

FIRST DRAFT

**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
WITH
SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE ARMY
GLEN E. MORRELL (USA-RET)**

**SERGEANTS MAJOR OF THE ARMY
HISTORY BOOK PROJECT**

**Center of Military History, United States Army
and the
United States Army Museum of the Noncommissioned Officer**

**Interviewer: SGM Erwin H. Koehler (U.S. Army, Retired)
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US ARMY MUSEUM OF THE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER

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INTERVIEWER: ERWIN H. KOEHLER (U.S. ARMY - RETIRED)

INTERVIEWEE: SMA GLEN E. MORRELL (U.S. ARMY - RETIRED)

Interviewer: Today is Thursday, March 31, 1994. My name is Sergeant Major Erwin H. Koehler, U.S. Army, retired. I'm in the home of Sergeant Major of the Army Glen E. Morrell, U.S. Army retired, located in Port Saint John, just north of Cocoa, Florida. My interview with Sergeant Major Morrell will cover the time frame from his birth through his tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army. Sergeant Major what is your date of birth and where were you born?

SMA Morrell: 26 May 1936. I was born in Tyler Country, in a place called Wick, West Virginia.

Interviewer: Where is Wick located in the State of West Virginia?

SMA Morrell: In the northwest part of the state, south of Wheeling. That's about the best I could describe where that's at. I don't think they've got it on the any anymore. You'll have a hell of a

time trying to find it if you go there.

Interviewer: Were you raised in a rural environment?

SMA Morrell: Yep. In a rural area.

Interviewer: Where was your father born, and do you remember this date of birth?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. He was born in Schultz, West Virginia S-C-H-U-L-T-Z. And he was born July 20, 1893.

Interviewer: Where was your mother born, and when?

SMA Morrell: She was born in the same place, in the ninth month of 1895.

Interviewer: When and where were they married?

SMA Morrell: They was married in Schultz, West Virginia.

Interviewer: Tell me about your parents. Their occupations, their physical characteristics, etc.

SMA Morrell: Well, my mother was a housewife and a very lovely lady. She was a very smart person for the education that she had. Probably if she had been born in later years, she would probably have been a very well educated person because she was a very astute student at that time. I think I'd have to check back with my sisters, who are much, much older than I am. I don't know what grade they had back then. Was it the six or eight grade that they went to and then that was it. That's the only schools that was in that area where she went to school. I think it was the eighth grade that she went to and graduated from that. But she was always very well read. I wish I could write like she did. It was the best penmanship of anybody I ever saw. Hell, I was always in too big of a hurry to try to master that, and you can't even hardly read anything that I write. But anyway, she was just a lovely person and always good to people. She was a good moral person. My Dad worked for the Hope Natural Gas Company, which is the Exxon Corporation right now. He worked in the oil and gas there in West Virginia. He was a good man. He was a hard worker. I don't know how long they had been

married. They were married during the Depression, and of course he worked all that particular period of time. I know he told us about having to walk a hell of a long way to go to work. Of course, they rode horses back then. They didn't have any other kind of transportation, except the old Model T Ford. I guess they had some of those around. He provided a good home life. I never had no regrets about where I grew up at, and what I was taught, and everything.

Interviewer: Did you say your sisters were older than you?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you have any brothers?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I've got two brothers and four sisters.

Interviewer: Which ones are older and which ones are younger?

SMA Morrell: All of them are older than I am. I was the last of the Mohegans.

Interviewer: Is that right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: As you were growing up, as we know, discipline is very important in raising a child. What were some of the things your parents forbade you to do, and what sort of punishment did you receive if you broke one of your parent's rules?

SMA Morrell: Well, I guess the biggest thing, back in that particular period of time, there wasn't a whole hell of a lot of stuff you could get into, especially where I lived. There wasn't that many people that lived around close. The closest house was probably about a quarter of a mile from where I really grew up at. You just didn't do anything. I don't know, they just instilled the respect that you should have for other peoples in me. There wasn't too many things that you got into orneriness, because if you did, you got the hell beat out of you. I mean, not literally, but you knew better than to do something because you'd sure get your butt whipped, if you did something that you wasn't supposed to be doing. And then, hell, I was always busy. I had work

that I had to do. We always grew a real large garden in the summertime, and then in the wintertime. There was always work to do around there, because we had farm animals and we had to take care of them. Anytime that I wasn't doing that, I was either reading or fishing. That's about the only two things to do back where I grew up at. Really, as far as discipline, I knew about how far I could go to get away with something, and I knew how far to push it, and then I knew when to back off, because I'd pay the consequences if I didn't back off.

Interviewer: How did the standards of conduct that your parents required of you influence you as a young man and then later on when you came into the Army?

SMA Morrell: Well, I think it taught you to respect other people and to give everybody a chance and not to look down on anybody because they might not have been as well off as what you were, regardless of whether it was in quality of life type things, or if they weren't educated as much, or if they wasn't fortunate to have everything that you had. And I don't know, I just stuck with that all my life, and I still follow those things today.

Interviewer: Do you think that discipline that you were raised with by your parents, that it helped you to adapt real easy in the Army, compared to some of the other recruits that you saw around you?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, more especially on the people that came from the larger cities. They had more of a problem adapting to the discipline that was within the military, and I think the reason for that is because of maybe the way they grew up. Their mothers and fathers didn't pay that much attention to them.

Interviewer: Are your brothers and sisters still living?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, all of them are still living?

Interviewer: Where are they living now?

SMA Morrell: Well, I've got one sister that lives in Indiana, Pennsylvania. I have three sisters, they live in West Virginia. One of them lives in Newell, West Virginia. One lives in Wheeling, West

Virginia, and the other one lives in Schultz, West Virginia. I missed one some damn where. No, that's all of them. Then two brothers. I've got a brother living in Wheeling, and one that lives in Grantsville, West Virginia.

Interviewer: Whenever you were selected as Sergeant Major of the Army, what was your reaction?

SMA Morrell: Shit, I really wasn't even thinking about it when I went before the board. Hell, in fact, I got pretty well soused on the airplane coming back because I was mad for wasting my damn time. I had a good job in FORSCOM (Forces Command). I enjoyed it and I like the general that I worked for there. I thought it was a waste of time for me to even go up there and participate in that, because of all of the things I heard about how they select the Sergeant Major of the Army, which I found out later on was a bunch of bull shit because, that was not the way the scuttlebutt in the Army went around on how they selected or how you might come to be the Sergeant Major of the Army. So I really never give it any thought. I just kind of passed it on, because I came back on the airplane and my wife picked me up. I said, "Well that was a waste of time." I guess one of the reasons I predicated that on was because of the other four people. I think a couple of them worked for the general that was going to be the Chief of Staff. There was scuttlebutt going around in the Army, who was going to be the next Sergeant Major of the Army, so I just forgot about it. I went back and went to work and didn't think anything about it. I was working on a FORSCOM conference, to be held out in San Antonio. My admin assistant come into tell me that the Chief of Staff, General Graham, wanted to see me. I was getting a briefing on something that I needed for the FORSCOM Conference, so I told them, okay, I'd be there in a minute. Well, hell, I first ignored it, really. General Cavazos was not in the headquarters. I think he was out in Fort Hood, Texas, or he could have been on leave, I'm not sure. So they came back and said, "Hey, General Cavazos is on

the line, and he wants to talk to you. Well then I told the major, "Let me go in here and find out what the hell he wants." So I went in there and he told me, "It's a great day for the Army, a sad day for Forces Command." He said, "I want to congratulate you. You've been selected to be the next Sergeant Major of the Army." So I felt pretty damn good about it. The old country boy did alright.

Interviewer: General Cavazos was a very interesting person to work with, wasn't he?

SMA Morrell: Yes sir. I'll tell you what. That was one of the great generals we had in this Army. I don't know if we'll ever have another one like him or not.

Interviewer: You always knew where you stood with General Cavazos.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. You always knew where you stood.

Interviewer: When did you serve as Sergeant Major of the Army?

SMA Morrell: From 1 July 1983 to 30 June 1987.

Interviewer: Who was the Army Chief of Staff at that time?

SMA Morrell: General Wickam. I might add, from what I know, what I got involved in, and what I know about Chiefs of Staff of the Army prior to him, and the ones after him. I'd say that he had the interest of the Army, the whole Army, I'm talking about the enlisted people, the noncommissioned officers, and the officers, and the families, at heart more than any person that I ever run into in the almost thirty-three years I spent in the United States Army. I know a lot of people would say, "Well, God damnit, what else would you say about that. But I know that to be a fact.

Interviewer: You had good working relations with him, didn't you.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. I sure did.

Interviewer: Do you remember who the other command sergeants major were in the final five that went up when you did for consideration for Sergeant Major of the Army?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. There was Oscar Barker, Larry Hampton, Bill Tapp and Ray Martin?

Interviewer: You had some fairly good competition, didn't you?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, there was a couple of them that was in there that was pretty good.

Interviewer: I think you and I know who the good ones were.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right.

Interviewer: Tell me about your appearance before the board when they selected the final five. Who all sat on the board and what questions did they ask you?

SMA Morrell: General Livesay was the president of the board. Then it was made up of other general officers, and the incumbent Sergeant Major of the Army, who was Sergeant Major of the Army Connelly. Hell, they first asked you kind of general questions about different things, about the Army, or about how you might look at a certain issue, but it all was kind of general conversation. It was nothing really that you'd have a canned answer to, because it was more or less what your opinions were on different things.

Interviewer: It was more or less to first give you a chance to express yourself. Right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, that's all it was.

Interviewer: Tell me about your pre-selection interview with General Wickam.

SMA Morrell: Well, I went in to see him and he did all of the talking. I didn't want to see him. He wanted to see me. He asked me some general questions, more in just a conversation, and not anything direct, about how I felt about certain issues. If there wasn't anything like that, I just told him, I said, "You must know something about me. You know what my background is. You should have a pretty good understanding of what I've done in the past." I said, "I'm too damn old to change." So he did most of the talking. Really it was, again, just

kind of a general conversation that you would have just about with anybody. It wasn't a pointed conversation about how could you do this, or how you could do that. It wasn't anything like that. It was more or less just like you would meet someone and just be talking about different things. Really, it wasn't all that oriented toward the military.

Interviewer: When you talked to General Wickam, what was your first impression as you talked to him? Had you met him before?

SMA Morrell: I had never met him before in my life.

Interviewer: What was your impression when you talked to him?

SMA Morrell: Well, he was a very astute individual and very smart. He knew a lot of things and he knew the direction that he wanted to take the Army in, during his tenure. I gather that much right quick like. He was a very likeable person, who I became very fond of over the four years that I worked for him.

Interviewer: What was the length of time between the pre-selection interview with General Wickam and the time that you were notified that you were selected?

SMA Morrell: Hell, I don't remember, Butch. I think probably it could have been three weeks, or hell, it might not have been that long. I really don't remember.

Interviewer: Did they do the normal background check on you and Karen?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Well, they already did that. They do that on the selection of all the people, when they first come in, whatever they draw the number down to. I think there was ten people. Then they had the interview with the board, then they run another background check on the five people they recommended to go forward to have an interview with the Chief of Staff.

Interviewer: When you were selected, they had the process where first of all they were given a big stack of records of everybody that

was to be considered. Then they did the screening of the records and took it down to ten. And then those ten went before the board. Then the board selected the final five. Is that right?

SMA Morrell: Right.

Interviewer: Then the five were interviewed by the Chief of Staff.

SMA Morrell: Right.

Interviewer: What was the reaction of your family when you found out that you had been selected?

SMA Morrell: Well, my wife was very pissed off. The reason she was, like I told you I was in the middle of trying to get a FORSCOM Conference fixed up to go to San Antonio. Fifth Army was hosting the conference out there, along with Fort Sam Houston. So when I left the telephone conversation with General Cavazos, I went back in the office. The major was still there to give me this information that I needed. We talked for about ten or fifteen minutes. Then I told him, "Hell, I've got to stop this." I said, "I've got to call my wife and tell her I've been selected as the Sergeant Major of the Army." So I got on the phone and called her, and she hung the damn telephone up on me because Bill Connelly's wife, Bennie, had called her and told her I'd been selected. Well, she was brushing her teeth because she had to go to some meeting that they had there. I don't remember what it was. She was mad because I didn't call her. To this day she still reminds me about that. She was very happy about it, but she did hang the telephone up on me. She wanted to know why I didn't call her right then and tell her.

Interviewer: She didn't appreciate getting the information second hand?

SMA Morrell: No. Well, Bennie Connelly had thought that I had already told her. But I don't know, something about how they were notified up there. She called her and Bennie had told her before I got

a hold of her. She thought that I wasn't going to tell her, or something. Hell, I don't know. You know how women are.

Interviewer: Other than the reaction of General Cavazos. What were the reactions of the other members of the FORSCOM staff when they heard that you had been selected?

SMA Morrell: Well, they were very happy to see me be selected as Sergeant Major of the Army. Everybody wished me well and congratulated me. They was happy about it. Now I'm sure there were probably some around there someplace that wanted to see somebody else, but that's just the way the ball bounces. You know, it is kind of the luck of the draw, I guess, but everybody that I came in contact with they were very happy to see that happen.

Interviewer: When I talked to Sergeant Major Connelly, of course he was at Forces Command when he got selected. He said that everybody that bad mouthed him and called him an SOB, for years, started calling and getting on good side.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you have that?

SMA Morrell: Well, you know, not really, I guess, hell, everybody has got enemies, but I really never had experienced that. Hell, I always treated people like I'd like to be treated, so I never experienced that.

Interviewer: How long after you received notification of your selection did you assume the duties of Sergeant Major of the Army?

SMA Morrell: Well I think it was sometime in May, Butch, when I was notified, I don't remember the exact date. I've probably got in there someplace. It's in the files and I'd have to dig that out. But I would say probably no more than three weeks. Maybe two weeks. Hell, I can't remember, but it was a very short period of time, because then I moved up to D.C.

Interviewer: Did you have a period of transition with Sergeant

Major of the Army Connelly before assuming your duties? If so, tell me about that transition period.

SMA Morrell: Well, the only transition period he and I had was at the FORSCOM Conference. He came out there and spoke at that. When the conference was over with, he stayed an extra day out there. He and I just walked around the city of San Antonio, talking about different things, and about how some things operate up there that don't change, even though you have a complete charge. You have a new Chief of Staff and a whole new staff coming in. We talked about those things, which was very helpful when I went up there. But one of the good things about when I went there, I kept his admin people, which I don't think any other Sergeant Major of the Army ever did that. They brought their own admin people in. I knew both of his admin people. I had known them for a long time and I liked both of them, so I kept those guys there. One of them was on orders to go to the Sergeants Major Academy anyway in six months. Then the admin assistant that I had at FORSCOM, I brought her up there before he left.

Interviewer: Who were the two admin people that were there when you took over, and who did you bring up?

SMA Morrell: Fred LeBlanc and Dale Ward. Now Dale was a master sergeant and Fred was a sergeant first class. I brought up a staff sergeant that worked for me at FORSCOM, Laura Cutts, and she came up there and she got promoted to sergeant first class.

Interviewer: Who was your civilian secretary?

SMA Morrell: I had the one Bill Connelly had for a while; Ellie. I don't remember Ellie's last name, for crying out loud. Then I got another civilian by the name of Ruth Feltner. She stayed there all the time that I was there. I got a program to go to Fort Jackson and get young soldiers out of the Admin School AIT and bring those individuals up there for a short period of time and let them develop and then they'd go someplace else; that worked out real well too. So I had my Sergeant,

a sergeant first class, a private--and most generally he'd get promoted to E4--and the civilian secretary.

Interviewer: Did those admin people that you brought up from Fort Jackson really look forward to that opportunity?

SMA Morrell: Well, yeah, but they was kind of hesitant about it to begin with because just being in the Army a short period of time, but did one hell of a good job. They was good people. In fact, one of them that I had up there got out and went to ROTC and was going to try to get a commission; I don't know whether he did or not.

Interviewer: I guess that little walk around San Antonio, with Sergeant Major Connelly, was probably one of the better transitions that I've heard of because you didn't have the pressures, you had the time, and you could do it in a relaxed type atmosphere.

SMA Morrell: Yep. That's right. It was very, very good.

Interviewer: Did he brief you on some of the ongoing programs and did he make any recommendations what you should out for when you get up there, etc.?

SMA Morrell: Well, he told me about some of the things you might get into a shortfall on, but as far as recommending anything to me, no. On any kind of policy changes or anything that was going on, no. It wouldn't have done any good anyway, because when you've got a new Chief coming in, that person is going to do what the hell ever he want to anyway, so he just talked more in generalities about some of the things that you need to be on the lookout for.

Interviewer: Plus, the Army is continually changing anyway, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, that's right. And that's a good thing. You know, the Army should never stand still, although the Army should never lose sight of some of the things that it has done in the past. I think one problem that the United States Army has, they don't stop long enough to look back to see where there's some good things that went by the wayside and, consequently, a hell of a lot of people get hurt when they

don't do something like that. Bill Connelly is not the type of guy, really, that would try to tell you what the hell to do, or anything like that. It wouldn't have done any good because, again, it's all based on the personalities of the people you're working with on a hell of a lot of things that goes on up there.

Interviewer: He did tell you what a good staff that he had, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. He was very pleased with the people that worked for him, and I knew those guys anyway, so I didn't have a problem with it. Even if I hadn't known those people, I would have been a damn fool not to keep them, and I think anybody is a God damn fool when they go into a position and you've got admin people there that have worked for a long period of time, you know damn well they know what goes on, and that's the same in every God damn part of the Army that you go to, you get someone that comes in and they're like a new broom, they want to sweep clean. They want to bring people in that couldn't even get lost the first God damn door they took a turn out of in the Pentagon. That really hurts, I think, a person going into any position when they do something like that. You've got some continuity, you've got institutional memory there, and they don't capitalize on that. I think that is detrimental to the people that you're supposed to be representing when you do something like that. It's just like when I spoke at the pre-command courses. I would always tell them, "The reasons you're selected for command is based on what you did in the past. You're going to go and get in command of a damn unit, and the first thing you want to do is change that damn thing a hundred and eighty degrees. Of course that predicated on a commander telling a company commander or a battalion commander or even, in a hell of a lot cases, a brigadier commander, 'Well, I want you to go down there and then I want you to tell me what you find and what you're going to do.', and all this kind of stuff. Well that puts a guy on the spot, because he might think, 'Well, if I don't come back and tell this guy that I

found this and I'm going to do this, then he might think that I'm not looking the way I should be looking, or I'm not that good of a commander and really able to access things real quick'." I always told them, "Hell, if that outgoing commander didn't do a good job, then you wouldn't have a change of command. You would have had an assumption of command, because they would have already relieved him." But you've got a hell of a lot of people that want to go in and change everything from A to Z, and that whiplashes everybody. If you're going to represent somebody, like I was representing all of the enlisted people in the United States Army, hell I want someone that has been there, that can give me some good advice on what the hell goes on, and can find their way around the Pentagon, because I never did understand where anything was in that God damn building. I didn't even try to find out. Hell, I told them, "I don't even want to know where anything is. If I've got to go someplace, you go and find out where the hell it is and you take me there." The only place that I could really find was the old office that I hand and the Chief of Staff of the Army's office. I couldn't give a shit less about any of the other places, because that wasn't my forte to try to find out where in the hell everything was in the Pentagon. Hell, I don't think anybody knows what the hell is in the Pentagon.

Interviewer: Having an experienced staff there, with that institutional knowledge, was very important because of the amount of time you spent on the road.

SMA Morrell: Well that's absolutely right. Then the other thing a lot of people forget about, and I've always questioned this in the Army, is, a person goes into a new job and forgets that a soldier is a soldier, a noncommissioned officer is a noncommissioned officer, if they're good and worth a damn. People think, "Well, their loyal can't change." Bull shit. We have changes all of the time in the Army. Hell, you've got that everywhere. Loyalty has nothing to do with it.

The loyalty don't go to that son of a bitch that's in that position. It don't make any difference if you brought a mannequin in there, for Christ sakes. It's the position, for Christ sakes. A lot of people get confused on that, I think, and think the loyalty is to whoever is in the position. You've got to have loyalty to an individual, but when you have a change of position, the loyalty has to be to the Office, for crying out loud, or to whatever it is.

Interviewer: There's the old saying, "You don't have to like the guy to be loyal to him."

SMA Morrell: Well hell no. That's right, and there's a lot of confusion on that in the United States Army, because a lot of people think that, "You know, I can't trust the people that are in this damn place here to do what I want done, so I'll have to bring my guys, or my gals, in here." Well hell, you've got to trust people. When you find out you can't trust them, then get rid of them.

Interviewer: Describe your ceremony when you were sworn-in as Sergeant Major of the Army.

