I called up the newspaperman and told him what had happened, and I said, "We're going to have a general court. Some things are going to come out that people are going to be interested in." And he said, "I'm not going to write anything about it

now. Keep me posted. We'll see." He never published anything in the local paper about. I guess he did say that there was a general court martial for some maltreatment, but very low key, and it never got out to be much of anything, and that's the closest I came to having anything serious while I was there. We did have other cases of maltreatment, but none where anybody died or anything.

Frank: It must have been interesting to watch the evolution of a Marine.

Murray: It was. It was very interesting to . . . I watched it from beginning to end. I watched them arrive at Yemassee, and watched them go through the whole thing and while there were some things I thought maybe should be changed, I said, "No, this thing's been working very well. I'm not going to change it."

Frank: How do you feel about the new concept of . . . making the CGs of each of the depots responsible for recruiting east and west of the Mississippi so that the recruiters are directly responsible to the man who is in charge of the end result?

Murray: If it's working better that way than it did before, well, that's fine. My initial reaction when I heard that was

being done was, "Oh God! They're making a mistake." The CG of a recruit depot has enough to keep him busy just seeing that everything's going right with recruit training without putting him in charge of something else. I really couldn't understand why it was an advantage to doing it that way, but they're still doing it so I presume they decided it's a good . . .

End Tape 2/III, Side A

Begin Tape 2/III, Side B

Frank: . . . a direct chain of responsibility from the recruiter up to the CG of the recruit depot and making the recruiter a more responsible individual with respect to the type of individuals he is recruiting. We didn't have that before.

Murray: Yes, I agree, but I think that can be carried to extremes sometimes of centralizing too much. In fact, over the course of my career, I felt that more and more things are becoming centralized, less and less initiative was being allowed to people down below. I guess it's working alright, but I made a statement one time that before too much longer a division commander is only going to be able to say, "Aye, aye, Sir. I'll tell them." In the Vietnamese war this was very much the case; all the way up to the President getting

on the telephone to Lew Walt. It's symptomatic of what's going on all the time. The more you're capable of assuming command . . . It seems that it must be somebody's law that says the more you acquire the capability, the more certain you are of seizing it the capability of telling somebody else how to do his job. Micromanagement exactly, and computers are enabling people to do that. Fortunately, when I had Parris Island, I was given a considerable amount of leeway to handle problems locally without being hovered over all the time by somebody above.

**Frank:** Now you go up to Headquarters to become the IG of the Marine Corps for 26 months. That must have been a very busy period.

**Murray:** I was gone a good part of the time. And I enjoyed that. The mission of the Inspector General is to be the eyes of the Commandant, to report to the Commandant the state of affairs of his commands all over the world, and I think in the past maybe some people may have taken that to mean that they should be a watchdog to catch people, at least I had that impression in my younger years that the IG was out to catch you. My philosophy was that I was out there to help people and my teams, whenever we went out, and I talked to them, I said, "Our job here is to help people. We report to the Commandant what we see all right, but it's not just to



put people on report. It's trying to help people to stay straight, because, after all, everybody's trying to do a good job." And I think we succeeded in doing that during those two years. I don't think anybody hated to see the IG come while I was there.

**Frank:** It was 26 months, and you went from a period of relative peacetime to the Vietnam war period. Did you find any major problems during this time?

**Murray:** Right. No. No major problems. I found a couple of relatively small units that had some leadership problems which were resolved by getting people transferred. No real major problems. The units I inspected for the most part were in pretty good shape, as good as you would expect them to be.

The major deficiencies were generally in administration and our administrators, the ones I had, were very good and the ones I picked up always seemed to be pretty good administrators, and they'd go in and hold school. You did find some of the same mistakes each time you went back, but I think that's to be expected, particularly with the kind of record-keeping we have nowadays. You've got a very sophisticated system with a young kid at the very tail end of it, down at the bottom end of it, who's putting the stuff into the system, who's not always qualified to put the stuff

in. That was one of the major problems. We didn't have too many problems with the equipment. The equipment, for the most part, was in pretty good shape. Only on rare occasions did we find units whose maintenance of their equipment was not up to par, too. The Marine Corps, I thought, was in pretty good shape in those years.

Frank: Prior to the time you went up to G-3, G-3 had been the major staff agency in Headquarters. It was the mover and doer. Now we were getting into the joint planning arena, policy analysis was being phased out, and not too many years after this we went into the new staff system where we had new agencies replacing others. How did you find G-3 when you took it over?

Murray: I found it a very difficult job to try to come to grips with. As you say, the Vietnamese war, the Vietnam war was going on now. One of the things that the G-3 was charged with, for example, was to provide the combat units with the people trained in the proper MOSs. We actually issued orders to send people to schools in accordance with the numbers that were required. But, we got all our numbers from the Personnel Department. They were the numbers keepers, and they'd tell us how many people we should send to what schools to get the proper number of MOSs, yet G-3 appeared to be held responsible for making sure that the right number of

people got out there. Brute was continually complaining that we weren't sending the right kind of people in the right numbers. There wasn't any way I could resolve this problem in the 3 section. So it seemed to me that there needed to be some reorganization, some sure lines of responsibility and authority fixed, which I think is what they've done in later times. It was always a problem for me to decide which the 3 section should handle and which PP&O. Bill Buse ran that shop while I was there, and frequently I'd get a piece of paper from Bill Buse's shop that I thought properly belonged to them, but I'd have to take it on. It was very difficult for me to get a handle on just exactly what that job was. We seemed to be involved in an awful lot of minutia, and I've been convinced for many years that in Washington there's a tremendous amount of work that goes on that's made work rather than necessary work. One of our big jobs was to work on the budget each year.

**Frank:** That came under the 3?

**Murray:** It didn't come under the 3, but we worked on the force structure part of it, and I dealt with these analysts from the Department of Defense who were wondering why we couldn't split an amtrac battalion up two or three ways on the east and west coast, all kinds of crazy ideas. They were playing with numbers, and they weren't playing with a tactical

unit. There were one or two in there that understood why you couldn't do certain things, but some of them just couldn't understand why there were certain things you couldn't do.

**Frank:** Were you involved that weekend when Alain Enthoven came over, and they had to explain to him with flashcards what a BLT was, what a fire team was, etc?

**Murray:** It seems to me like I was. I was involved in several episodes there when people from the Pentagon to be briefed, right, that's what it was called, to brief them, to instruct them, yes. I don't remember specifically if I was involved with the one you're thinking about or not.

**Frank:** You managed to get out of Headquarters in September '67 to be go out to be deputy commander of III MAF and we've got that.

**Murray:** You've got that, right.

**Frank:** This would be the end of our interview then. I thank you for the seven hours we spent here. I enjoyed it and talking with you.

End Tape 2/III, Side B

End of Interview

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