SMA Morrell: Well, it was so damn crowded in that office that it was something. Like I told you, General Wickam is a very gracious individual, he was a hell of a general, a hell of a soldier, and a hell of a professional. It was a very moving ceremony. I enjoyed it, as I look back on it now, and I enjoyed it the day it happened. I think one of the most enjoyable things was that I had my mother come up there for that, and of course, she was quite up in years, in age. But she got to be there for that and I was very glad about that. I had my children were there, as were a lot of my friend in the Army. In fact, there was a lot of people who couldn't even get in the room; it was in the Chief of Staff of the Army's office. There was a hell of a lot of people that couldn't get in there because there were so many.

Interviewer: Who administered the Oath of Office?

SMA Morrell: General Joyce. He was the... What the hell was he

then, Butch? The TAG. The Adjutant General.

Interviewer: I don't know, but I think it was normally done by the Adjutant General.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you get your scroll?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: I understand that at one time they wanted to do away with that.

SMA Morrell: I don't know anything about that.

Interviewer: I think it was Sergeant Major Gates that said that they wanted to quit giving that scroll, but then they changed their mind when asked, "Why do away with it. You only give one away every three or four years."

SMA Morrell: I've never heard of that. You know, that's probably some damn admin weenie up there that didn't know what the hell was going on, which there are still a hell of a lot of people in the United States Army that don't understand the position. Why it was created. And what the hell the Sergeant Major of the Army is supposed to do. In fact, you'll find a lot of people that don't even know who in the hell the Sergeant Major of the Army is right now.

Interviewer: One of the Sergeants Major called the admin people "the flat peters."

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Well, I'm going to tell you something. I never went along with that. I'll tell you what. I've known a hell of a lot of good admin people when I was on active duty. I'll tell you one damn thing, if it wasn't for the good admin people that I had, and the DCSPER (Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel) Sergeant Major, there was a hell of a lot of things that would have slipped through the crack that would have had a hell of an effect on enlisted people and noncommissioned officers if it hadn't been for the admin people who kept me informed about what the hell was going on. So I always had a

good feeling for good admin people. Now I'm the type of guy that believes that you're either good, God damnit, or you ain't no good. You know, you can't have an "in between" in the Army. Maybe out in civilian life you can have someone that kind of mediocre, but I never cared for mediocre people. I wanted someone that was topnotch. I was always fortunate in the Army. I had good people that worked for me, and I think the reason that I had good people working for me was because I took good care of them. I treated them like they should be treated.

Interviewer: Do you think that there were a lot of the senior officers in the Army that really didn't understand exactly what the job of the Sergeant Major of the Army was?

SMA Morrell: Why hell, you've got that today. They never did and they never will. It just like the old four-star general I sat by one time, when we had a four-star conference up there, when they call all of the four-star back in. He was bitching to me because Sergeant Major Bainbridge, when he left Office up there, he went to work at the Soldier and Airmen's Home. He was pissed because here a God damn enlisted swine took a position that belonged to a officer over there. That kind of mentality still exists in the Army that we have today. You've got a hell of a lot of people that won't show it, but they sure as hell will talk about it behind your back, or talk about it in other settings that they get into. There are a hell of a lot of people that still would like to see that Office done away with.

Interviewer: Do you think some of them felt intimidated because you answered directly to the Chief of Staff of the Army?

SMA Morrell: Hell yeah, they felt intimidated. And they should feel intimidated, in one sense. The reason I say that, if they knew what the hell they was doing, and they was good God damn officers, then they wouldn't feel intimidated, by God. That's what the problem is with the United States Army. They still think back two hundred ago, I guess, that the only God damn decision that should be made in the

Army is a decision made by an officer. That's wrong.

Interviewer: What were your priorities when you assumed office? Did you set any priorities?

SMA Morrell: Yeah I did. Jesus, I've got some written down in there, on paper, some of the goals I had that I wanted to accomplish. I'd have to get them damn things and read them to you.

Interviewer: What we can do, you can give them to me and I'll make them as an annex to this interview.

SMA Morrell: Okay.

Interviewer: Tell me about your first meeting with General Wickam. What guidance did he give you, and did you happen to write that guidance down?

SMA Morrell: Just a minute. Can you hold on?

Interviewer: Well take a pause here.

(End Tape OH 94.6-1, Side 1)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-1, Side 2)

Interviewer: We had a break in the interview while the Sergeant Major went and got some reference material on his guidance, etc. Go ahead, Sergeant Major.

SMA Morrell: The first meeting I had with him, if I'm not mistaken, was that afternoon, right after I was sworn-in. I went in and we sat down, and we talked about a hell of a lot of things. All he told me to do was, be myself. One of the things that I really had a lot of respect for him on was, people told him a hell of a lot of things about me, and I know one thing that he picked up on right away, and that was that I was going to do what the hell I thought should be done. He knew that I was not going to embarrass the Army in any way. He knew that, with the background that I had, and I think what General Cavazos had told him, he just told me to be myself and go do the things that needed to be done in the Army, based on the discussion we had. And then he published two pages, and a half of another page, his guidance to the Army Staff. He

wrote on this thing, "Please provide copy to SMA (Sergeant Major of the Army), VCSA (Vice Chief of Staff of the Army), DAS (Department of the Army Staff). These are my views and I've discussed with SMA."

(NOTE: There was an interruption in the interview.)

Interviewer: We had a pause in the interview while the Sergeant Major answered the telephone. For the record, the Sergeant Major handed me a copy of General Wickam guidance. Sergeant Major, what I'll do is make this an annex to the interview transcription. Do you think one of advantages of having this guidance written down was that everybody on the Staff knew exactly what that guidance was?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I think it was good, not only for those people on the Staff to understand what the hell my position was, they could very well see where the Chief of Staff of the Army was coming from on that. So I thought it was good, although, to tell you the damn truth, I didn't pay that much attention to it. When I talk about not paying attention to it, I mean that I never had any problems with it, because I guess everybody understood right away that I worked for one person, and that was the Chief of Staff of the Army, and I didn't give a shit whether they liked it or not, that that was the individual that I dealt with. Now I'm not saying that I did not deal with the other staff people, because I did. He put in there that they were to answer to me just like they answered to him. I never had any problems whatsoever with them. Now a couple of times someone tried to bull shit me, and they got off that dime real quick like when I turned the tables on them. After that, I never had any problems whatsoever.

Interviewer: When you returned, after a visit, if you had a problem, could you go right to an action officer, the DCSPER, the DCSLOG (Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics), etc., and deal directly with them?

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. When I had a problem I could get it fixed by the Principle Staff person, and I'm talking about

the generals. I didn't let nobody else work on that. Of course, he probably gave it to somebody to get the answer, and then he gave it back to me, or he come up and briefed me on it. But I never had any problem on that.

Interviewer: When you talk about the generals, are you talking about the Deputies?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, like the DCSPER, the DCSLOG, the DCSOPS (Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations). Those people. I never had any problem. Sometimes there were a lot of things that I informed the Chief of Staff of the Army about.

Interviewer: When you were out on the road and a problem arose, could your office do the same thing that you did and contact the appropriate Principle Staff person and tell them what the problem was? How was that handled?

SMA Morrell: Most generally, if I had a problem that was dealing with something that I wanted to let the Principle Staff solve, then my people would call back, or we'd call back to the office and then they would get an answer, or solve the thing right while I was out on the ground wherever I was at.

Interviewer: Did you get real fast responses?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I never has any problems on anything that surfaced. They always took care of it in a timely manner.

Interviewer: What do you think was the most pressing problem when you became Sergeant Major of the Army?

SMA Morrell: Well, the guidance that the Chief give me was to go out and talk to, and visit soldiers and families, and that kind of stuff. Just the logistical problem of that damn thing; getting everything together and trying to find out where you should go. That was a nightmare, because, you know, I visited soldiers all over the damn world and that was a big problem in itself.

Interviewer: Whenever you assumed your duties as Sergeant Major of

the Army, what kind of briefing did you receive from the different staff elements in the Army?

SMA Morrell: You got a briefing on everything from A to Z, for crying out loud. They were mainly to inform you of what they could do and what their mission in life was. Then the majority of them wanted you to pickup things for them, for their use, while you was out there. Because sometimes you'd find things that they didn't know anything about, so you would pass that on to them so they would be aware of it, or fix it, or whatever the case may be.

Interviewer: After you got those briefings and you found out how the Army operated up at that level, what was your perception on how you would go about performing your duties, particularly when you were out in the field?

SMA Morrell: I knew what I'd be looking for, and what I've always looked for. You know, to see how training was and to see if the policies that was being implemented by the Department of the Army Staff were worth a damn or not; could the policies be put into play; what kind of an affect did they have on chain of command out there; what impact did they have on the soldier. I pretty well knew all of that kind of stuff anyway, I guess from the places that I worked at in the Army. So really, it wasn't that big of a change to me, going up there.

Interviewer: Your FORSCOM job also gave you a better view of the overall Army, didn't it?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, and by being the Command Sergeant Major of the Recruiting Command, which really give me a hell of a perspective of the Army, also. So I had interfaced with a hell of a lot of people before I assumed that position, consequently, that helped me out a hell of a lot. Now I'm sure you have heard, when you was in the Army, that a person changes when they go to a higher position. Well, I don't know why in the hell a person has to change. I don't know why in the hell they can't be just like they were. The only thing, you're just at a

higher level, but the way you operate should not change in anyway whatsoever. I think that is one of the biggest factors that a lot of people get cross-wired on, because when they get there, they think they're something that they're not, and consequently, that pisses the whole world off. If you just continue to be yourself, and knowing that you're in a higher position, but that don't mean a damn thing, and you're working with people at a higher lever, that should not change the individual that goes in that particular position.

Interviewer: This morning, before we started this interview, we talked about some of those people that, for some reason, changed, and we couldn't understand why.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. That's absolutely right. They think that they're something that they're not. You can't fool a damn soldier. I don't give a damn who you are. You can be the smartest son of a bitch in the world, but you're not going to fool a soldier out there. A lot of people think you can bull shit a soldier, and even today they still think that; but you can't do that.

Interviewer: A soldier will see through you in a minute.

SMA Morrell: You're absolutely right.

Interviewer: After you assumed the duties as Sergeant Major of the Army, how often did you meet with General Wickam?

SMA Morrell: Whenever I thought that there was something that I needed to bring to his attention. Again, it was on policies that were being established by the different staff sections in the Pentagon, or when we had problems somewhere in the Army, or whatever it may cover on soldiers, families, stuff on the NCO Corps, or anything like that. If I thought The Old Man needed to be aware of it, then I'd go in and see him. If I didn't, then it was my call.

Interviewer: In other words, he let you do your job.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. When I went on a trip, if I felt there was something that he needed to know, then I'd go in his

office and I'd tell him; that way the way we handled that. I did not make any memos for record or anything like that, that I give to him on a trip that I took. There was no need of it. If there was something there that he needed to be made aware of, then I told him, and the other things, if I could take care of it, then I took care of it with my admin people or through the DA (Department of the Army) Staff.

Interviewer: How often did you travel with General Wickam?

SMA Morrell: Not too many times. I went to Fort Bliss, Texas with him, one time. We went to Fort Bragg one time. We went to South America one time. We went to Korea one time. And we went to China. That was about the only times I can really recall that I travel with him. We talked about that. I told The Old Man... Just like when I went to Korea with him. I just flew over to Korea with him, and then he went his way and I went mine. I came back commercial air, although we did meet up in Hawaii. That's one thing that I did not care to do was with him and the reason for it was, because they had a structured briefing everywhere he went and they had him locked up from the time he got there until the time he left. Well hell, I couldn't see behind the scenes, so I told him that. I said, "You know, I don't mind going with you, but I'm not going to stay with you. I'll fly in someplace, and then I'm gone, because they're going to show you what the hell they want you to see." I said, "I don't want to see nothing like that. I want to see the stuff that nobody sees.", and he understood that. We never had a problem in that regard.

Interviewer: A while ago we discussed your staff. About how many inquiries or letters did your office receive from the field, in a normal week, or in a normal month?

SMA Morrell: Jesus, they was always inundated with requests coming in from the field, telephone calls. God, I don't think the telephone ever stopped ringing up there. I know they how to work a lot on the weekends, because they could go in there, without the telephone ringing,

and get a lot of the stuff done that needed to be done. They worked at nighttime also.

Interviewer: How many of those inquiries, particularly those from soldiers, could have been handled at the command or the installation level?

SMA Morrell: Well, a hell of a lot of them could have been handled out there by the sergeants major in those units, and the first sergeants out there. It all could have handled there if they would of done it, but a hell of a lot of times we have senior noncommissioned officers in this Army that believe, "You either do the damn thing my way. That's just the way it is. To hell with you. If you don't like it, that's tough.", and those kind of things. And then you got into a problem where there were a lot of personalities involved. Probably the majority of it could have been handled out in the field if they would have looked at it, professionally, like they should have by being in the position, whatever position it was that they had. So that was one of the problems. A lot of times people was getting screwed over for no reason whatsoever. Instead of a first sergeant or a sergeant major getting the damn problem solved, with the noncommissioned officer chain out there, hell, they didn't do that. They just ignored the damn thing. Just to be up front with you on it, that was because they weren't that God damn professional, and consequently, a lot of soldiers suffered on account of that. Then there was a hell of a lot of people that didn't know that they had a voice, that they had someone that they could get a hold of when there was something that come up that they got screwed on. I guess they didn't know how to go about it. Then a lot of things we got were from people who had served in the Army. We got a lot of correspondence from retirees. Hell, it was a never ending process. A lot of times we'd get inquiries from congressmen for information on assignments or problem with people that they got correspondence from. Of course one of the things, whoever it was that we helped out up there in Congress a

couple of time, evidently told them, "If you want to get an answer, get a hold of that office up there." They did that so we did a quite a bit of work in that category, although the Congressional Liaison was responsible for that, but you've got a lot of staff people in Congress that pickup on that, which I give them credit for doing it, because then they can get the answer from the perspective of the enlisted side of the house, more so than from the perspective from all of the people in the Congressional Liaison, which were all officer personnel.

Interviewer: Whenever you got your complaints or inquiries from the field, did your office answer all of those?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, my people always did the research, got all of the facts together, and then they brought it in and they'd brief me on it. I'd tell them, "That's okay," or "Change this," or "Go back for that." Then I'd sign it and send it back to them.

Interviewer: Approximately what percentage of the time did you spend in your office there in the Pentagon?

SMA Morrell: Oh, hell, I suppose maybe twenty, twenty-five percent. Something like that. There's not a hell of a lot you can get done in the Pentagon. Now don't get me wrong, there's a lot of things you can do in the Pentagon. There are times that you've got to be there. But the majority of your time has got to be spent out in the field, looking.

Interviewer: What was the normal routine when you were in your office there at the Pentagon?

SMA Morrell: Very seldom did you ever have time to take a break for lunch, because from the time you got there, somebody was always wanting to see you. You had a briefing on issues that were coming up. Someone was briefing you. You had to go see somebody about something. Jesus, it was just a hell of a long day.

Interviewer: Plus, you sat on a lot of councils and boards, didn't you?

SMA Morrell: Well yeah, but hell, I never paid that much attention to those damn things. If I wanted to go, I'd find out what the subject was, and if the subject wasn't anything that dealt with the enlisted side of the house, I didn't give a damn about it, to tell you the truth. I would kind of pick and choose what I wanted to go on. Now when I was in town, every time The Old Man had his General Staff meeting, I was always at that thing, because I always had something to say. I don't give a God damn if I didn't have something I had to say, I always said something. I always had my time in the barrel when I went in there. The main reason for that was to keep everybody in tuned that "You're up here wearing a Class "A" or a Class "B" uniform and there's people out there in the field that are muddy, and hungry, and dirty, and all that kind of stuff." So I always attended those meetings.

Interviewer: How often did the Chief have his staff meetings?

SMA Morrell: Well, I think that was on a weekly basis, if I'm not mistaken. But anytime that I was there in the office, I always attended the staff meeting.

Interviewer: How did you schedule your trips? How did you decide where you were going to go and when you were going to go?

SMA Morrell: When I first went up there, I kind of looked at the bigger installations, and at the same time I knew that I had to visit the smaller, out-of-the-way places, so I just tried to juggle that. You'd go to a large place, and then you looked around to see what units was in the area where you was at, and get to those at the same time. Of course you had to visit the Guard and the Reserve, so you could incorporate that into a trip out there. And again, that was a hell of a thing to coordinate, because you had a hell of a lot of people that you had to coordinate with in order to get out there, and then to get exposed to as many soldiers that you could. So, hell, a lot of the determination was made by calls from the MACOM (Major Army Command) Sergeants Major that wanted me to come to places. Then other people

would call in; divisions, corps. They'd say, "Well, how about coming down here. We've got this going on. Or we've got this kind of training, or whatever it is." That kind of how we planned the trips.

Interviewer: How far ahead did you plan your trips?

SMA Morrell: Jesus, I don't know. My admin people did that. Hell, we worked off of a yearly calendar, really. Of course, there was a hell of a lot of things that sometimes you had to change in the middle of the stream, because of priorities; or because something was coming up within the staff that you needed to be there for; or if you had to go before Congress to testify. I also had to brief the Secretary of Defense, damn near every two months or three months. I'd go in and talk to him. Secretary Wienberger liked some of the information that I gave him. So it all depended on what the hell was going on. But most of the time we would try to schedule a year in advance.

Interviewer: How was your working relations with Secretary Wienberger?

SMA Morrell: Good. That was a hell of a Secretary. He probably was the best damn Secretary that we ever had. People probably say, "Well hell yeah, because he was in Office when you was there." That has nothing to do with it. He was interested in soldiers; he was interested in families; and he was interested in services.

Interviewer: Who was Secretary of the Army at that time?

SMA Morrell: Secretary Marsh.

Interviewer: He served what? Twelve years?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: How was your working relations with him?

SMA Morrell: Good. I had no problems. I briefed Secretary Marsh on issues. You know when you're getting through to people when they take notes, and Secretary Marsh took notes at every damn meeting. I don't know of any time that I ever talked to Secretary Marsh when he didn't take a couple of notes in his book. Secretary Wienberger took

notes, although he didn't take them. He had General Powell take them for him. He didn't call him "general," he called him by his first name. He'd say, "Colin, make a note of that." He always got to me on stuff that I talked to him about that was up in his level.

Interviewer: You said earlier about testifying before Congress. How many times did you testify?

SMA Morrell: Well, that was more or less a structured thing on the House Armed Services Committee and then on different committees within Congress that was dealing with the military. That was kind of an "on call" thing. When you come up on call, then you had to come in and testify.

Interviewer: What were some of the subjects that you testified on?

SMA Morrell: Most of it dealt with quality of life on the enlisted side of the house. Family issues. Money in order to support that stuff out there; to support training and the whole ramification of what impacted on soldiers. Again, it was more or less a congressman or a senator would get up there and ask you what you thought about this, and then you had the opportunity to expound on that and tell them what the hell the fallout from not being able to get the monies, or to get this supported, or to get that supported, or whatever the case may be. Most of the time it worked real well.

Interviewer: Did you normally speak "off the cuff," or did you have prepared statements?

SMA Morrell: No, that was one thing that I made very clear to everybody when I went up there. When they found out that I was going over to testify, the staff would always want to come in and brief me on something. I told them, "Hell, you all had your chance to go over there and talk to them. I'm going over and talk to them and I don't need to be singing the same damn song that you're singing." Whatever come up, that's what the hell I talked about. I most surely always had me some damn notes about what I wanted to talk to them about anyway.

Interviewer: Since you talked off the cuff, do you think that maybe what you had to say was better received than some people that read prepared statements?

SMA Morrell: That's what they always said. They said they didn't have to worry about getting the truth, because these guys was going to tell them the truth anyway.

Interviewer: When you appeared along with the other senior enlisted men of the other services, did you get together and make sure who was going to say what so you didn't have redundancy?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, we had a little meeting and we would talk about what the hell everybody was going to bring up. But you had to be careful with that, because, like the Air Force is a little bit different than what the Army is, but basically, the issues were the same because it impacted on soldiers, airmen, sailors, and Marines. So we would tell everybody, you've got to make sure you get your point across on whatever it is. Yeah, we would talk about that. If I mentioned something about this is what I needed, or this is what soldiers have problems with, then I didn't need you to get up and say, "Well, hell my airmen don't have a God damn problem like that." We had one guy that did that one time but we slam dunked his ass and told him, "Look, you son of a bitch, if you want the shit knocked out of you, that's what you're going to get, because we're not going to have that. God damnit, you've got that problem and you just don't want to fess up to it. Sometimes some people are intimidated by the people that they work for, because they say, "Well if I say this, and that's not what The Old Man said then that's a problem." Well God damn, that's your problem, it ain't my damn problem, because you're supposed to stand up for what you was sent there to do.

Interviewer: If you don't, you short change the people you represent.

SMA Morrell: Why hell yeah. Then you might as well not be up

there, for Christ sake. Like I told you before, when we was sitting in there at the bar. If you've got a big enough set of balls, you can do anything you want to, as Sergeant Major of the Army, as long as it's not illegal and you're not trying to do something to better yourself, and as long as you're trying to do things for the people that you represent, by God, nobody will ever do anything to you. Now you'll piss a lot of people off, but I'll guarantee you, the guy you work for, if he's worth a shit, then he's not going to say anything to you about it.

Interviewer: Like the old saying, "If you're right, there's not much they can say about it."

SMA Morrell: You've got that shit right. The only thing they can tell you to do is "We appreciate it. Pack your God damn bags and get the hell out of here."

Interviewer: Like you say, if you work for a guy that has the Army at heart, he's not going to do that.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right, and I never worried about that. You know, I can't understand why anybody would ever worry about a job. If anybody worries about a God damn job that they got, and the position that they're in, then they've got a problem, because they're not the person for that damn job, because they don't know what the hell they're doing or they wouldn't even have any thoughts like that.

Interviewer: Whenever you were on a trip, did you have a member of you staff accompany you? If so, what was his/her responsibility?

SMA Morrell: Well they were there to coordinate with whoever it was that I was visiting, because they most surely had admin people to coordinate with to make sure the schedule was tied-in. Now one of the things that would piss me off real bad, and I got blind-sided on that a couple of times--probably more that a couple of times--is, they would make out an itinerary and then they would send that out. Then they would change that damn thing, unbeknown to me, and here they told some soldiers that I was going to visit that I was going to come down. The

itinerary cut them out, because they had too damn much stuff on the schedule, or we'd run behind time and they'd just say, "Well, they had to do something else and they can't accommodate at this time." Then I'd find out that was not true, that they just overloaded the God damn thing and it was their own inefficiency, or whatever, putting it together that they didn't have it locked in. That really aggravated the hell out of me because you've got soldiers that wanted to see you, and then the damn thing changed. I really got uptight about that and I had them to watch things like that and make sure it didn't happen, because what would happen when I left, they would tell the soldiers, "Well, the Sergeant Major of the Army made the determination that he couldn't make it down there." Well, that pissed the people off, and it wasn't me that did that, for Christ sakes, it was the people that I was visiting that was doing that. So I had to watch that. And then he maintained contact with the office on any issues that was coming up back there, or if The Old Man needed to get a hold of me, or he needed to get some information to me, or whatever the case may be. We always had a link back to the Pentagon. I don't know how the hell I would have done the things that I've done and went to the places that I went to without the support that I had.

Interviewer: They took the notes and let you concentrate on what you were doing.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. I could talk to two or three thousand people, maybe in one setting. The questions that were asked was always documented so we would have a track of what the hell the perspective of what people were thinking about. Then you could look at those and find out where your problems were.

Interviewer: Did you or your admin assistant contact your office in the Pentagon every day?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. That was kind of an SOP (Standing Operating Procedure) that they either contacted us or we would contact them,

because they always knew where we were at. Most generally it was twice a day, and it could be more often, depending on what you run into, or what you was trying to solve, or whatever the problems may be.

Interviewer: Did you and your admin assistant sit down, at the end of the day, whenever the day ended, which was probably late at night, and kind of go over what went on that day?

SMA Morrell: No, because if it was real pressing on something then, yeah, we would. But that person was with me and we always had a chance to talk, and most generally what they would do was put that together and then early the next morning we'd go over that, or if it was something that I was going to get into the next day, then we would do that. But normally, they would put it all into some kind of a format where you could make sense out of it, and then we'd talk about it the next day.

Interviewer: When you went out on a visit, and you arrived at an installation, tell me what your normal routine would be?

SMA Morrell: Well the first thing, get up early, because most generally I took PT (physical training) with a unit out there, provided they was taking PT at the time that I wanted to, so it wouldn't interfere with anything else that I had on the itinerary that day. But most generally, that's how the day started off with, because I did PT every day, regardless of where I was at. Whether it was with the troops or I'd take my admin person that was with me, and we'd go out running or a lot of times the Sergeant Major, or someone that I knew out there, would come by and we'd go out and do PT.

Interviewer: Then you also paid a visit to the installation commander, division commander, etc., and let them know you were there. Right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I always paid them a courtesy call.

Interviewer: Did you find that they also liked to bend your ear?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Yeah, and rightfully so, because they had

problems too. They had the same problems that everybody else runs into; the levels that you got to go through in order to try to get done. So consequently, I helped a hell of a lot of them out, and I'm sure they were aware of it when things come to pass that they had problems with, that they couldn't get through their normal level of command.

Interviewer: Also on those visits, you had somebody appointed to be your host and take you around to the various units. Was it normally the Sergeant Major of the installation, post, division, etc.? Who normally handled that?

SMA Morrell: Well most of the time it was whoever the installation sergeant major was, whether it was the Corps Sergeant Major, the Division Sergeant Major, but then sometimes they would turn me over to a command sergeant major of a battalion or a first sergeant, and I didn't mind that. A hell of them was reluctant to do that, but the ones that really had their stuff together, hell yeah they'd do that and I'd go on about my business. A lot of them was afraid I might find something and then they thought they'd be on the short end of the stick. Those kind of people I never did understand., but what the hell, that's what makes the world go around, I guess.

Interviewer: It probably made a lot of them nervous when you talked to their troops.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, it damn sure did. I've always said, "What the hell have you got to be nervous about? If you're doing what the hell you're supposed to be doing, then you shouldn't be nervous, right?"

Interviewer: Did you find that the soldier was not reluctant at all to tell you what was going on?

SMA Morrell: You're absolutely right. You put a soldier in the right place out there and that soldier will tell you what the hell is going on. Of course, you can't always take that as factual, but where there's smoke, there's fire. I pickup on a hell of a lot of things from conversations with soldiers.

Interviewer: Did you find that the soldiers you talked to really enjoyed the opportunity to talk to the Sergeant Major of the Army?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I think that the majority of the people that I interfaced with, yeah, they enjoyed being able to say what they wanted to say. Hell, I always enjoyed talking with soldiers. That's what I wanted to do. Hell, I was always a soldier. And again, I think that's where a hell of a lot of people make mistakes, because they get in a position and then they're afraid of soldiers, for some reason. I don't know why, but I found that throughout my Army career.

Interviewer: You also found out that soldiers liked to tell you about their jobs.

SMA Morrell: You're right. Yeah, they're very proud of what the hell they're doing.

Interviewer: Whenever you came back from a trip, did your staff provide a reading file for you so you would know exactly what transpired while you were gone?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, and that was a hell of a thing to deal with, because just as soon as you got back, you got anywhere from one to three brief cases full of shit that you had to go through, and hell, sometimes that took about two hours. Hell, you could be gone for two or three weeks and when you come back, there all that stuff was, and all of it was stuff that had you had to get out right away. The more pressing things, you did that over the telephone. But then you had all of that other stuff that you had to take care of, and that was aggravating at times, but that just goes with the job.

Interviewer: While you were Sergeant Major of the Army, you had the opportunity to visit the Peoples Republic of China.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Tell me about that trip.

SMA Morrell: Well, that was the first time that the Chief of Staff of the Army had visited China, I think since General Marshall, if I'm

not mistaken. That was when we was trying to further the relationship between the United States Army and China. China has always held the United States Army in high esteem, more so, I think, than any of the other services. Now I found out that, China respected and believed the leadership of the American Army, more so than they did anybody else, to in...

(End Tape OH 94.6-1, Side 2)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-2, Side 1)

Interviewer: Sergeant Major, as the last tape ended you were talking about the respect that the Chinese have for the American Army. Do you want to continue.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I guess that goes back to the 1930s, if my memory serves me right, when there was an American Army presence in China. I guess that is something that has just carried over for all those years. The purpose of the visit was to reestablish that, and I think, probably try to work interference, which I know it was, with North Korea, because China has one hell of an influence on North Korea. But anyway, the mission that I had was to go over there and brief the Chinese Army on the American Army Noncommissioned Officers Corps. I sat with the Chief of Staff of the Army in all of the meetings that was conducted there, and I did brief the Chinese leadership on how we raised, and how we trained, and how we established a Noncommissioned Officers Corps. I gave them all of the materials on how we train people in PLDC (Primary Leadership Development Course), BNCOC (Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course), ANCO (Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course), Sergeants Major Academy. I took all of those publications to them. They had a six hundred man class in session at the time, that we visited. I got to see a division, with all support weapons, on a live fire exercise. This was a whole division, in mass, in an attack using Russian tactics. Then I got to talk to a lot of those soldiers, after the live fire exercise, and I got to look at the equipment. I got to

inspect a whole division, with all supporting weapons, on a hell of a parade field. The equipment was very well maintained, although it was old equipment. Then we got to visit their equivalency to West Point, their field artillery school, their naval ships and submarines, and also their air force. Their air force flew up around during that trip. So I got to look at all aspects of their military.

Interviewer: What was your impression of their demonstration of a division in an attack?

SMA Morrell: It was "balls to the wall." They had their stuff together. It was very good. Hell, they started just about like we do. First preparatory fire, and then all of the tanks come in, and then the infantry comes in behind the tanks. Hell, it looked pretty damn good to me. I'd hate to have been in the middle of it. Of course, our tactics are a hell of a lot better, as you know, and the equipment we have is a hell of a lot better. But they still know what the hell it is that they're doing. We got to watch a live fire exercise by a company, with all of their organic weapons. That was a damn show in itself, because they had a strip of land that might have been a mile long, and they started right where we were sitting at, and they was shooting recoilless rifles right there. In fact, I had to tell the Chief of Staff to get the hell out of the way, because I said, "That guy's going to shoot that recoilless weapon from right over there." And sure as hell, he did. They had civilians on both sides of this damn fire zone, and they was all watching this thing. Hell, in the American Army, a range officer would have had a heart attack, because you had these people on both sides, watching this thing. Shit was flying everywhere, but nobody got hurt. It was a hell of a good exercise.

Interviewer: Tell me about the Chinese Noncommissioned Officers Corps.

SMA Morrell: Well, one of the problems, you don't know who in the hell is in charge. They'll tell you, "Well, we don't have anybody in

charge. Everybody just works for that person because of respect.", or whatever the case may be. But you knew who in hell the leaders were, but they never wore any insignias or anything like that, but you could pick them up right away. What they wanted was redundancy in the leadership, just like we have, to where if you get someone that gets wounded or gets killed, you have someone else that can come in and takeover. That's one of the problems that most of your foreign armies have, anyway, because of the political aspect of it. They're all afraid of someone getting into power and then creating problems within the framework of whatever it is that they have setup. So I don't know who in the hell they had been talking to, prior to us getting there, but they was very interested in trying to pattern their Noncommissioned Officers Corps after what we have. Now whether they got it off the ground, I don't know. I know they had a six hundred man class in session, now what kind of class and what they were doing, I don't know, but that's what they wanted to do. Just to show you about how soldiers are, I asked one soldier over there, through an interpreter, how he liked the Army. He told me he didn't like the damn Army. If he had his way about it he would be out of the damn Army and he'd be doing something else. I said I don't know what kind of hell that guy got after I left, but I'm sure someone read to him from the good book, but he was very honest, which surprised me because I didn't think anyone there would be that outspoken, but that individual was.

Interviewer: The Chinese Army, like the former Soviet Army, is a conscripted army, Do they have any professional NCOs?

SMA Morrell: No, they don't have any. You've got one person in charge, and that's it.

Interviewer: What was the reaction of the people when you gave them the briefing on our NCOES (Noncommissioned Officer Education System)?

SMA Morrell: First of all, they had a hell of a time understanding

what the hell I was, or who I was, or what I did. The Chief of Staff of the Army had a hell of a time explaining that to the leadership of the Chinese Army. Finally, he told them, "He's just like a four-star general." He said, "He's like a four-star general, only he's a noncommissioned officer and he's the guy that tells me what is good and what is not good about the Army. He gives me advice and recommendations on what needs to be done, because the majority of the people in any Army are the enlisted people." Finally, they understood that, but they had a hell of a time trying to figure out what a Sergeant Major of the Army is, let alone what noncommissioned officers are. After I briefed them on that, they had a better understanding of it. Like I told you before, they're probably still translating all of those damn manuals and everything that I took over there to them.

Interviewer: How long were you over there?

SMA Morrell: If I remember right, I think we was there about nine or ten days, or something like that.

Interviewer: Where did you stay?

SMA Morrell: We stayed where they keep all foreign dignitaries. I forget the name of the damn place. It was like a guest house that they run and it's owned by the Chinese government. It's just like a big hotel. They've got different ones there. For the Americans, they had all of these people trained on American and what Americans like; the food and all that kind of stuff. Then they had one where they put people visiting from another country in that particular hotel. I forget what the hell they called that. I might have a name around here someplace or something. But anyway, that's where we stayed, initially, and then we flew into other cities and we stayed in hotels.

Interviewer: How was the food.

SMA Morrell: Good. They had good food. I enjoyed the food.

Interviewer: How was the hospitality?

SMA Morrell: Good. I liked it. You know, a soldier is a soldier.

You can't blame a soldier because of the politics that are involved in whatever the hell is going on at the time. But I enjoyed the people. They are very hard working people; a hell of a lot of them. They're about forty of fifty years behind. It reminds you of back in the '30s or '40s, I guess, like it was in this country.

Interviewer: What impressed you most about the Chinese Army?

SMA Morrell: Well, I think the discipline and the equipment that they had. It was old equipment, but it was very well maintained. They seemed to know what the hell they were doing, from all of the observations that I with them.

Interviewer: How many Army installations did you say you visited?

SMA Morrell: Oh Jesus, I don't remember exactly how many. We also got a demonstration by the counter-terrorist team. Of course I had to laugh at that. I asked this one general, although he said he wasn't a general, but he sure as hell was. I ask him what the hell they needed a counter-terrorist team for, hell, there ain't nobody that going to do anything in China. He just laughed. But we were the only westerners that got to see their counter-terrorist team, which is equivalent to our Delta Force. They had their shit together, I'll tell you that. They were very astute in tactics and everything on how to handle a terrorist threat or anything else.

Interviewer: Did you get a chance to observe any airborne operations?

SMA Morrell: No. I was happy about that, because I sure as hell didn't want to be jumping out of no damn Chinese aircraft.

Interviewer: What was your lasting impression of your visit to China?

SMA Morrell: Well, we got to visit The Great Wall. When I found out I was going over there and that we was going to visit The Great Wall of China, I said, "Well I'm going to urinate off the God damn Great Wall of China." Hell, I was scared to get up to the edge of that

damn thing, because it's about sixty or sixty-five feet high. You could drive two vehicles, abreast, on that thing, although you really couldn't, because of the steps and everything that went up. But it was wide enough. What a hell of a feat that was to build. Jesus crimina, I couldn't believe anybody would build something like that, but that was built to keep the race pure, and keep all of the hoodlums out. Evidently it must have done a pretty damn good job. Then I got to visit The Forbidden City and the Terra Cotta Soldiers. You know where they got all of those people buried, miles of people buried facing towards to thing or another. I think you read about that.

Interviewer: Yeah, the soldier statues they found buried there.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. You know, it's really amazing. The resources that is in that country. Only about one third of the land is populated; two-thirds of it is not populated. They all live in the bigger parts like Beijing, Shanghai, and what the hell the name of the other places that we went to there. You've got four different climates in that country too. You've got the cold region, the tropics, the mountainous region, and you've got the desert. All of that is right there in China.

Interviewer: What time of the year did you go over there?

SMA Morrell: I think it was in the fall, if I'm not mistaken.

Interviewer: What year?

SMA Morrell: 1986.

Interviewer: Do have any more comments about that trip to China?

SMA Morrell: I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed seeing another way of life and seeing the Chinese people. In fact, what I really enjoyed to is that I got some very candid answers from some of the senior people there, because I asked them if they fought in the Korean War or were advisors to the North Korean Army, and they admitted that "Yes they were." I asked them about the Vietnam War and they were advisors to North Vietnam. They was not reluctant to talk to you.

Interviewer: You're talking about the generals.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I guess they were generals. They said they weren't, but I know damn well they were general because one of them wanted me to get him some camouflage fatigues, which I did. He wanted some general stars sewed on them. I told him, "I can't do that because you all don't have any rank." They was in the process of establishing a rank structure, at that particular period of time.

Interviewer: Did they indicate to you that perhaps they may try to establish some sort of a professional NCO Corps?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I think they are probably working like hell at doing that. They probably have got a pretty good start. I would assume that they do have from what we got. Because of the politics, and the State Department, and the Administration, we did a lot of things. There were a lot of things that were accomplished there on visits back and forth, such as some equipment modernization that they wanted. There were some things that they wanted from us, but because of events that happened later, that kind of deteriorated. They did come over on a contingent and visit the United States, after that. I think there have been a few more visits, but I don't know how many. But that has kind of deteriorated because of what's going on over there right now, and after the Tien An Men Square fiasco. You know what American thinks about that, which is bull shit too, because look what happened to Cox's Army in Washington, D.C. at the end of the First World War, when they promised everybody a bonus. The American government, like they always do, reneged on that and they all marched on Washington, D.C. MacArthur was told to get them the hell out of there. If my memory serves me right, I think there were some people injures, and probably some people killed on that, but we're very forgetful. Of course we condemn China for the Tien An Men Square. The only thing I condemn China on is, God damn, what did they wait so long for. You know, they paralyzed the damn Capital. Hell, I would have pulled the plug on them a hell of a sooner that they did pull the plug on them. They're making a hell of a lot of

progress in there. They made their God damn point and they should have got the hell out of there, and I had no God damn sympathy for what went on at Tien An Men Square. We'd do the same. If you think that you had, say, a million people that would plug-up Washington, D.C., what the hell do you think would happen? Do you think we'd just say, "Well, you all need to pack your bag and go home." We'd have the God damn Army up there unscrambling that thing, because they'd paralyze this country. We always have the right God damn answers. We meddle too much in people's business. We're the United States of America because of what was founded and what was formed into this country, and the kind of government we've got. We're very fortunate to be as young as we are to have a government that really operates they way we operate. But our problem, on the State Department side of the house, is we want to force our God damn way of life upon everybody else out there. That ain't going to work. We've done screwed up a hell of a lot of things by doing that. Look at what we've done to some of the countries in South America. We just literally screwed the whole God damn thing up because we want them on this human rights thing. Well, shit, we had better get our own house in order before we start preaching to somebody else. That's my philosophy.

Interviewer: How does the Chinese Army select their young NCOs?

SMA Morrell: Well, I don't know how they were going to do that. What they told me, originally, they took the more educated people that they had and, I think, probably it is similar to what Korea did at the time the Korean War was going on, with the KATSUSAS (Korean Army Troops Supporting the United States Army) that we selected over there; the people that were better educated than what the average conscript was that they drafted or put into the military. That's how they was going to try to run that thing. That was the indication and what they told me.

Interviewer: While you were Sergeant Major of the Army, you had a

chance to visit Korea. Correct?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. The best damn allies that the United States of America has is South Korea. Bar none.

Interviewer: Did you get a chance to visit with the South Korean Army?

SMA Morrell: I sure did. Every time I visited there, I always visited with elements of the South Korean Army.

Interviewer: Now that there's saber-rattling going on in North Korea, we all wonder what's going to happen in that part of the world.

SMA Morrell: You've got that right. Because you've got a president up there that really doesn't give a damn and he has made the statement for a long, long time, that before he dies he wants to jump that border again, and probably he will.

Interviewer: While you were Sergeant Major of the Army, we also had "Operation Urgent Fury.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Tell me about that operation. Your visits down there.

SMA Morrell: Well, I never visited down in Grenada. There was no reason to because it was a very short duration in-and-out type thing. I found out about that when we had a four-star conference going on. The Chief always wanted me there when they had the two-stars, the three-stars, and the four-stars in for a conference. I had to be there to attend that conference with him, which I was very glad to do, because I got a hell of a lot of things accomplished. I always had time to address them on anything that I felt that I needed to make them aware of. I always enjoyed that because that give me a chance to tell them some of the things that nobody else would tell them. So I found out that was going on, and I told The Old Man, I said, "Well I won't be here tomorrow. I'm going down to Hunter Army Airfield.", because I knew the Rangers was going to go down there. He told me in no uncertain

terms to keep my ass in Washington, D.C. and that I wasn't going anywhere. I was just pulling his leg. He kidded with me, but then he said, "Yeah, I know you'd like to go, but you can't do that. You've got to stay here." Hell, I wouldn't have gone anyway, because all I would have done was screwed the damn thing up, because someone would have to take care of me. Hell, I had no business being there. That was a good operation, I think. It was in-and-out.

Interviewer: Did you ever get a chance to talk to Sergeant Major Carpenter about that operation?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Him and Sergeant Major Vowels, who had the 2nd Ranger Battalion.

Interviewer: Out of Fort Lewis.

SMA Morrell: Out of Fort Lewis. I got to visit both of those battalions after it was over with and talked to the soldiers, and talked to the Rangers about how that went down. Of course, you know, there were a hell of a lot of problems with the interface between services on that damn operation, and that was screwed-up. The reason for that is still because of the jealousy that exists between all of the services up there. Everybody wants a God damn piece of the action when something comes up, and consequently, a lot of times it's best to give it to one service and let them do the doggone thing instead of trying to involve other people that does not have the capability of being compatible in a situation like that. We've got ourselves into problems time and again in the same mode.

Interviewer: When Charlie Beckwith took the mission into Iran to free the hostages, there were too many finger in the pie and that messed that mission up.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, everybody wants a piece of the action. The hell of it is, nobody wants to sit down and rationalize and think things out. Now I will say one thing that happened on my watch up there, is the Chief of Staff of the Army had better relationships and had done a

lot of work on an agreement between the other services and the Army, than I had ever known done in the past or has been done in the future, from what I read and what I've been told. He really did a lot to straighten that out, more especially with the Air Force, because we depend on the Air Force a hell of a lot for close-in air support, and transportation, and all those things. Hell, they was miles apart. Everybody wanted to do their own thing.

Interviewer: Did you have an opportunity to sit down with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, or the Chief of Naval Operations and talk to those senior officers?

SMA Morrell: Hell no. I talked to them on different occasions, but not down in a setting like that. I might see them at a function and talk to them, or be visiting their Master Chief of the Air Force, the Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, the Sergeant Major of the Marines Corps, and they might be around and I'd say something to them or talk to them. But nothing like anything like that.

Interviewer: What was your interaction with the senior enlisted persons of the other branches of the services?

SMA Morrell: I had a good rapport with them. They was good people and we had a good relationship. We got together periodically and we'd help each other out in anyway we could on issues that come up, because, hell, you always have people living on Army installations, or Army people living on Air Force and Navy installations. So there was a lot of interaction that went on for the betterment of the enlisted personnel and families, in that regard, in trying to help people out. Then a lot of times you'd be visiting and you'd pickup a problem that was really their's, and you'd go back and tell them, "Look, you need to look at this." They would do the same thing in some of the places where they were at where we had Army people, so it worked out real well.

Interviewer: How was your working relationship with the National Guard Bureau and OCAR (Office, Chief of Army Reserve)?

SMA Morrell: I had a good working relationship with the two people that was there at the time that I was there, and I visited a hell of a lot of their units. Sometimes I think probably I visited more of their people than what they did, but of course that was because of the places that I traveled to, I guess.

Interviewer: Who was up there? Don Ingram and Cornelius Boykin?

SMA Morrell: Ingram and Boykin, and then Doug Murray come in after Boykin.

Interviewer: Right. Boykin had OCAR and Don Ingram had the NGB (National Guard Bureau).

SMA Morrell: Yeah. So I had a good working relationship with them. They were good people, trying to do things, but what you've got to understand about that side of the coin is, there's a hell of a lot of politics involved in that. I'm not talking about politics that is down at the level where you find the Guard and Reserve at, but I'm talking about a hell of a lot of politics within the Department of Defense and within the Congress. When you try to do things, you get short stopped because of policies or because of whoever might be at DOD (Department of Defense) or who is in the Congress. You talk about politics. God damn, that a tough nut to crack there. You can beat your head against the wall if you don't get anything solved, a lot of time.

Interviewer: When you went out to visit the Reserve Components, both the National Guard and the Army Reserve, what were your impressions during those visits?

SMA Morrell: The soldier are good. They want to do what's right and they really have the interest of what they're doing at heart. The shortfalls, I tried to do something about them, but shit, I made some headway and then I didn't make too much headway sometimes, too. That was because of the layers of bureaucracy that you had to go through in order to try to get something done in the Guard and Reserve. And again, it was all because of the political fallout on the damn thing. A lot of

soldiers did not get the full benefit of what was out there because of that. Because people were afraid to really go to the next level, and then to the next level, in order to get an answer because of the people that they might piss off in between, or the political ramifications of it. So that was very frustrating. Hell, it still exists out there today. I don't know how in the hell you would ever overcome that. You've got good noncommissioned officers out there, and hell, you've got good officers out there, and you've got good soldier out there. You know, a lot of people complain about the training. Well, hell, it's not their fault. A lot of times that's driven by policy or driven by something a hell of a lot bigger than what they are. I just thank God we've got the National Guard and the Reserve, because even when we were bigger, without this damn reduction in force that we have had, we still wouldn't have been worth a damn on the battlefield without the expertise of the Guard and Reserve on what they have within it. Right now, of course you hear everybody say, up at the Department of the Army and the Congress and every God damn body else that don't know shit about what an army is all about, they'll tell you we can fight a war on two fronts. They are a lying son of a bitch. They're ain't no way in hell, even with the Guard and Reserve, you can fight a war on two fronts, because we don't have the damn manpower; we don't have the personnel; nor do we have the capability to get people to the two fronts. Hell, we're lucky to get them to one damn front.

Interviewer: Also, we're looking at a draw-down to ten divisions.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right.

Interviewer: Plus a large cut in the Reserve Components.

SMA Morrell: That's right. I made the statement in 1985, that the Army would go to somewhere between nine and eleven divisions, with what I saw coming on the horizon. They're going to cut this God damn thing. In fact, you hear them talk now about a hollow army. Hell, we've already got a hollow army. We've had one for two damn years,

and they bull shit about it. They don't lay this shit out on the line; they're afraid to. The people in the hieracy just don't have the God damn intestinal fortitude to tell the Secretary of the Army, and the Secretary of Defense, and the Congress exactly how this God damn thing falls out. Because of the end of the Cold War, everybody thinks, "Well hell, we don't have to have very many people." Now let me tell you something about the God damn Cold War. Russia has never kept a treaty since the Soviet Union has been in existence. Take smart people. If you've got problems and you've got things that are costing you money, what do you want to do? The American way is to get rid of it. Right? They got smart. All of them God damn parasites that they had, they got rid of them. They give everybody their God damn freedom. And now they can build their economy, with other people's money, and they're still building their army and modernizing with new equipment. They're bringing a new tank on-line, and all that shit. When they built their economy and build their army back up, what the hell do you think they're going to do? Everybody thinks, "Well, we're going to be friends, and friends, and friends." Friends, my ass. They'll come back and haunt us. That's exactly what's going to happen, to my way of thinking. And we just cut the hell out of our Army.

Interviewer: Those hard-core communists are still there.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. They're God damn powerful too. I think you'll see that before the year is out, that they're not going to turn that damn thing around. I just think it's a God damn shame the way they have cut the Army, but what I really think is a crying shame is what they have done to soldiers and families.

Interviewer: How do think the down-sizing of the Army will affect recruiting and retention? A lot of senior NCOs and officers are now asking the question, "What kind of a future am I going to have?" How do you think that's going to affect the Army?

SMA Morrell: Why hell, it has already affected the Army, because

I talk to Recruiting Command people all of the time; recruiters out here. It already has had an impact on recruiting. They go someplace trying to get an individual to go into the Army, and right next door to them is someone that wanted to stay in the Army that got kicked out because of the reduction in force. That guy says, "Hell, don't go in the Army. You don't have a career. Shit, you go in there and the next thing you know they'll tell you that they can't use you no more and you've got to get out." The same thing on the officer side. It's going to have a hell of an impact, I think, on trying to keep a professional Noncommissioned Officers Corps and a professional Officers Corps. I've had indicators and have had people talk to me that we're liable to end up with the least desirable type people in the Army, because of this reduction in force, than what we ever had, even when we had the draft in effect. There are a hell of a lot of people that are smarter than I am that should pickup on that, for crying out loud, but that's not being done. And again it goes back to people standing up for what the hell position they was hired for and trying to make people understand. I don't see that being done.

Interviewer: That was one of the questions I was going to ask you. For so many years we struggled to raise the enlistment standards, and I was going to ask you what affect you think the down-sizing will have on that?

SMA Morrell: Just exactly what I said. I think you'll end up with an army that is not like the Army you and I knew before we got out, before they started this. I think you'll end up with a much less educated caliber of people. Take our Administration. The Administration we got in right now don't give a God damn about soldiers. They could give a shit less. The majority of them wouldn't serve in the Army, come hell or high water. Hell, they'd probably go to China. I wish they would. China would put their ass to work and then they'd understand what working of a living is all about.

Interviewer: Do you think that the large number of people that we have in our Congress right now, never having served in the military, is starting to create some of our problems?

SMA Morrell: Well, I don't know if that's the reason. I think the biggest reason is because of all these God damn giveaway programs that we've got in the United States of America. They can't be made to understand that there could be a threat out there. And you know that this world will continue to be unstable. What they want to do is take that money and continue to have the giveaway programs that we have and that's where it all comes from, because they want money for the constituents that they have in A, B, and C city, county, state, or wherever it is that they come from. They think the place to get that from is the Defense Budget. They really don't realize what kind of an impact that has if you got yourself into hot water. So I'm not so sure... I've even made this statement: "We've been fortunate to have people in Congress that served in one of the services." But you know, a hell of a lot of them served in positions that they wouldn't even know anything about a God damn soldier. They don't even know what a soldier smells like. They never walked in the footsteps where soldiers walk. I don't know if that's always been helpful to us or not. I think the way people have been blind sided by that is they say, "Well, old Senator So-and-so used to be in whatever it was." What the hell was he in? Some of them wasn't even in the God damn Army. They made all that shit up that they were and they didn't even serve. Some of them said they served and they didn't serve in the places they said they did, which has come out in times past. So I'm not so sure that is detrimental to us, because I think what is really detrimental are those Congressmen and Senators that are not listening when someone is telling them what the fallout or what the alternatives to something can be. They just kind of let that pass over their heads.

Interviewer: When you were up at the Pentagon, did you have a list

of the different briefing that were going on throughout the Pentagon, and did you have the freedom to attend any one that you wanted to?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, anything that pertained to the Army. I could attend any briefing. A lot of times my presence was requested at briefings that they had. So anytime I wanted go listen to something, I had no problem if I wanted to do that.

Interviewer: How often did you get briefings from MILPERCEN (Military Personnel Center)?

SMA Morrell: Shit, they would have been in my office every day if I would have let them come in there. But I received very good briefings and I had a good working relationship with MILPERCEN. I had no heartburn on that in anyway whatsoever. They had a bunch of damn good people over there; Herb Swabb, Joe Himelick, Larry Harris, Strickland. I think those guys really had the soldier at heart. I think they did a hell of a good job.

Interviewer: Also during your tenure, NCOES really started moving forward when the Sergeants Major Academy took over the common core responsibility for the ANCOC, BNCOC, and PLDC. Give me your observation concerning the changes in NCOES during that time.

SMA Morrell: Well we finally convinced the Officers Corps, God damnit, that if they wanted to have a professional Noncommissioned Officer Corps, we had to train it. And of course, I give all of the credit to the Chief of Staff of the Army, my boss. I told him, "Look, God damnit, if we're going to have a good professional Noncommissioned Officer Corps, then we're going to have to train them, but one of the things we're going to have to do is provide the resources that are needed in order to train these people out there." There were a hell of a lot of others that was totally opposed. They wanted it, but they didn't want to pay the price for it. That was a God damn battle. In fact, that was a battle all of the time, trying to get the resources and the time available, because commanders that had only commanded for

two years really didn't give a shit--now not all of them, but the majority of them--as long as they got a good report card for their command time, and they didn't want to lose anybody out of that unit, because they wanted to keep everybody there, "balls to the wall" and consequently, that was a fight all the time to try to not let that take place. Another problem I had in that regard, Butch, and I talked to you about this before, but I don't know if you remember, but that was, we had some noncommissioned officers, and there are probably still some senior noncommissioned officers in the Army, that think, hell, we don't need those schools that we have. And the God damn attendance at the NCOES has not been what it was in the past, and it continues because of the shrinking budget and people taking the money and doing something else with it. They don't want to pay the price, and consequently, that's going to hurt the Army too, down the road, because then we get to the point where we want somebody to do something, but God damnit we never train them to do that. I've always said that was one of the biggest problems that the American Army has always had, up until we got this thing off and running. You know, it took us a hell of a long time to build the Army that we did have; we don't have it now. It took us ten damn years to build the Army that fought in Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf. God damn, you couldn't do that with the Army that we've got today, because you don't have the resources, and I don't think you have the training, that was done back then, being done today, because, again, they don't have the money to do it.

Interviewer: During your tenure, did you find that whenever the Army wanted to cut money, the first thing they want to try to cut is TDY money for NCOES?

SMA Morrell: The first God damn thing is "there's too much money being spent on schools." But there's never too much money to be spent on officer education. And I don't have a damn things against officers' education. Hell they need that, for Christ sake. If anybody needs it,

they God damn sure do too, but by God, on the same respect, your noncommissioned officers need to be educated for what we expect the noncommissioned officer to do. And if we want to be successful on the battlefield, then by God, you better continue to do that. Because if you don't, then we're going to get a hell of a lot of people killed, because you've got a hell of a lot more noncommissioned officer than you do officers, and the God damn noncommissioned officer is the one that's going to be out there seeing that things get done. It damn sure isn't going to be the officer. You know that as well as I do, and everybody else does, but a hell of a lot of people won't admit it, and that's what the problem is in the God damn Army. It's just like when we started the NCOES. You know as well as I do, we had a lot of God damn academies that was in World War II billets. They wasn't putting any money aside to build the new facilities or renovate the facilities that was conducive to a good learning environment. We still have that problem. because it has not been properly resourced. Now I had to get into a pissing contest with TRADOC (Training and Doctrine Command) over the elementary school that they had at Fort Benning. They needed a million dollars to renovate that and turn it into a Noncommissioned Officers Academy. Well, TRADOC said that they would, and then I got wind that they were going to renovate it and give it to the IOBC (Infantry Officer Basic Course), or the officer side of the house. I had to go to the Chief of Staff of the Army and tell him, "Look here, God damnit, you know, Congress said we want you out of the World War II billets. We've got an NCO Academy down there and we've got the opportunity to have a good one." Well, The Old Man directed them to put the money into it, to renovate it, and give it to them for an NCO academy. I was just fortunate to be able to be down there and pickup on that, and make that happen. But you've still got a lot of academies out there that are in undesirable locations. Look how long it took us to get the God damn Sergeants Major Academy building on-line, and that

son of a bitch still wouldn't be built if I had not have gone to General Wickam and told him, "God damn, TRADOC is going to keep slipping that and using the money ." He directed, I think it was General Richardson, to get the damn ground broke on that thing and get it off the ground and get it to running. There was a reluctancy on the bureaucratic side of the house--at the higher echelon--on the officer side, to not build that Sergeants Major Academy building down there, because they thought it was too God damn good for noncommissioned officer training.

Interviewer: I guess we still have some senior officers that don't think that Academy should be in operation.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. And they do everything that they can to continue to try to get the money to do something else with; and that's wrong. I did not like to see the Academy go to nine months, of course with the cutback, they say, "Well, you know, you don't have that many people.", but I don't know if that is...

(End Tape OH 94.6-2, Side 1)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-2, Side 2)

Interviewer: When the last tape ran out, we were talking about going to the nine month course at the Academy. Do you want to continue talking about that?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I fought that all of the time that I was up there. Periodically that would crop up; going from a six month course to a nine month course. I just didn't think that that was the way to go. I thought that six months was long enough. I didn't want to see it come down any from the six months we had, although there was a hell of a lot of discussion on trying to make it similar to what the Air Force and the Navy ran, but I was never agreeable to that. One of the selling points that someone tried to sell, "Well, they'd take families." Bull shit! They're not going to take families out there if you go to a nine month course. The people that was going to take families would have continued to take them for a six month course. Because of the work that

family members do now, and then you've got kids and nobody wants to take them out of school. They own houses and all that kind of stuff. So shit, I don't think that's going to increase your family population out there. I'm not so sure that might not be a stumbling block to continuing that type of education for senior noncommissioned officers in the Army. With the cut-back, and what I addressed when I was still up there, was one thing I thought they should have looked at, is sergeants first class, promotable, and even with the reduction in force, you take a sergeants first class, promotable, and send them to the Sergeants Major Academy. That would give you a hell of a lot longer time to use an educated person, that what it is when you only send E8s and E9s to the God damn thing. So that's what someone should have looked at, but everybody jumped on this thing, "Well you'll have a school year.", and this kind of stuff. I think that was a wrong approach to that. That's my personal opinion. And the other thing that you might find is, by going to a nine month course, I think you'll have the numbers that they anticipate that they've going to have. I don't just think you'll have that. I think, probably, some time you might see more people decline that than what we have had in the past, because of those reasons. So I think it should have stayed a six month course.

Interviewer: Do you think that our structured NCOES, and also the Sergeants Major Academy, over the years, has changed the way that the Officers Corps looks at the NCO Corps?

SMA Morrell: Those officers that are not professional officers, yeah. But those officers that are professional, that really understand the United States Army, and understand what makes the United States Army operate, you don't need to convince them of that, because they know God damn well that the Army can't operate without the noncommissioned officers. But those nonbelievers, yeah, you're still are going to have those fighting the Noncommissioned Officer Education System, because they think they can do that at station level; they can do that in the unit; they can do that in the company; or do it at the installation,

whatever the case may be. And the hell of it is, at the time when I was on active duty, you had some senior noncommissioned officers that thought they could do the same God damn thing.

Interviewer: When you and I came in the Army, we did not have a structured training system. Now, under NCOES, we do have a structured system. How has the NCOES impacted on the Army

SMA Morrell: I don't think that you would see the Army that is in existence today, if we had not had the good Noncommissioned Officer Education System. You would not have seen us do as good as what we did in the conflicts that we've been involved in, more especially in Desert Storm, because the noncommissioned officers are really the ones that made that God damn thing work, if anybody would stand up and give them credit for it, but nobody ever gives the noncommissioned officers credit for a God damn thing that happened in the Persian Gulf. Some people give a little lip service, but you've never heard it from the hierarchy, for Christ sake. So without that, we would still be wallowing around out there. I think you would still have good noncommissioned officer leadership, because of the training that the individual got from another good noncommissioned officer, but overall, you would not have that throughout all your units. Now prior to NCOES, I think you had pretty good solid leadership in your combat arms. But then in your combat support and combat service support, you had a lack of it, more especially in your combat service support. But through NCOES, that thing has really picked up, and it is damn good today. Hell, I don't know how you could make it any better, as long as you continue to do that. If you do away with it, then we're right back where we were fifteen years ago.

Interviewer: I think Sergeant Major Bainbridge made a good statement. He said, "World War II was won in the classrooms at Carlisle and C&GS (Command and General Staff College). Desert Storm was won in the classrooms of NCOES."

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: I think that pretty well sums up the NCOES.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Yeah. I think NCOES has did a hell of a lot for the Army, and rightfully so. You know, how in the hell can you criticize someone, or relieve someone, or reduce someone, if you haven't adequately trained them, for Christ sakes.

Interviewer: How many times did you visit the NTC (National Training Center)

SMA Morrell: I don't know. Many times.

Interviewer: Give me your assessment of the affect of the NTC on the Army.

SMA Morrell: Well, initially, when the NTC first started operating, it was damn good. But then the senior leadership come up on the net and said, "We need that in order to test battalion commanders and brigade commanders." They really got away from the purpose of the NTC. God damnit, the NTC was to train a company or a battalion size element and let everybody exercise leadership in order to learn, and be a good training mode. Then they come out with this thing where they wanted to check and see if a battalion commander should be promoted to brigade commander, and if a brigade commander should be promoted to a general officer. I was totally God damn opposed to that. And son of a bitch if TRADOC didn't ramrod that God damn thing through. That's what they're doing, as far as I'm concerned. They have took the rationale for the NTC away from what it was specifically designed for in the start. But I think units have been a hell of a lot better after going through, but I think they would be a hell of a lot better if it wasn't used as a grading factor for commanders. It too predicated on that.

Interviewer: It had become an evaluation report card.

SMA Morrell: It's an evaluation report card for battalion commanders and brigade commanders.

Interviewer: During Desert Storm they sent a Guard armor unit, I

think from, Georgia, to the NTC. They found that the unit wasn't prepared to perform the mission they would be called upon in combat. Do you think that by sending the Guard and Reserve units out to the NTC, and putting them in that realistic environment, it will make them more combat ready?

SMA Morrell: Well definitely it's going to make them more combat ready. But everybody picks on what? The 48th Brigade? Well hell the leadership was all screwed up in that outfit. That's the only problem you had with the 48th Brigade. Hell, you had a lieutenant in charge of a company, and there was twenty captains assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company that didn't want the responsibility of command time. So it was strictly the damn leadership, and you couldn't do anything with the leadership because of the politics involved in it. The soldiers were good. There wasn't a God damn thing wrong with the soldiers that was in that outfit, it stemmed from the leadership. Now I'm talking about both the officer leadership and the noncommissioned officer leadership.

Interviewer: When you visited Korea, as Sergeant Major of the Army. What were some of the problems that faced the troops stationed in Korea?

SMA Morrell: Hell, they had many problems over there. One was the living conditions that they had to live in. Another one was that damn training that they had up on the border, and the facilities that they had up there. That was pretty tough. In fact, it's still kind of tough up there in some of the places that they have, although that has been improved a hell of a lot, during my tenure. Since that particular period of time, there have been a hell of a lot of improvements, but it is still not what it should be, because of the presence that we have had over there. You can take a look at Germany. Jesus Christ, it took us for year to get anything worth a damn in Germany, and we still haven't got it done in Korea. We've still got people that's not living in very

good living conditions. Then you're training is also constrained because of the population you have over there. If you had the good facilities, you could probably increase that tour of duty. I was an advocate of that; increasing the tour of duty for people in Korea. That's another problem that they have, affecting the combat side and the training side, hell, you put a soldier over there and by the time you get that soldier trained and oriented to what's going on in Korea, and then they take a thirty day leave, which they're authorized, then they come back, and then they start phasing out, why hell, you have that person for a very small amount of time. I always said, what we should do is have good facilities and take that tour to eighteen months in order to have good continuity and have a soldier trained for whatever the threat may be. I think that would increase the training and the readiness in Korea itself. But hell, I got fought like madman over that.

Interviewer: One of the sergeants major said that one of the problems that they saw was that, for years we looked at Korea as twenty-five or thirty one-year tours, which is different than the way we looked at Germany.

SMA Morrell: That's right.

Interviewer: With the old Quonset huts that they at Camp Casey.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, that's right, but they've made a hell of a lot of progress. But it's still not at the point where I feel it should be. Like I always told Secretary Wienberger. I said, "God damnit, one thing that always frustrates me," I said, "you need someone at the Department of Defense--he understood this--that has been there, and when you all come up with a God damn treaty, or you come up with whatever the rules are going to be, then you need the prespective from the people that is going to have to implement that damn thing." One of the biggest fallacies that I saw, and have seen during my military career, is that the State Department will negotiate, and they come up with whatever it

is and then they expect the soldier to go out there and there ain't a God damn thing there for that soldier, He or she has got to try to live in a God damn environment that no civilian would even think about going into, for Christ sakes. That was always frustrating to me. Here we've got the greatest country in the world and the greatest army in the world and we treat people like shit when we put them in those places.

Interviewer: During your tenure, did you observe one problem the Army has had for years and that is, at one time we ignored the family and then we started taking care of the family, but we forgot about that single troop that lived in the barracks?

SMA Morrell: Oh, hell yeah. There was initiatives ongoing, even when I was up there--I'm sure that they're ongoing now--for better opportunities for single soldiers. But there's a hell of a lot of lip service payed to that, and you know as well as I do, the bottom line is, the money is not there to support the God damn thing. A lot of times, money has been appropriated for that, but commanders have used that money for something else. So that's why we have a problem on the single soldier issue. We've made great strides on families, but we haven't done a damn thing hardly to... Well, it's a hell of a lot better than what it was when I first come in the Army, and it's a hell of a lot better than when you come in the Army, but it's still not where it should be, based on what America is, and I never could understand that. We just should have better facilities for single soldiers, and better opportunities for them. I think that we do the best that we can, a majority of the time, not a hundred percent of the time, with the resources that we have. But it's a hell of a resource issue. Just look at the families and how much resources it took to get quarters and to make things a little better for them, but hell, we still are not where we should be, not on this great country that we live in, You can't make no God damn body understand that. You have a hell of a time, some times, trying to make generals understand that, because they forget what

it was like to be a second lieutenant.

Interviewer: Talking about the families. Over the years we have improved the way that we deal with families and we came up with a Family Policy and the Family Support System. Give me your assessment of the Army's family policy and the family support system.

SMA Morrell: It's only as good as it's emphasized by the commander and it was only as good as it was, during my tenure, because of the interest that the Chief of Staff of the Army, and Mrs. Wickam had, and the guidance that General Wickam give the Army about what he wanted done on the family side of the house. But I saw that thing deteriorate after that. It's just like anything, as long as that's an issue, and they say, "Well hell, it's still an issue." Yeah, but how much lip service is give to it. You know, if you don't emphasize something; and you don't keep track of it; and you don't focus on it; and you don't talk about it; then hell, everybody just forgets about it. That's what happens on a lot of things that someone will come out with. They say, "This is what we're going to do.", and then they forget about it, and consequently, everybody else down underneath them forgets about it. They say, "Hell, it don't make any difference anymore, because that's not talked about." So that's one of the thing that you have to be careful about, in higher positions. You've always got to emphasize, and reemphasize, and reemphasize, those issues that you want people to continue to stay on top of and do something about it, and consequently, that is very damn fragile. If you just forget about it, everybody, right on down to the lowest level, will forget about the damn thing.

Interviewer: During Desert Storm, one of the problems that surfaced was, I think the Army wasn't prepared to properly handle the large number of dependents that were left behind after entire unit were deployed to the Persoan Gulf. At some installations it worked well, while at others it did not work so well. What improvements do you feel the Army should make in the family policy and the family support system?

SMA Morrell: Well, I think the first damn thing the Army needs to do with families, is tell the families what their responsibilities are and, then tell them what the Army's responsibilities are, and make sure that family, to include that soldier, understands that. But we don't do that. You know, I think we have sent out a wrong message, a lot of times. We tell them we're going to do this and we're going to do that, and a lot of time families think that the Army's responsible for things that the individual family should be responsible for. We just have not articulated that very well. I don't think we have that good of an education program. You know, you can develop any God damn thing at the Department of the Army and it ain't worth a damn out in the field. A lot of times they'll develop policy up there, but when you get down to where it's supposed to implemented, there ain't nobody who knows what you're talking about, or somebody will say, "The hell with that. That might be good for them up there, but God damnit, I ain't got time to screw with that down here." So, I just think we need to have a better understanding of where responsibility lies at, and that is, the soldier that gets married, that soldier has the responsibility to his or her family, and they should be told, "These are the responsibilities that you're going to have to abide by and come up with, and this is what the Army will do to supplement that." But we sent the wrong God damn signal like, hell, we're going to do all of these things. But we can't do that. The Army can't do that, but there are a lot of things the Army can do to make it better, but it's got to be an equal partnership there on that thing. You take your Child Development Centers. Look at how God damn money we've poured into them. Now that goes back to the single soldier thing. Here we take care of children out there, well God damnit, you're the one that wanted the kids. The Army didn't, per se want children. That's a family's responsibility to take care of that child. Well we took all of this God damn money that we could have spend trying to do something for single solders out there and we put it in

Child Development Centers and hired GS infinities, or what the hell ever they are, to run them damn things and they got masters degrees and doctorates, and all that you had to have to work in there to do those things. Hell, we've just become a baby sitting service. You know, "Hell, I've got to go to work at six o'clock and I've got to take the kid there" I saw examples of this. They take the kid and put it in there early in the morning, they pick it up a five or six o'clock in the evening, they bring it home, bathe it, put a bottle in its mouth, put it to bed. I saw one and two year old kids that had no motor skills whatsoever with their hands, because they never had been handled, for Christ sake. So we're contributing to, really it's child neglect, as far as I'm concerned, because of that. We build these God damn Taj Mahals. You can see them all over. You've seen them, for crying out loud. Hell, they've probably got them there at El Paso, Texas. The Army said, "Well, we're going to take care of kids." Hell, we shouldn't be in the kid business. I don't feel that's the Army's priority, and we've spent a hell of a lot of money on that. Of course, you'd talk to a lot of hiercy at the DOD level and they'll bull shit you and tell you, "Yeah, but that's not that much money." It a hell of a lot of money that they have spent. I'm not anti-family, for Christ sakes, but the responsibility for a family is with the families, God damnit. The Army has some responsibility there, but not to provide all of the things that families should be doing if you want to have children. Look waht we did to the single parent that we have running around in the Army. Jesus Christ, look at the problems that we had with that thing. The problems are still out there, but nobody will address them. Nobody will say anything about it. Then there's the moral side of it, God damnit. I cuss and raise hell. They think, "Well, you're a hell of a guy to be talking about morals." But we encourage it. We tell someone to go out and have children and never be married. God damn, if you're married in the eyes of the Bible, and you want to live, say in Germany, in an

apartment over there. You know, the stuff you live in. If you've got a single soldier that is pregnant, and you want to be in a downstairs apartment, the doctor will say that person can't climb the steps, and you'll be in the God damn high rise and she'll be on the bottom, and she's never been married. Now what kind of bull shit is that? They say, "Well, you son of a bitch, you don't understand." The hell I don't understand. You know, where in the hell do you draw the line on something like this.

Interviewer: When you were out there, as Sergeant Major of the Army, what kind of complaints did the single soldiers give you about the living conditions, etc?

SMA Morrell: Most of it was the way they live. We did improve a hell of a lot now. That's one thing that did come up during my tenure. We got good furniture. Hell, that's what they wanted. We went to all kind of extremes to make sure the furniture that was bought by the DCSLOG of the Army was the type furniture that single soldiers wanted, that lived in the billets out there. I still did not like the way we built quarters, or barracks; whatever you want to call it. I never did like those. In fact, in some of the places there wasn't a hell of a lot you could do, because you had an old structure there and you tried to renovate it, and be space conscious at the same time, but I feel that we don't have enough room for where people live at. Of course, on the other side of the coin, they say, "The soldier doesn't need all of those things that they do have in their room. Well God damnit, if they want it, why shouldn't they have it? And why shouldn't they have a place in order to keep it? Then the other part of that is, they can't do things. You know, you could only have a six-pack of beer in the God damn room, or whatever. Of course now, they can't drink until they're eighteen, or whatever that is. You know, I'd rather have a soldier drinking in the room than I would down at a bar someplace, and then driving a damn car. I had soldiers that lived in the barracks

and I didn't give a shit what had in there, in the way of something to drink, as long as they didn't create any problems. If they drank whiskey, and a hell of a lot of them drinks whiskey, if they had that in there, I didn't get excited about that, as long as they conducted themselves the way they should and not create problems for other soldiers living in the billets. Then the other part of that was, if you lived in the billets, you was always on a "hey, you" roster, because you always had a God damn shortfall and they always went to whoever was present. That's still a factor in military life today. Again, that's because of laziness in leadership, because they could get someone else to do those things, or have a hell of a lot better planning ability than what they have. Those are some of the kind of problems that soldiers always bitch about. Then we got the influx of females in the Army and the visitation policy. Like the damn policy that was written there when I first went in as Sergeant Major of the Army. They was writing that thing and the Chaplain come up. I read that thing and, Jesus, I couldn't believe what they wanted to put out. I told him, "You need to go back to the damn drawing board." You know, you're not going to legislate sex, I don't give damn what you do. Hell, God couldn't even do that. You ain't going to do it. You've got to have a plan and you got to have some regulations, but you've got to have a regulation that is enforceable, for Christ sake. You can't have a regulation that says, "You will not have sex, because there ain't nobody that can keep anybody from having sex. I don't give a shit who it is. So that was a problem too. It better, I guess, today that it was back then. They do have visitation, and that was one of the big things back at that particular time. Hell, they lived in the billets. Where in the hell else were they supposed to go?

Interviewer: Also during your tenure, you probably saw a lot of changes in the role of the female soldier.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Years ago they did away with the Women's Army Corps. How has the role of the female soldier changed in the Army?

SMA Morrell: I had a hell of a time with that, when I went up to be Sergeant Major of the Army. I think it was either seven or nine female sergeants major we had in the Army at that time. I could be off a little bit, but there was not very damn many female sergeants major. I said, "If we're going to have a large content of females in the Army, then these females are going to have to have some role models that are female. Through a lot of efforts that I did, we built that up to where we had, hell, I think it was seventy-seven, or some eighty-seven female sergeants major that we had in the Army. I picked some of them up for over thirty years, when we still had the thirty year program. I think it has did a hell of a lot for the Army. You have to go back and look at the history at that particular period of time, in 1973, when we created the all volunteer force. Shit, we couldn't even recruit enough males. If it hadn't been for female content that was recruited, we'd never got the volunteer Army off the ground, for Christ sakes. We really had a hell of a time with that. A lot of people won't admit that because of whatever reason. But anyway, I think that they have made the Army more understanding. I think they have provided a hell of a good service; the majority of them. I think they have done a hell of a good job. I don't go along with this bull shit that they come up with where they want to assign everybody to any God damn unit in the Army. The only people that beat that drum, again, was politicians, and the only people that you'll find out that are really adamant about it is because of assignemnts of officers. They want that as a damn stepping stone in order to get promoted. And the Army is hiding in the closet because they should be able to tell people, "Look, we've got so many positions in the Army that can be commanded by male or female, and God damnit, that's all that you can have." That's been the cry. Have you heard anybody raise hell about a noncommissioned officer? You know, why can't

a noncommissioned officer be first sergeant in any God damn unit, but it's all been predicated on, the officer can't fly airplanes in combat, or an officer can't do this. Hell, it's all hinged to promotion, but you don't hear them talk about promotion for females on the NCO side, and we're got a hell of a lot more female NCOs than what we do female officers in the Army, but you don't hear nobody talk about that. They hide their God damn head in the sand, and it really pisses me off because we should be looking at the largest population of the people that we have on trying to do something for them. So we haven't accomplished anything there. The only thing is, because of the Pat Schroder's of the God damn world, and all those other bleeding heart liberals up there, they've expanded this thing. Where it can work, I think that's all well and good. But there's a hell of a lot of places where it can't work. Butch, you know that as well as I do. It ain't going to work. And I'm not anti-female. I think a female should be given the opportunity to advance as far as they can, but you've got to understand, there's only so many places where they can do that at, and God damnit, we have never told them that; the Army, I'm talking about. They have never come up and said, "This is it. You can't do it."

Interviewer: When you take a look at the combat environment, with the hygiene factors, etc., there's some places they can serve and some places they can't.

SMA Morrell: That's right.

Interviewer: I think a lot of people haven't taken that into consideration

SMA Morrell: Why hell no they haven't taken it into consideration. You take on a airplane; a C-130 or a C-141 aircraft. If you've got two piss tubes in the back of that thing. Now how in the hell... On a God damn troop transport, is it okay for a female to go back there, in front of everybody else, and relieve herself? Like what happened, in either Panama or Grenada, where they had to pass a five gallon bucket around

for them to urinate in, because they had more people on the aircraft than what they was supposed to have on it. Now is that the hell they want do do? But nobody wants to address that. They think that's all bull shit. But you have that problem. And then the other problem you have, and I ran into this in Turkey. At Chaucmocli, there was three females there, and they took up one of biggest portion of the barracks, which was very limited space, and one whole latrine. The latrines were so God damn deplorable that it was pathetic. They didn't have enough to go around, but they had to make one latrine down there for them, which denied the largest population of the troops there the convenience of having more than one latrine to use. I got them reassigned. I caught a lot of hell about it, but I got them reassigned. I got them out of there and I wouldn't let them put nobody back in there. Now what happened after that, I don't know. I suppose it went right back like it was, because nobody give a shit.

Interviewer: Do you think that most of the problems with female soldiers is not their mental capacity or their physical capacity, but the hygiene problem in a field or combat environment?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Well, that, and the other problem is the way that we're raised in America, I think. Of course, I don't know. Here in the next ten God damn years, maybe nobody gives a shit whether they're male or female, or who anybody is, the way America is going, with the morals the way they are. Yeah, that is a problem, and a lot of people don't want to admit that. A lot of women don't even want to admit that, but you've got a hell of a lot more that will admit it, than won't admit it, especially on the noncommissioned officer and enlisted side of the house, because if you ask a lot of them, they sure a hell don't want to be in no damn combat unit.

Interviewer: You and I know that we've always had gays in the military. Now they're advocating a more open policy. What affect do you think the gay in the military issue is going to have on the Army?

SMA Morrell: I think that's a bunch of bull shit. They're Trying to force morals and standards on people that just don't believe in that kind of stuff. Now I don't know whether anybody believes in the Bible or not, but I think the Bible is the oldest written document that we have, and what the hell does that say about that kind of stuff? I just don't think that there any place for it in the military, although, hell yeah, we've had it in the military, and really, it's been a very minor problem. You know, the chain of command has got enough God damn problems. They don't need anymore than what they have. Why put something on them--on those in the chain of command--that will create an extra burdens and extra problems for them when they're already shuffling, I don't know how many. I don't know why in the hell we want to do that. I know why that come about. You know why it come about. The Army should not be a testing place for the ills of society.

Interviewer: The United States Army has always been in the forefront of a lot of changes. One, in particular, is the integration of the forces.

SMA Morrell: Yeah

Interviewer: When the Army was integrated, what affect did that have on the Army?

SMA Morrell: Hell, I think, for the long term, it had a good affect on the Army. I don't see no problem with it at all. None whatsoever.

Interviewer: It's made a better force because we've got a cross-section of our society.

SMA Morrell: Well, hell yeah. I have no heartburn with that. None whatsoever. I think it was a hell of a long time in coming. It was too late in coming about, but of course I was still kind of young when that happened. Yeah, I think that has made a better Army.

Interviewer: The demography of our country is changing. We have a change in our socio-economic groups. Also we're having a growing number

of minority groups, such as the big increase in the hispanic population in such places as Texas and California. The Black population the the Los Angeles area is increasing. How do you think the changing demography in the United States is going to affect the Army in the future?

SMA Morrell: Well, it all depends on what kind of an Army America wants. That could be detrimental to the Army, because with the cut-back and then you might have people that... You know, the Army offers a hell of a lot of opportunities. It has in the past and I hope it continues to offer people opportunities. You could get to the point to where you're saturated with one ethnic group, more so than what you would have if you had a cross-section of America. I don't that would be good for the military. So that's one thing they're going to have to look at. Now they looked at that thing. Hell, they've got studies up in the Pentagon on that, because that surfaced when I was there. I know it was surfaced before I got there, is to try and make sure that they don't cut something so bad that then you only had one element that would be serving because the opportunities that are there for that particular segment of people. So that's one thing that they're going to have to pay a hell of a lot attention to.

Interviewer: Just like in Vietnam, we had people that could afford to go to college, and they went to college. Those who couldn't afford to go were normally the ones that ended up in the Army, because of the draft.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Well, maybe it should be like an old sergeant major told me here one time. He said, "Maybe what we should have is a U.S. Army, only you would have an American Foreign Legion. You'd have a mercenary army." Hell, maybe that's what the hell they need. Maybe that's what they want. I don't know, it has a hell of a lot of merit to it. Then they wouldn't have to worry about a lot of the things that they have to worry about. But that would be the wrong damn way to go. You know that as well as I do. I listened to the guy when he was

talking about that. You know, you pay the price. I always told the Congress and I told the Secretary of Defense, and every God damn body else that would listen. I said, "You know, it only costs a nickle more to go first class." I said, "It will cost a little bit more money. You'd better spend it, knowing that that's going to continue the freedom that we've always had in this country. Yeah, it's a damn shame that you have to spend the money that we do on a defense system. That's just the world, and the world is not going change, and if we're not careful, then the world will continue to change and we will be a part of the world like other countries are, but we won't be the country that we are right now, and, I hope, what the majority of the people want to continue."

Interviewer: When you were the Command Sergeant Major of USAREC (United States Army Recruiting Command), and then you went on to Forces Command, and then to become Sergeant Major of the Army. During that period of time you saw a change in the Army. Has the reason that a soldier enlists in the Army changed?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I think it has. Because whatever is taking place in America, I don't think there is the desire to join the Army, like we had back in the '80s; in the first part of the '80s. You know, we had a hell of a good program out there advertising, soliciting, and recruiting. And then when everything really started coming together real good, they started cutting the programs that we had for people that enlisted in the Army, and the advertisement that we used to get them to come in, to tell them about it. We cut the hell out of that damn thing. The budget is damn near down to nothing. I think that's had a hell of an impact on trying to recruit people. You know, we want recruiters to get the best that is out there, but hell, they're out there competing with everybody else in America, trying to get good people. What the Army did, industry finally picked up on it, and a hell of a lot of other people that's in the employment business across the United States. They started looking at what the Army was doing, and they started doing the

same thing, and consequently, when they cut the monies that were available to do the things that the Army needs to do in order to get good people, hell, we couldn't compete anymore. Right now I don't see us competing. You take the G.I. Bill. Bull shit, why should they have to pay for a G.I. Bill? Then they come up with this thing where you go to college and then you do some kind of community service work for the three or four years of college, or whatever it is that you do. Well bull shit, who's going to hold their feet to the fire in order to do that? We recruit someone to go into the Army, and they've got to pay in order to get the G.I. Bill. That's bull shit.

(End Tape OH 94.6-2, Side 2)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-3, Side 1)

Interviewer: I think we have pretty well covered the reasons why soldiers enlisted in the Army. I talked to you about your trips to Korea. Let me ask you about your trips to Europe. How often did you go to Europe? Did you go annually?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I think I made two trips each year to Europe. I always went to Germany, but sometimes I would go to the southern part of Europe; Italy, Turkey, Greece.

Interviewer: During one of the breaks, we talked about a problem that they had in Europe with the COLA (Cost of Living Allowance) because of the increasing value of the German mark. Do you want to address that?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Well one of the problems that I picked up on was that the value of the Dollar continued to decline, and decline, and decline. There was a hell of a lot of soldiers that lived on the economy and they was having a hell of a time trying to survive because of the strong Mark. The Dollar continued to buy a hell of a lot less than what it was intended to buy. I come back and I had a meeting with Mr. Wienberger and I addressed that issue, and he said that his people in DOD (Department of Defense) were working on that and he'd send me down a copy of the memorandum when they finished this thing. Well what they

did, they sent him a letter and said there really wasn't anything wrong with the Cost of Living Allowance and how it was applied. Well I knew that was not true because there was a problem with it. I wrote him back a letter and pointed out that according to the evaluation, the way it was based, that an E5 in Germany should have the same spending money as an E5 living in the United States did. Well the COLA was based on a Department of Labor survey that was done back in the '70s, and this was back in 1987, so you know how old that damn thing was. When I wrote this letter to him, after I got this memorandum from Mr. Chew, he read it right away, and I supposed he felt that he had really been given a smoke screen about the COLA. The Pentagon kind of exploded because the Comptroller of the Army, they had a GS17 or 18, and then they had a three-star general that was the Comptroller, and was not aware of all of these things that my people had ferreted out in order to get Mr. Wienberger's ear on this COLA issue. So when he found out the real story, then he got money from the budget in DOD in order to plus up the Cost of Living Allowance. And then it was based on the devaluation of the Dollar. Every time the Dollar was devaluated, then the Cost of Living Allowance would go up to offset the change in the Mark and the Dollar exchange rate. I excited a hell of a lot of people in the Pentagon, at the DOD level, when that happened. In fact, the guy that initially sent Mr. Wienberger the memorandum, come down to see me and he raised hell because of me getting involved in something like that. Hell, I wouldn't even talk to the son of a bitch. Then we had a meeting and the Chief found out about it. Now my meetings that I had up there with anybody, The Old Man never told me I couldn't go see somebody or he never told me what I could say or what I couldn't say; I said any damn thing that I wanted to. He knew damn well that the only thing that I was going to do is what is good for the soldier out there. Of course I excited a hell of a lot of the generals on the staff, and more especially the Comptroller's office, because here I was, just a damn old

enlisted guy, find this out when they should have been paying attention to something like that but, consequently, they wasn't. Anyway, we did get the COLA increased for them and monitored all the time so when the Dollar devaluated, then the Cost of Living Allowance went up. What was really funny about it was, I went in and talked to The Old Man, and then everybody else briefed him on all of the ramifications of this thing. The Old Man told the Staff, at a staff meeting, that he wanted to make sure that I got credit for ferreting this out, although it wasn't my job, and it was a damn shame that I'm the one that had to do that, because someone else that was supposed to be paying attention to that should have done it. Although it wasn't my job, he was glad I did it. Nothing never come about it, because they didn't want it publicized that a God damn noncommissioned officer is the one that ferreted that out, and hell, it helped everybody out that was serving overseas, regardless of what your rank was. That was very interesting to get involved in something like that, because the civilians that work up there have no idea of what the hell soldiers put up with when they're enforcing policy, predicated on the State Department and the best interest of the United States, and they don't understand that a soldier is the one that pays the price on something like that.

Interviewer: I guess you found the bureaucracy that you had to deal with very frustrating, didn't you?

SMA Morrell: Well, really, it wasn't frustrating to me. It was just that here you've got intelligent people, but they couldn't give a shit less, really was what the bottom line was about that. It didn't impact on them. Another thing was money; they didn't want to spend the money on it that they should have spent.

Interviewer: I'm going to ask you about Karen's involvement when you were the Sergeant Major of the Army, but before I do, were you married when you joined the Army?

SMA Morrell: No, but I was when I reenlisted.

Interviewer: When did you and Karen get married?

SMA Morrell: Jesus, let me sure I've got this right. How about that? I had her write this stuff down. Oh, 27 September 1956, in Dunn, North Carolina.

Interviewer: What was Karen's maiden name?

SMA Morrell: Wade.

Interviewer: W-A-D-E?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Where was she born?

SMA Morrell: Parkersburg, West Virginia.

Interviewer: A little later on I'll ask you the remaining questions about your family, but I want to make sure, for the record, I have that before I start talking about her involvement while you were Sergeant Major of the Army. When General Abrams was Chief of Staff of the Army, he decided that the Sergeant Major of the Army should be married. Why do you think this was so important?

SMA Morrell: Well that's the first time I ever heard that. I didn't know that he made that statement that the Sergeant Major of the Army should be married.

Interviewer: That was during the time when Van Autreve was coming, and at the end of Dunaway's tenure.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I don't know if I would really full agree with him on that. The only thing, by being married I guess you would be more in tuned with the family side of the house, on the family issues, than what you would be if you was a single person. But hell, that could work good for the single soldier. If a guy up there was single, he would know how in the hell he lived in the Army. It would add to the information, while traveling, that you would pick up on the family side of the house, but hell, I know sergeants major that were installation and post sergeants major that weren't married. Hell, they had better programs for the families than what people that did have a family had.

You know, that surprised the hell out of me. I think I read that in here. I didn't even know that he had come up with that.

Interviewer: That was one of the recommendations that he made.

SMA Morrell: I don't why in hell that he would even think about that, because normally, ninety-nine point nine, nine, nine, nine times out of a hundred, you'd have a guy that would be married anyway, in the selection process to come up there to be Sergeant Major of the Army; at least I would think you would have.

Interviewer: How often did Karen travel with you?

SMA Morrell: Well, any time that I was going someplace where I thought there would be families at, which was damn near everywhere. Even when families weren't supposed to be there. She went with me a hell of a lot. I've got down all of the mileage and all of the places where she visited at, but how many there are, hell, I didn't count them. Just like on mine. I've got all of the places that I visited during my four years. Any time I was going and I wasn't going out and being out in training or something like that, she always went. When we got there, she went her way and I went mine.

Interviewer: When she was on those trips, I guess they took her through the housing areas, to the hospitals and ACS (Army Community Services), and places like that.

SMA Morrell: She probably knows more about hospitals, ACS, Child Development Centers, commissaries, PXs (Post Exchange), that what a hell of a lot of people know.

Interviewer: On those trips, wasn't she sort of an extension of your Office because she gave you a lot of the feedback?

SMA Morrell: Well, yeah. She was. She give me things that impacted on the facilities and problems with facilities and programs, but she also had her own interface with the Family Liaison Office and the Army Community Services. She had her own dialogue with those two elements too, when she come back off of a trip. She gave them

information that they was looking for and information that they could use in order to do their job better.

Did she have quite a few speaking engagements?

She always spoke at women's luncheons, at wives clubs, to ACS people, when we were out on those trips.

Interviewer: While you were traveling, and she didn't go with you, what did she do to occupy her time while you were gone?

SMA Morrell: She maintained liaison. She kept busy with her dialogue with the Family Liaison Office, with the Army Community Services, and... What the hell did they call that thing, later on, over there in the Hoffman Building?

Interviewer: The Family Support Center?

SMA Morrell: The Family Support Center. That's it. It came to be known as The Family Support Center; those people that she worked with.

Interviewer: She gave them valuable input, as far as the families were concerned.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, and she and Mrs. Wickam had something going where they got together to see what improvements could be made on the family side of the house.

Interviewer: Was Karen included in the official government and military functions there in D.C.?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you ever get a chance to go to the White House?

SMA Morrell: I visited the White House Communication Agency; the people that worked in that. But other than that, hell no. I was either out of town or made sure I was out of town. But Karen did. She met with the President. I forget what that was about. You have to ask her. It had something to do with the family members when they designated something for the families, or something like that. Hell, I don't know what it was. It's been a while back. You'd have to ask her that. She

went over there with Mrs. Wickam and the Chairman of the Joint Chief's wife; Mrs. Vessey.

Interviewer: They met with the President?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, in fact we've got a picture of her shaking hands with the President. It's hanging there in our hallway.

Interviewer: What were the major developments or initiatives during your tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army?

SMA Morrell: Well in NCOES (Noncommissioned Officer Education System), changing PLC (Primary Leadership Course) and PNCOC (Primary Noncommissioned Officer Course) to PLDC (Primary Leadership Development Course). That was on my watch.

Interviewer: When I was in charge of the development of the PLDC, we had the validation of the course, down at Fort Polk.

SMA Morrell: Fort Polk. Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. You came down after the validation, and after you were briefed on the results, and put your blessing on it and said it was a "go."

SMA Morrell: Yeah. What else? (There was a long pause.) Shit, ain't that a hell of a thing. God, there were so many things going on. Hell, I don't know.

Interviewer: Probably the biggest thing was just to keep the programs going. Like you said, there were so many things going on during that period.

SMA Morrell: Well, The Old Man had his own agenda. I think if you take a look at some of the things that The Old Man had down here ("here" was referring to the guidance paper that the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Wickam, provided Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, and the members of the Department of the Army Staff), you will get a good indication of what the hell we was doing in the Army then. (Sergeant Major Morrell referred to a copy of the guidance paper as he outlined some of the Chief of Staff's Themes.)

He wanted a Mission-Ready Army--Trained to Win; An Army of Excellence; An Army with its Vision Rooted in History and Values; A Flexible Army with a Responsive Strategy; A Modern Army; An Efficient, Competent Army; A Total Army; An Army Dedicated to its Soldiers, Civilians and Families; An Army to be Proud Of; An Army Under Challenge. (This ended the list of the Chief of Staff's themes. The following items outlined by Sergeant Major Morrell came from General Wickam's guidance paper, Item 2., titled SMA DUTIES.) What he wanted me to look at was, combat readiness, with priority on training and maintenance; quality of life; health, welfare, morale; professional development and evaluation of the enlisted force; strengthen skills, competency and moral qualities; Look for new techniques to recruit and retain quality soldiers; foster discipline and the role that the NCO plays in developing it; maintain high standards in the enlisted force; continue to instill pride in the uniform and the privilege of being a soldier; emphasize height/weight standards and physical toughness. Jesus, I never kept a damn list, I guess, like some people did of what the hell they thought may have happened in the Army. Shit, what took place from 1983 to 1987 I thought was all for the good of the people that I represented, and I think it was good for the Army. The light infantry division come on line at that time. The equipment got a hell of a lot better, although we still don't have a God damn glove that will keep you hands warm. We never could get anywhere with that.

Interviewer: Didn't the Army start up-grading more of the equipment, during that period of time?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. The GORTEX equipment that come on line would have never come on line if I had not been in the position there, and knew about it, because they was trying to blind-side The Old Man on it because they thought it cost too damn much money. I damn near got a GS15, I think it was, fired because I had him come down and brief The Old Man on GORTEX, and show him what the hell it was. Then The Old Man

chewed the DCSLOG's (Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics) ass out because he didn't make him aware of it. The DCSLOG said, "Well, we didn't have the money to buy it." The Old Man said that he was the check writer, so that's how we got GORTEX equipment in the Army.

Interviewer: For the record, why don't you explain what GORTEX is.

SMA Morrell: It's equipment that keeps you dry--it breathes-- and it's warm, and its water repellent. It's not the old stuff that we used to have, where you sweat like hell. When you put it on, you got wetter wearing it that you did if you stood out in the rain. The whole ensemble of GORTEX and all the lightweight equipment was part of that initiative that come on line at that particular period of time. We was talking about accomplishments a while ago. Another thing we done, we got rid of the damn specialists ranks that nobody in the Army ever understood. That was by a stroke of a pen. Of course everybody in the world fought that. We got rid of that during my time. I thought that was a pretty good accomplishment in itself. We started the lock and got that implemented. Promotion to sergeant and all that was tied to the Noncommissioned Officer Education System. You had to be a PLDC graduate to get promoted to sergeant. There was a linkage between promotion and NCOES. We got that initiative going. On assignments. It use to be that you could put in for retire a year out. Then we got that down to six months. I wanted it to go to three months. Then we changed it that if you were on the list to be promoted, you didn't have to wait until your promotion come up if you was in a position and there was a vacancy, then you would go ahead and get promoted. Hell, I don't know what all, Butch. Shit, I guess whatever the hell was going on in the Army at that time, I was involved in it if it pertained to the enlisted side of the house, and a hell of a lots of times if it didn't. I'd give them my ten cents worth, whether they wanted it or not, and The Old Man always took it; that's another good thing that I could say.

Interviewer: I've talked to your predecessors and it seems like

the question of whether the Sergeant Major of the Army should be rated kept surfacing, and of course the Chiefs chopped that off right away. Did you have a problem like that?

SMA Morrell: I never heard it mentioned during the four that I was up there. Nobody said anything about rating the Sergeant Major of the Army. I never heard it mentioned.

Interviewer: And if it did, General Wickam would have told them, hell no. Right?

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. I don't think anybody would have had the intestinal fortitude to even raise that issue to the Chief that I worked for.

Interviewer: When you became the Sergeant Major of the Army, what was the official tenure? How many years?

SMA Morrell: Three years. It has always been a three-year tour of duty. The same for the Chief of Staff. Well a lot of people think that the Chief of Staff's tour is four years, but he is hired for three years. That's all predicated on the political thing, because if you have a change in administrations, if they wanted to they could get rid of everybody right down the line. As far as I know, it still is a three-year tour of duty, with the option of the Chief, if he gets extended for a year, then he can extend the Sergeant Major of the Army for a year.

Interviewer: Is that how you got extended for another year?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. The Chief got extended and he stayed on for an extra year, and he asked me to stay on for another year.

Interviewer: What do you think is the ideal tenure?

SMA Morrell: Well, I think the way it is. I think that's good enough. I think you should serve as long as that Chief of Staff you're working for is there; as long as he wants you. Then I think it would be wrong, say if a guy served three years and then the Chief is going to stay another year and he got another Sergeant Major. That means that

the new guy coming on the block would want to pick his Sergeant Major, so that Sergeant Major would only serve for one year. So I don't see anything wrong with the plan the way it is.

Also do you think that serving two different Chiefs could be a problem? Why hell yes. There ain't no doubt about it. If you want to get a policy changed in the United States Army, all you have to do, if you're working at a different level out there... Maybe I shouldn't say this shit, but I am anyway. All you've got to do if you've got a new commander that comes in, and he wants to do something that you don't want done, you just tell him, "Well, the other commander, that was one of his pet peeves." You'll never hear about that son of a bitch again. So that's goes to show you, what I was telling you about before, "a new broom sweeps clean." So I don't think it would be in the interest of the person that was occupying the position or in the best interest of the Army to do that.

Interviewer: Who was the Secretary of the General Staff when you were there?

SMA Morrell: The Director of the Army Staff?

Interviewer: Yeah.

SMA Morrell: General Brown.

Interviewer: Didn't you say, a while ago, that Colin Powell worked for Secretary of Defense Wienberger?

SMA Morrell: Right.

Interviewer: As Sergeant Major of the Army, what did you find most frustrating?

SMA Morrell: Well, you'll probably find this hard to believe, but really, I wasn't frustrated. I'd get mad at something that some bureaucrat would try and bring up. One of the biggest frustration that I had was on the God damn overage MOSs that existed in the Army. There was a solution to that but nobody wanted to listen to it. I just thought it was a damn shame that we have a soldier out here that we recruited

and enlisted in the Army, and put him in a God damn position where he couldn't get promoted, and then we would continue to promote and then continue to reenlist to add to the damn problem that we already had. That was frustrating as hell. That was just demoralizing and there was no need to do that. Because of recruitment and getting quality people in the recruiting program that we had back in the early '80s, Jesus Christ, we were just recruiting people right and left. They would just put them in these MOSs, not paying attention, and then letting people reenlist. Then you had God damn cutoff scores of nine hundred and ninety-eight, and you've still got them, and that's a God damn shame. That's inefficiency for every God damn body that plays in that arena, to include myself, although I made a hell of a lot of enemies and raised a lot of hell about that, but I could never do anything about that. One reason is because we was so successful in getting quality people in the Army and we just wanted to continue to bring them in, and bring them in, and bring them in. What we did was hurt that person. Look at all of the people that got hurt right now, under the reduction in force, because there was no place for them. Then we had this thing that they come out with where if you don't get promoted by a certain, then you've got to get the hell out of the Army. Well why in the hell couldn't they get promoted. Because the God damn Army, in its infinite wisdom, continued to let people reenlist in the overage MOSs. It wasn't the God damn soldiers, the soldiers were good soldiers. They knew their job, but the couldn't get promoted because of the plug-up in the system.

Interviewer: That was one of the question that I was going to ask you, later on in the interview. Because of the up-or-out policy, do you think we lost a lot of good soldiers?

SMA Morrell: Why hell yeah, we lost good soldiers. Let me tell you something. We lost soldiers on this God damn up-or-out policy, that back in the 1975 to 1982 time frame, or maybe even up to 1985, we would

have killed for to have them stay in the Army. That was terrible that we did that. And I'll be God damn if the Army still doesn't do it. I talk to soldiers and they've still got nine hundred and ninety-eight points and the still can't get promoted, and that's terrible.

Interviewer: At one time we had a log jam all the way at the top and all we did was just slide it down a little bit.

SMA Morrell: That's right. I said that when soldier come in and enlists into an MOSs, and then you restructure the Army, or whatever you've done and you're over in that MOS, then tell that soldier you've got to reenlist and we'll give you a choice, but if that choice is not short, then you're going to have to go to an MOS that is needed in the Army, otherwise you're going to have to get out. But they wouldn't do that, they just continued to let the enlist. They'd let people migrate from MOSs to MOSs, and that's why you have a problem. That's why the Guard and Reserve have a problem with MOS qualification. The reason is because you've got to go somewhere else to get promoted to another level. Hell, nobody wants to stay a private, or a PFC, or a spec four all of their damn life, and I don't blame them. You can fix that, but nobody ever wanted to fix it. Hell, it didn't bother them because they were in the hierarchy, I guess, and they were going to get promoted. See, the Officers Corps don't have that God damn problem, and we should not have it on the enlisted side of the house either.

Interviewer: We were talking earlier about the change in the quality of the soldier. What effect to you think the transition for a draft oriented Army to an all voluntary Army has had on the quality of the soldiers that we have been able to recruit?

SMA Morrell: I've always made the statement, "If you want to be a soldier, I rather soldier with people that wanted to be a soldier than people that were drafted to come in the Army and did not want to be a soldier." I think we have a better Army because you've people there that want to be there. They're the ones that said that they wanted to

join and they enlisted. Hell, I think it has made a stronger Army, and you get your payback because people stay around. When you had a draftee, he come in for two years and then he got out. You had a hell of a turmoil in the Army then. You don't have near that turmoil, during the years I was there, that you had back a long time ago when you had the draft. I can see problems now because people come in and if the opportunities are not there to get promoted, or the opportunity is not there do of the things that we show in the advertisements that we put out, then you'll go right back to that. Really, it takes eight years to get the payback from a person when you enlist them in the Army. When you lose someone out of the Army that's got eight years in, you're losing all of that experience and it's going to take you eight more years to build it up. That also impacts on your Noncommissioned Officers Corps, because you don't get that experience at the E5, E6, E7, E8 and E9 level when you lose those people out of there. So your quality can go to hell on you if you don't have good incentive programs in order to retain people, such as promotion opportunity, and what is going to suffer? Your leadership is going to suffer in the long run, because as people stay and continue to go up in rank then, as I talked about before, you're liable to have lesser quality than what you would have if you tried to maintain some incentives in order to keep people in the Army.

Interviewer: During the earlier years when you and I were in the Army, the AWOL rate was high and there were discipline problems. Over the last ten or fifteen years, there probably isn't a handful of units that have ever had an AWOL. Do you agree with that?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. That's because a person wants to be in the Army; they joined to come in. I've always said, "I want the best person to my front, rear, right, and left, that I can depend on." I don't want that person to be there because they was made to be there. If you've got someone that's there because they want to be there, you're going to

have a hell of a lot better soldier. But again, that's a very fragile thing, because if you don't offer somebody something, then they're not going to stay with you. You know, people don't stay in the Army just because of their love for the Army, there has to be other things that goes along with it, although I would say that the majority of the people that stay in the Army, love the Army. But then that thing is going the other way. A hell of a lot of people that stay in the Army want to treat like a job. They want to come to work at eight, and go home at four, and the hell with everything else. That's not the type of army that I would like to see, or the type of an army that I would like to be associated with. But we are damn near there.

Interviewer: At the Academy we talked about the "quitting time NCO." He think's it's a seven to five, or an eight to five job. Then he wanted to leave the area and go home.

SMA Morrell: He doesn't want to be bothered.

Interviewer: And he doesn't want to take time, after work, talk to the soldiers

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. They don't even know where in the hell their soldiers live at. That's not being a leader--I don't think it is--and that's not having a good Army and that's not having good leadership in the Army, when you look at it in that respect. You know, back at that particular period of time when they said that if you were a noncommissioned officer, you could live off post, right? Because you got more money than what a private has. Do you remember that?

Interviewer: Right.

SMA Morrell: I said, "If you worked for General Motors, you don't park right up next to the God damn door. You park back there in the back forty, unless you're an executive, and then you've got to be a pretty high executive to be able to park up by the front door." What in the hell does the Army think they are going to have if you don't have any leadership living on post. What kind of a God damn installation are

you going to have? But you've got people in all of the hierarchy that don't know what soldiering is all about and think that's what they should do. But what about the privates, PFC, and spec fours. What kind of incentives do you have for someone to live on the installation? You know, that should be an incentive. If you want to stay in the Army and you want to be a noncommissioned officer, then you can live on the installation, if that's what you so desire, and the quarters should be of good quality, which a hell of a lot of them are not. We advocated that, that we was going to let all of the lower ranking people live on post. Well that was conducive to what happen on the leadership side of the house, both for the noncommissioned officer and the officer. So they said, "To hell with it. If you don't want me on the God damn post, I'll live off post." They might live twenty miles away. Let's say you've got a problem in the unit, and you call the First Sergeant. He's got an answering machine or the wife says, "He's not here. He's gone and won't be back until whatever." Well the reason they did that was because they wouldn't let him live on the post in the first place, so you drive them off. There is a lot of that that has developed because of the way we have treated people, over the long run. I remember at one time we had it locked in where if you was a first sergeant of a command sergeant major, you had priority in housing. Some places still have that and some don't, and that's bull shit. You should have those people living on the installation, if you at all possible can. You go back to where people work. You remember when that come around, and the all volunteer Army. God damn, we got so complacent that it was pathetic. Hell, they said, "You don't have to attend anything." Well you know, that was all done on the officer side of the house, and then I'll be a son of a bitch if that didn't spill over on the NCO side, and the NCOs picked up that same attitude. You couldn't get nobody to volunteer to do anything. They said, "The hell with it, I'm not in the Army." That was a hell of a thing to try to bring back. Once you lose something,

it's hard like hell to recover it. And that's one thing that we lost, although some people do a hell of a good job of it out there, but it's still not like it should be in a military organization.

Interviewer: How has the leadership changed from when we came out of the Vietnam War through your tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army?

SMA Morrell: Shit, like night and day. The Vietnam War was all screwed up, as you well know that it was. We didn't have any concrete plan. It was a political war. You had people that would come out of there, and then they was going back. You had a hell of a lot of people who said, "The hell with it. I'm going to retire." You had a lot of Korean War and World War II vets that said, "Hell no, I done fought a war." They got out. We got to the point, in the Army, where it was had to find good, solid, quality noncommissioned officer leadership. That really impacted on the Army at that time. Hell, we started raising "instant NCOs," and you just can't do that. You've got to give people a lot of training in order to get them to be the leader that you want them to be. We was trying to do that overnight. We tried to solve a damn problem that there really wasn't a solution to. We did the same thing on the officer side of the house, although you don't hear too much about that. That's why we had the Calley's and all that shit that happened over in Vietnam, because they was doing the same damn thing. They wasn't paying any attention to the people that they were commissioning. Then when we come out of Vietnam, they wanted everybody to grow hair. Let their hair grow long, with sideburns, and all of that God damn stuff, trying to placate everybody in the Army. We didn't have an army back then. Shit, anybody could have whipped our ass if we had gotten into a confrontation. I think from 1970 to probably 1979, anybody could have kicked our ass, because I don't think the will was in the American Army to fight a long sustained battle.

(End of Tape OH 94.6-3, Side 1)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-3, Side 2)

Interviewer: When the last tape ended, we were talking about the change in leadership from the Vietnam era to what we have today. Some of the problem areas that we had.

SMA Morrell: Well, the other thing. You know you was talking about when General Abrams come into office. I think he was the one that started the initiative on training noncommissioned officers. I also attribute him to what really started taking place and what did take place in the Army, is the formulation of a Ranger Battalion, back in 1974, and in '75, they come on line. He saw the need for a well disciplined, well trained unit. I think his future goal was to put good trained people in the Army that had good high standards and discipline. I think probably that was the time frame when the Army started to turn around, because they found out that you can't put that old slogan out there, "The Army Wants to Join You." Everybody was doing their own damn thing. That just was not going to work in the United States Army. I also think that helped turn the Army around and refocus it. You can have excellent training and you can have excellent leadership, as long as you have good discipline, and you instill the will, and provide the resource that is needed to produce a unit like that. I think his thoughts on that was to use that as a shipping element, because those people went to other units in the Army to bring discipline and training back to the way it should be.

Interviewer: Do you think that when we went to the all volunteer Army, and used that slogan "The Army Wants to Join You," that perhaps our leadership underestimated what it would take to bring people into the Army?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I think that they underestimated that, along with another thing that I think they did at that particular period of time, when they put that slogan out. You had a lot of complacency in the Army; within the leadership of the Army. Everybody was running scared, because look at how many people that we drummed out of the Army

at the end of the Vietnam War. So nobody was really on the positive side. You know, most of the bad things that you hear about the Vietnam era is about the noncommissioned officer leadership. Well there wasn't a God damn thing wrong with the noncommissioned officer leadership, after period of time, or even during that period of time. Look at what they did on the officer side of the house. You know they put an officer in a position over there, and he stayed there six months, and then he went to a headquarters back at division level, or corps level, or army level, or whatever. They were using that in order to give officers the opportunity to get command time, and you continued to have the same damn noncommissioned officers, that rotated in and out of there, and they was there all of the time. Hell, I don't think they had real good leaders on the officer side of the house at that period of time. The only thing they was interested in was getting their damn ticket punched and getting their basic line of medals that was given to them during that period of time because they commanded the unit for six months. That impacted like hell on the Noncommissioned Officers Corps, because noncommissioned officers saw that and said, "What the hell is going on here?" They said, "There's no light at the end of the tunnel." But you still had a hell of a lot of good, solid, hard charging, noncommissioned officers, with good leadership abilities, that served during that period of time, and even after that. I think the NCO Corps took a hit for a deficiency that was in the Officers Corps at that period of time. That's always been the way that I felt about it. Hell, look at the NCO. They didn't get a God damn basic load of medals when they left out of Vietnam, but ever officer that you had over there damn well got everything. Hell, you had them flying twenty thousand feet in the air, directing the battle, and they ended up getting one or two Silver Stars out of it. That didn't help the morale, at that particular period of time, and it damn sure didn't help the leadership that was in the Noncommissioned Officers Corps.

Interviewer: During the break, we were talking about the NCO Candidate Course that we had, whereby we would take a soldier that came into the Army, who either was drafted or enlisted, send him through basic training and AIT. Then we identified those who had leadership potential, and then we put them through the NCO Candidate Course, where we trained them to be squad leaders or fire team leaders, then we sent them to Vietnam. Some people call them "Instant NCOs," or "Shake and Bakes." What were some of the advantages of this program, and what were some of the disadvantages?"

SMA Morrell: The advantages to it was that it provided the noncommissioned officer leaders that we needed. Not only did we do that, hell, look what they did on the officer side of the house. The officers did the same damn thing. They just turned OCS (Officer Candidate School) loose and, hell, they'd take anybody as long as they could pass the damn test. That was the only that you could sustain the numbers of noncommissioned officers that you needed at that particular period of time. The only problem with that program, that's a hell of a way to try to train a good noncommissioned officer. It's not being fair to that individual to put them through a fast training program like that. It would have worked a hell of a lot better if they would have had sustainment training for them when they brought them back out, but they didn't have sustainment training. In fact, they didn't even have any way of identifying those people, except on the individual's record. The Army had no way of identifying them, in order to sustain it, so that had a negative impact on it. They went over to be a fire team leader or a squad leader, and I don't know, probably a hell of a lot of them did alright. Probably there was a lot of shortfalls in that. The reason I say that, the leadership that existed in the unit they were assigned to probably was not aware of the background of that individual, because all they did was say, "Here's your squad leader, or squad leader, or whatever the case may be," and away they went. They didn't

do any sustainment training for them, and if they would have known that and added to it, that probably would have helped those people out a hell of a lot. Then on the other side, like I said, they didn't have nothing for them when they come back out of there. They more or less just learned from the school of hard knocks, until we got a structured NCOES in place. Hell, we did the same thing in Korea. Korean veterans talk about when they didn't have enough noncommissioned officers to go around. Of course, you didn't have a hell of a lot of noncommissioned officers back at that particular period time, anyway. But they did the same thing and the same problems fell out, because they had a fast promotion system, and you had a person that come out as a master sergeant and they didn't even know how in the hell to be a master sergeant, but they were damn good on the tactical side of the house, in a combat situation.

Interviewer: When it comes to training soldiers, what did we learn from Vietnam?

SMA Morrell: Well, I would say that you've got to have good training programs, day-in and day-out, to train people, based on what the threat is and what part of the world the threat may be in, and make sure that they get realistic training. We did not have that on-line back when the Vietnam War was going on. We got into some of it later on, but I think it was way too late and too short, because I don't think the Army had a good training program, back then, to fight a war of that nature.

Interviewer: How do you think that our individual and unit training has changed, particularly during your tenure?

SMA Morrell: It was resourced a hell of a lot better than what it was ever resourced in the past. A lot of the tactics changed, based on the way we fight, and then you had a lot of documentation that come on line, that had never been changed for, God, I don't know how many years; we had never looked at that. We never looked at the way we trained our

people. You know, we was still training people like they trained twenty years ago. We started looking at that, and NCOES forced the Army to do that, where we looked at a program where you trained and then you had sustainment to it, and then you brought them back and retrained, and then sustained and added to, and we built it like that. In also made the Army look at how they were training the officer side of the house. Jesus crimina, they found the same damn thing that we knew all along, that they had not changed any of their training programs, or updated any of their training material. That's when 101-6, or 101-1, and all that stuff come out, where it really specified what people's duties were and their responsibilities, and how they would do these things. That's what we should have been doing all along, for everybody, on the soldier, the NCO, and the officer side of the house. That caused us to look at all of that.

Interviewer: Basic training, over the years, has also changed. From the time that you came in the Army until your tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army, how has basic training changed?

SMA Morrell: About like night an day. I think what I remember about basic training, when I went through, it was more or less discipline. I think the majority of it was on discipline, on drill and ceremonies. Rifle marksmanship was a hell of a big thing. We had first aid, and not hardly anything on tactics. It was just more or less how to take care of yourself in a field environment, and making sure you could shoot a rifle and the old 3.5 rocket launcher, or the 2.3, or whatever the hell it was. But anyway, it wasn't worth a damn. It was a terrible piece of equipment. We've built on the deficiencies of the past and learned lessons that we should have not been reinventing the wheel, really. I think that the training we have today, you couldn't compare it with what we had in the past; it's a hell of a lot better.

Interviewer: How has the training in the NCO academies changed?

SMA Morrell: I think the NCO academy that I went to, back in

Berlin, Germany, I believe it was in 1958 when I went through there. Or was it '59. I believe it was '58. Hell I don't know. But anyway, again, that was more on maintaining an immaculate barracks, giving classroom presentations, and drill and ceremonies. That's what I remember most about it. Today, they put you in every environment that I think that you would be involved in, as a noncommissioned officer. You learn how to teach, how to train, and tactics. You get a little bit of everything, where before, you did not get that. It pretty well rounds you out if you've got anything going for you at all before you come there, because it reinforces what you have learned and it adds to that.

Interviewer: Besides NCOES, one of the other great accomplishment of the Army is the Enlisted Personnel Management System (EPMS). Tell me about some of the strong and weak points about the system, and compare it with the old system that we had.

SMA Morrell: Jesus, under the old system, if you knew someone, hell, you could get anything you wanted. Under the new system that we have, it predicated on efficiency and on what a person's capability is. I just think that since EPMS is locked into NCOES, they track a person's career a hell of a lot better than what was ever done in the past. We probably should have done that a long time ago.

Interviewer: EPMS also ties into the Centralized Promotion System, which was a big step forward. Tell me how you feel the Centralized Promotion System has affected the Army.

SMA Morrell: Well, it took all of the personalities of, what you might refer to as "the fair haired boys," out of it. I think that the Centralized Promotion System is predicated on performance and what an individual has done, and what they're capable of doing, and what they expect that a person with that background can do. Now you've got to remember back when I came in the Army, hell, promotions was few and far between. In the old system that they used to have, a lot of people got

promoted because of who they worked for, or the position they held in the company. Like if you were the company clerk, or worked up in battalion headquarters, you damn sure would get promoted over someone that was out in the field. Then a lot of it was predicated on how well you were liked by the people that controlled the promotions, or the people that had influence over the people who were doing the promoting. So I like the Centralized Promotion System. I think it's the best damn thing the Army has come up with. Everybody has got the same opportunity to get promoted.

Interviewer: When you first came in, the Army had the problem that was created by the officer Reduction in Force, or RIF. Commissioned officers who were about to lose their commissions had the opportunity to become a noncommissioned officer. What affect did that have on the NCO Corps?

SMA Morrell: Well hell, it created a buildup where you had good strong noncommissioned officers that couldn't get promoted, because those people were promoted to a rank and then there wasn't any money to promote people, so those people took a lot of the rank structure that should have been given to the professional noncommissioned officer, and the noncommissioned officers could not get promoted.

Interviewer: Also in many cases they were filling positions, but the NCO were doing the job.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. They worked at the company level, at company headquarters--that's where I run into them at in one unit that I was in--as a training NCO. Most of the rest of them was assigned to a staff section, at battalion or higher level.

Interviewer: You also had some of them working on the golf course or working at Special Services.

SMA Morrell: Well hell, you had them all over the place, wherever they could SD (special duty) them. If there was an SD position, and you had some of those people, that's where they were at, until they could

get their twenty years in so they could go ahead and retire with the rank that they got RIF from.

Interviewer: Whenever the grades of E8 and E9 were introduced, there was, what was often referred to as a "log jam" at the top of the enlisted rank structure. What affect did the addition of the grades E8 and E9 have on the Army?

SMA Morrell: You had a hell of a lot of people that were SD out of the unit that were carried in the unit as a platoon sergeant or as a first sergeant. You had a sergeant first class or a sergeant as a platoon sergeant, or a sergeant first class as acting first sergeant. When they opened that God damn door, the people that was SD someplace, they fell out of the roofs, coming back in to get promoted, because they was carried on the manning roster in that position, and they had the time in service and the time in grade. You had a hell of a lot of people promoted, at that particular period of time, that didn't know shit from Shinola about being a first sergeant, or being a good master sergeant, or being a sergeant major. I think that was detrimental to the Noncommissioned Officers Corps when that happened. A hell of a lot of those people, when they got promoted, waited until they had their time in, or served the time that was required for the promotion, and then they retired. We had a heck of a lot of those type people. What it did also, I think, it give you two more ranks that you could go to, and I think that was good, because that changed the rank structure for where a master sergeant, who used to be an E7, became an E8. Before the diamond, a master sergeant E7, was a first sergeant. If you had a battalion sergeant major, back then, he was a master sergeant. But then the rank of sergeant major E9 was established. Then you might have a master sergeant working in an "S" section (S1, S2, S3, S4) or a "G" section (G1, G2, G3, G4). That distinguished who that person was when they come out with the E8 and E9, more especially on the leader side of the house, like a first sergeant and a sergeant major.

Interviewer: It also created a problem, for a while, during the "wear-out period" when there was a master sergeant E7 and a master sergeant E8.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Well, you never knew who anybody was, unless you looked at their ID (identification) card or looked at their record, because they all wore the same stripes. I think the Army worked through that right well. I remember one guy that got promoted to sergeant major and he was in the same formation that I was in. When they promoted him he come back and he took over this particular formation and he didn't even know how in the hell to dismiss troops. In fact, he was the R&U (repair and utility) guy in the unit, but he was a master sergeant. Hell, I don't know how much time in grade he had. All he did was fix whatever needed to be fixed in the barracks.

Interviewer: We were talking about Vietnam, a little while ago. Was the news media fair in reporting the coverage of that war?

SMA Morrell: Hell no. I think the news media accurately portrayed the war, as far as pictures go, because you couldn't change those. What I think it did, was portray to the American people that it was a hell of a lot worst than what it was, although it was bad. I think that the news media should have been controlled. I don't think that everybody should be able to turn on the television, and be drinking beer and living the good life, and get instant combat on the damn thing. I don't think that was beneficial to the effort that was going on over there. I don't think that helped the attitude that the Americans had about the war in Vietnam. Of course I could understand why they had that attitude, because, what the hell, instead of supporting South Vietnam, we should have supported North Vietnam, God damn it, because they were the ones that really wanted to do something with the country. A lot of people don't know this, but I know for a fact, back in 1962, if you ever go back and look in the archives someplace, there was a guy by the name of Father Wall, who run a renegade outfit down in IV Corps, in

Vietnam, and he was a Catholic priest. They did a documentary on that and that was one of the propaganda films they used to show people on the atrocities that the North was doing to the South in order to try to get people over there. Well he was just a bad as what the God damn North was, if you do a little studying about what went on in that country. Of course, the guy that we had as President at that time was Kennedy, who was a Catholic, and I feel that's why we got involved in that damn war in the first place. But you won't read about that in a hell of a lot of articles that has been published on why we got involved in Vietnam.

Interviewer: Also, when you study history about Vietnam, when the French were fighting in Indochina, President Eisenhower wanted to send troops to assist them, and the two senators that help prevent that from happening was Senator Kennedy and Senator Johnson.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, that's right. Kennedy opened the door up and Johnson tore the whole God damn framework of the house down and turned everything loose. You know, I have no hard feelings about Vietnam. Hell, I did my job the three times I was over there. I enjoyed it because, hell, that's what the Army said that's what I should do. I worked with Special Forces people, and hell, all of the people I worked with was outstanding people. I have no heartburn with it, but it was a God damn shame that so many of our young people got killed over there in that damn quagmire, but hell, that's history, and you ain't going to do anything about it. Let's just hope the United States has learned a lesson, but I would say they did not, because with what they're doing today on the cut-back of the Army. It will be the same damn thing if we get into an altercation someplace else. People will pay in blood because the government didn't want to support and sustain a good defense posture.

Interviewer: During Operation Urgent Fury, the military kept the news media off the island until the operation was over, of course that

raised the ire of some of the news people. Do you think that was a good decision?

SMA Morrell: Well hell yeah. You know this, Butch. Hell, you was in the Army as long as I was. When you're trying to pull a surprise tactical operation, Jesus, it's pretty tough, because of the system we have, we notify a lot of people and the word gets out. Hell, we notified the Soviets and we notified, probably even China, that we was going to do that. It's hell to try to contain that just through the diplomatic channels that we have with foreign countries on what the hell we're doing, let alone the media. Now you have instant TV all the way around the world, and hell, whoever your adversary is, all they have to do is just listen. When you let the news media get into it, you're behind the power curve. You're putting people's lives in jeopardy. I'm like this, God damnit the American people have a right to know, but they don't have the right to know at the mercy of the people that's in there trying to do their job, according to whatever the policy of the United States may be at the time.

SMA Morrell: What do you think of the news media coverage of Operation Desert Storm?

SMA Morrell: I think it was good, as far as the tactical coverage. They didn't let people get out there and find out where all of the units were located, and they sustained that pretty good, I thought. Now as far as CNN's (Cable News Network) reporting out of Baghdad, I thought that was pretty shitty, but hell, money drives the train. They did it, but I don't think that was in the best interest of the United States, although it turned out to where it didn't make a damn anyway, because that guy couldn't do nothing, although he could have. If he had it to do over again, he'd probably would have unleashed all kind of bad stuff over there.

Interviewer: Are you talking about Peter Arnette?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I'm not blaming him for it, Hell, he was just

doing what the hell his bosses told him to do. He had a job to do, just like everybody else, but I thought that was in poor taste and I think someone should have shut that off. I don't believe the news media has the right to everything that pertains to a military operation.

Interviewer: The key is, "responsible reporting."

SMA Morrell: That's right, and they don't know what the hell responsibility is, as far as I'm concerned.

Interviewer: What should be the relationship between a command sergeant major and junior officers?

SMA Morrell: Well, I always felt that the command sergeant major has the responsibility to try to help that officer succeed, and try to continue to educate that officer in dealing with every facet of the military. To treat the individual with dignity and respect, never forgetting that, that second lieutenant that he should be tutoring, will probably, in all circumstances, end up being a commander, and that individual's perception of a noncommissioned officer will be predicated on how well that individual was received and treated by the senior noncommissioned officer in that unit.

Interviewer: Do you think that sometimes the young officers are kind of in awe of that sergeant major and they're kind of reluctant to go up and ask for advice?

SMA Morrell: Maybe in yesteryear, but I don't think so in the present day. I think that the majority of them will seek out advice from senior noncommissioned officers, but you're always going to have a percentage of them that think that the noncommissioned officers are a bunch of dumb asses, that don't know what they're doing. I think a lot of times that is attributed to the military schools that we have. I've been a advocate of not having any enlisted people in West Point, and I don't think we should have any up there. I think it sends a wrong God damn signal to the Officers Corps that sergeants, and that's who are the biggest bulk of people up there, all they're supposed to do is wait on

officers, because all they see them doing is setting up the classrooms and the chalkboards, and everything else that is needed in order to conduct that class, and that's not the God damn function of the noncommissioned officer. I have never, and will never, felt that we should have any enlisted people at West Point. I don't think they should be there, because that gives the officers a false representation of what noncommissioned officers are all about.

Interviewer: Did you ever get a chance to address the cadets at West Point?

SMA Morrell: Nope, I had no desire to do that in any way whatsoever. That's the Chief of Staff of the Army's responsibility to do that, and other general officers to do it. God damnit, I had enough problems trying to address the enlisted soldiers and noncommissioned officers that I had. Not that I would not have done it, if I had been pressed to do it, although I was invited to come up there. I did visit there one time, but hell, there's too much of the other Army out there in order to get involved with that. I just think that we give the officers the wrong impression about what noncommissioned officers are about, when we use them in that kind of environment.

Interviewer: What did you find most rewarding about being the Sergeant Major of the Army?

SMA Morrell: Well, being able to do something for the good of the enlisted people and the Noncommissioned Officers Corps, and being their representative to the Chief of Staff, the Department of the Army Staff, the higher people in DOD, and at the people at the congressional level. The satisfaction of knowing that you did the best you could, and you helped out a hell of a lot of people, and you made a lot of changes on issues that would have had a bigger impact on the enlisted force, and you changed a lot of things that didn't work. It was just a hell of a lot of fun. It was a hell of a lot of work, too. There was a hell of a lot of frustration involved in it, because sometimes things didn't move

as fast as what you wanted them to move. But all-in-all, hell, I enjoyed it, but I was tired when I quit at the end of it.

Interviewer: Whenever you took over as Sergeant Major of the Army, what was your perception of what your job would be?

SMA Morrell: What I perceived my job as being was anything that I felt I was big enough to do. I don't know of anything that I wasn't big enough to do, and I didn't give a damn what it was. I was not intimidated by anybody or I was not intimidated by having to deal with the senior leadership; that did not bother me in anyway whatsoever. I was not in awe of the God damn position that I had. I don't know why anybody would say they are awe of the God damn position. I mean, hell, it's just like any position that you had in the Army. Hell, it never bothered me. I've always said, "You can do anything in any position that you want to as long as you're not trying to do something personally for yourself, or you're not trying to make a gain out of it, and as long as it's for the good of the people that you work for and that you represent, and there ain't nobody that can do a God damn thing to you. They might chew your ass out, but they damn sure can't do anything else.

Interviewer: Did you have any personal goals that you failed to accomplish?

SMA Morrell: No. There were no goals that I had that I did not see fulfilled. The only thing, I didn't have a goal, like I was telling you about, trying to correct the over balanced MOSs in the Army. That was something that I worked towards. But no, everything that I really wanted to railroad through, I got that through without any problem.

Interviewer: Because you were persistent, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, and they knew damn well that it was right, because one thing the Chief always told them. When I talked, he told them, "Listen, that guy has got more experience with soldiers than all of you do in here. So listen to what the hell he's talking about."

Interviewer: In retrospect, is there anything that you would have

done differently?

Not a damn thing. Not one damn thing. If I went back up there for four more years, and the same things existed that existed when I went up there, I would do the same things. I always felt that I was fortunate, and like I told you before, because of the people that worked for me, and the MACOM Sergeants Major that I had in position at that time. I had some damn good MACOM Sergeants Major that felt the same way that I did. They weren't intimidated by the general officer that they worked for. They wanted to do what was right for the Noncommissioned Officers Corps and what was right for soldiers. We pushed a hell of a lot of things through that would not have been accomplished if it hadn't have been for all of us working together to do those things. You know, everybody thinks, "Well, hell, the Sergeant Major of the Army can do this and he can do that." Bull shit. You know, he's one guy and there's a big Army out there. You've got to listen. You've got to seek advice. You've got to talk to people. Then you've got to come up with the right way to do it. Then you've got to have the support in order to do that. I was fortunate to have the support to do the things that we got done.

Interviewer: How has the role of the Sergeant Major of the Army changed over the years?

SMA Morrell: Well, I don't know if the role has changed, Butch. I think, in that position, it's all predicated on whoever the Chief of Staff of the Army is, and how he wants to use the Sergeant Major of the Army. I couldn't tell you, because I can only speak about my tenure. I don't know what kind of guidance the other Chiefs of Staff of the Army gave their Sergeants Major of the Army, or what their priorities were. And I don't know if any of the Sergeants Major of the Army were intimidated by all of the high ranking people that they had to deal with. I don't know if the staff got to any of them and blind-sided them on stuff that they should have been addressing to the Chief of Staff of the Army. Hell, I don't have any idea. Like I said before,

the Sergeant Major of the Army has got to make his own damn way, and nobody can do that for him. He can only do as much as the Chief of Staff of the Army will let him do, but there should not be any problems on that, the way I see it. You know, people say, "You're the Sergeant Major of the Army. What the hell do you do?" Well, God damn, you do just like you did before, but only at a higher level. Hopefully that's what you do. And then I know one thing. My people put together a book in the office of the Sergeant Major of the Army, that a PFC could have went in that God damn office up there and everything was in there that that individual was, or would have been, involved in. All they had to do was read the God damn book. Now what happened to the book? I don't know, and I really don't give a God damn. I wish I'd kept a copy of it, but I didn't. But I could have put a good PFC in there, and as long as that individual could read and follow what my people put together in that damn book, that individual could operate at that level. But the problem you have, a hell of a lot of people, when they go in, they don't want nothing that son of a bitch had before them and, consequently, that gets them into trouble. And then they don't want to listen to nobody. They're going to do everything themselves, and that's how they get themselves in trouble, and that's in any God damn position in the Army. I don't care if it's the Sergeant Major of the Army or anywhere else.

Interviewer: A little earlier, you address briefly, when noncommissioned officers are selected for assignments, if that they decline to go to those assignments they were given a year to retire, but you helped to get that reduced to six months. I think you said you really wanted to have that reduce that to three months, is that correct?

SMA Morrell: I really wanted to go to thirty God damn days, but I couldn't get no support from anybody, so then I said, "Well, ninety days." They settled for six months. What that did was, if you had a guy that was coming out of Germany and you tapped an individual to go to

Germany, Jesus Christ, they sometimes went through fifteen or twenty people to get a back fill on someone coming out of Germany. What in the hell do you think that did to the soldiers and the people in that battalion? Most generally they took a first sergeant and pulled him up to battalion, and that meant there was a company without a first sergeant. You had someone doing a job there that really didn't have the experience to do it, and that just screwed the whole process up. When you did find someone, then that created a damn void because you couldn't get someone real quick to come into that position. Then that individual coming out, where in the hell were you going to put him if you didn't move. Then you had fifteen people that dropped out and you still had to keep them around for a year. That was bull shit. I said, "Give them thirty days. You either go or you don't go."

Interviewer: Then you had the guy that did go, on a short notice, and that didn't do him justice.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. So there fallacies in that. I will say, at least the Army does have a heat. They did go to six months on it. I think it's back up to nine months now, isn't it?

Interviewer: I really don't know.

SMA Morrell: I don't know what the hell it is. I heard there was a change. That might not even have been it. But anyway, there was so many problems with that; when you couldn't get an individual to take an assignment. Hell, they should of just pulled the plug on it.

Interviewer: What about the senior NCO who is selected to go to the Sergeants Major Academy and declines to go?

SMA Morrell: The same God damn thing. He should put his quit slip in and get out. You know, they're selected, based on what's in their record and what they can do for the Army. That means to me, if an individual don't want to go to the Sergeants Major Academy, which is the highest level training that we have for a noncommissioned officer, then that noncommissioned officer don't give a shit about the soldiers

that he is going to be dealing with, so why keep him in the Army. Hell, you don't need him.

(End Tape OH 94.6-3, Side 2)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-4, Side 1)

Interviewer: Today is Friday, April 1, 1994. This is a continuation of the interview with Sergeant Major of the Army, retired, Glen E. Morrell. When we ended up the day, yesterday, we were talking about the future of the Army. Some of the comments you made was about how we treat soldiers in the Army. You said that industry treats its employees better than we treat our soldiers. Also, you pointed out that if you knew somebody, then they'd take care of you. You cited examples of people who knew somebody, how they'd get promoted or...

SMA Morrell: Do you remember when they come out with the drug program about if you come out positive, if you was a noncommissioned officer you was put out of the Army? Well, there was a lot of people that, because of who they worked for or because they knew somebody, would come up in those cases and that wouldn't apply to them. The same thing with weight standards in the Army. You know, that damn thing is terrible because it's enforced, normally down at the company, but you go from company level, up, it's not enforced like it is down where the majority of your soldiers are, and it's not across the board. It's very discriminatory because of policy. Someone will say, "Well this is the standard." We've got a good policy. I've always said the policy that the Army has is good, but evidently the Army does not believe in their weight control policy, because it's not applied across the board. If you're on the officer side, it damn sure don't apply, because you've seen, in your military career, as I have, the overweight officers that are in the Army. You still have that today, and more especially at the senior level. You've got general officers that there no way in hell they could meet the height and weight standards in the Army. What I was referring to there is, you take a soldier or a noncommissioned

officer that was in the same circumstances, and if they didn't know somebody, then the Army ended up kicking them out of the Army for not complying with the weight control standards, and someone else could get away with it. I'm sure that exists still, today. The same thing on physical training. I wouldn't venture to guess how many people that really don't take a physical fitness test, twice a year like you're supposed to. But it's the same thing. They've got a policy, but it's only enforced when you have people that really want to enforce it, but it's not enforced at the highest level in the Army. That always aggravated me, because you should treat soldiers in "X" Company out there, wherever they may be, the same as soldiers anywhere else, but it's not applied across the board. I never did like that, but there wasn't a whole hell of a lot you could do about, because of the way the Army is structured. Some commanders did the job, and did it real well, and other commanders didn't put that much emphasis on it, so consequently, you always had soldiers that were treated differently, depending on where they were at and who they were working for.

Interviewer: Yesterday, we were talking about your visit to the Peoples Republic of China. After I reviewed what we talked about, I have a few additional questions I would like to ask you. Who went on that trip with you?

SMA Morrell: The Chief of Staff and his wife and his aide, General Shalikashvili went, the Secretary went, my wife went with me. We had a doctor that went with us; a major. I think that was all that made up the party that went on that trip. Oh, we had the political officer too.

Interviewer: From the Pentagon?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I called him "the political commissar." He was an agent.

Interviewer: Did they give you a good briefing on what you should do, what you shouldn't do, what you might see, and what you might encounter over there?

SMA Morrell: No. We were told that there would be bugs in the room, which there were. Of course that worked to my benefit, because The Old Man's driver went and he drank the beer. They had little old refrigerators in the room, and I came in one night and there wasn't any beer in there. They did have good beer in China. I said, "Damn, I can't believe they're so cheap that they can't put some beer in the refrigerator." Hell, I didn't have to worry anymore after that. I had beer every time I came back in from the field. They cautioned us if we was going to have any conversations to be careful what we talked about. That was about all.

Interviewer: Whenever you traveled, did you travel with the Chief all of the time, or were there times that you went your own way?

SMA Morrell: In China?

Interviewer: Yeah.

SMA Morrell: No, we stayed together. Every place he went to, I went with him.

Interviewer: How did Karen like China?

SMA Morrell: She really enjoyed it. They had a program for Mrs. Wickam and her. They went to hospitals and saw the way they take care of children over there. They had a good time. They got to see a lot of things that a lot of people will never get to see. Of course, they tried to do their best to take care of people, but it was very primitive. She was telling me about the hospitals. They have very outdated equipment.

Interviewer: I'd like you to access the performance of the Army during recent combat operations, such as Operation Urgent Fury, Operation Just Cause, and Operation Desert Storm.

SMA Morrell: I think that one of the main reasons why we were so successful on that, and I'm not taking anything away from the people that planned the operations and put that all together--hell they should be able to do that because that's their sole purpose in life and that's what they're supposed to do--I give credit to the strong leadership that

exists in the Noncommissioned Officers Corps to make that thing really work and to be so successful. If you'd look at the equipment when they went in and then after the conflict, I think ninety-three percent of the equipment was still operational; that was unheard of. They had very little maintenance problems. Again, you have to give credit where credit is due, which wasn't given. There wasn't anything said about the superb performance of the noncommissioned officers, especially in Desert Storm. There was reference made by the hierarchy, even by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs how good a job the soldiers and the officers did, but nobody said anything about the noncommissioned officers. I was very irate about that. In fact, I talked to General Vono about it, and he said he was going to correct that and do something about it. But I've attended a lot of things since I've retired and you hear a lot of people talking in different places, and I still visit military installations, and there wasn't much said about the performance of the Noncommissioned Officers Corps. I'm here to tell you, I talked to people that was over there. I talked to division commanders and they will tell you that all of that stuff come together because of the good noncommissioned officer leadership that was in place. So I think it all culminated because of the emphasis that was placed on the Army, starting in 1980 time frame and the revamping of all of the training programs with a good strong Noncommissioned Officer Education System. That's why all of those things come about and that's why we was so successful. Now they're trying to tear that up, and I've always had a fear of that, even when I left office. I know that there was a lot of stuff going around and you could see the drop in attendance at the academies, there was money being cut, there was reluctance by commanders to send people to school, even though it is tied to the promotion system now, that still forces people to go to school, but consequently you still have the problem on the money side of the house. Of course everybody that gets in that position up there, they say, "We're not going to see any deterioration

and we're going to maintain a good strong NCOES. We're going to send people." But that's not being done. You can go and talk to the academy sergeants major and they'll tell you. Of course, you go back to someone and they'll say, "Well, we've had a reduction in force." But you go out and find the people that should be attending PLDC (Primary Leadership Development Course) or BNCOC (Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course) or ANCOOC (Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course) that are not getting there. There has been a degradation in training. I think you'll see that at the Sergeants Major Academy also. I think you'll find that with the nine month course. I don't think that should have been the way that we should of went about doing business, because I think the training will suffer. Not the training, but I think the Noncommissioned Officers Corps is going to suffer in the long run because of that. If they really wanted to do something to get more time out of the noncommissioned officer, then they should look at a sergeant first class promotable being able to go to the school and you'd have that much more retainability out of that person after they come out of there. Hell, if you look at the Academy graduates, I think you'll find that with the majority of them, you only get about maybe five years, if you get that much out of them. I think one time they did a study for me on that. I don't remember, but I think it was down to about four years and then the majority of the people retired. So when you look at that, you've got to have what? Eighteen years in, normally, before you get selected to go to the Academy? Then you go and you got what? A two-year lock-in, or a year lock-in?

Interviewer: I don't know what it is now.

SMA Morrell: If it's a year lock-in, the person can go for another year and then retire, so you didn't get any retainability there out of that person. I know that there's a hell of a lot of people that disagree with me on that, and that's all well and good, but I don't think for the good of the Noncommissioned Officers Corps that's the way

the should went about doing that.

Interviewer: Also, yesterday we talked very briefly about Operation Urgent Fury. I need to ask you a couple more questions concerning that operation. Sergeant Major Vowels was out at Fort Lewis.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, with the 2nd Ranger Battalion.

Interviewer: And Sergeant Major Carpenter was at Fort Stewart.

SMA Morrell: Right.

Interviewer: You got a chance to talk to Sergeant Major Vowels and Sergeant Major Carpenter.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Why don't you share some of their thoughts concerning that operation.

SMA Morrell: Well, the intelligence wasn't that good on that particular operation. I think, if I remember right, some of the stuff that they got was not accurate. They had a hell of a time with map coverage of the area. They had to operate off of a standard Esso map that they picked up once they got down there. They had problems with the Air Force, on flying, because they started getting some, I think, anti-aircraft fire, or some kind of fire. Some of them got pretty shaky and turned around, or turned off, and really screwed up the airborne operation there, for a little while. I guess with the adrenalin pumping in something like that when you've got bullets flying at you, I can understand that, but there was a problem on the insertion that they had. The Navy inserted their Seals and they really had a problem with them. If I remember right, a few of those people drowned because that was very badly conducted. It was a combined operation, and again, it was because we don't work in a combined mode or we didn't have a good plan for combined operations like we should of had, and like we should have done, because of the events that took place in the past. So that really hindered them. They had some problems on coordination between, I think it was Delta Force and the Ranger, when

Delta got in there someplace. There were some problems associated with that. The basic plan that the Rangers had, they knew what the hell they was supposed to do; there was no problem with that. But there was a lack of intelligence data that they should of had, that they didn't have, and then what intelligence they did have, some of it was inaccurate. The map coverage of the area, hell, they just operated off of an Esso map; one that you get at a gas station. That was some of the problems that they had with that particular operation there.

Interviewer: I heard Sergeant Major Carpenter speak and he was saying about how sky high the morale of those guys was during that operation. It was unbelievable.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Well, you have to know, I guess, the mentality of Rangers. That's what they train for and that's what they like to do, although nobody likes to get into a conflict, but they're a highly trained bunch of people. They're good soldiers and well disciplined. Hell, anytime you get them involved in something like that, that really skyrockets morale, because they want to be tested to see if they are really as good as what they were trained to be, and they like to do things like that.

Interviewer: I think we have just about covered your tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army.

SMA Morrell: Okay.

Interviewer: I've got one other item that I would like to cover at this time, and then we'll go back and start talking about you earlier days. Tell me about your retirement ceremony.

SMA Morrell: The Chief of Staff hosted my retirement ceremony. It was done by "The Old Guard." It was a very good ceremony and I enjoyed it very much. The made a tape of it and I really didn't look at the tape until about a year later. It really meant more then than what it did at the time that the ceremony was being conducted. I had to laugh, because the staff was worrying about what I was going to say, so they

tried to trick me. They come over and said, "How long is your speech going to be?" I said, "Hell, I don't know, I haven't made one out yet." So they said, "Well, how long do you think it will be?" I said, "Hell, I don't know. I'll let you know." So they come back the next day and I said, "Who in the hell wants to know how long my speech is going to be?" They said, "Well the Chief does." I said, "Well hell, I'll go over and talk to him." That was bull shit. They wanted to know; it wasn't the Chief. He didn't want to know. So then I really had them going. I told them, "Well, I've got it now." I said, "It's exactly one hour, but I think I can cut it down to fifty minutes." Well they really got excited when I told them that. I said, "Well, I spent almost thirty-three years in the Army, and hell, it's going to take me a long time to get up there and go through my Army career." I said, "Hell, I'm going out and I've got to go from when I come in to the time that I get out." So I kept screwing with them on that. I really had them excited. So finally they did go tell the Chief. The Old Man, he never said anything to me until the day of the ceremony. He said, "Glen, how long is it going to take you talk." I said, "I'll be done a hell of a lot quicker than what you'll be, General." I think my remarks, if I remember right, was on just the front side of about two and a half 3x5 cards, and that's all. But I really had them excited there. But it was a good ceremony. The Old Guard did a hell of a job, like they always do. Karen and I both enjoyed it very much.

Interviewer: Was the parade conducted by only NCOs?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. It was all done by noncommissioned officers. They did a good job. The weather wasn't too bad. I think it was held about ten o'clock in the morning, if I remember right, but it still was hot. There was a pretty good breeze blowing and we got out of there before the sun got real bad, so it was pretty good.

Interviewer: That was over at Fort Myer, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: We've covered your tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army. Yesterday we covered the information concerning your parents and your brothers and sisters. What is the name of the elementary school that you attended, and where was it located?

SMA Morrell: Well, I attended one school and that was Normantown High School, in Normantown, West Virginia. When you started out, the elementary part was in the bottom. You started out in the bottom and you made your way to the top. I stayed in the same school for twelve years.

Interviewer: About how far was that school from your house?

SMA Morrell: Oh, I think about maybe five, six, seven miles.

Interviewer: How did you travel to school?

SMA Morrell: On the school bus.

Interviewer: Throughout your years in school, what were your favorite subjects?

SMA Morrell: I enjoyed math, science, history. I think those were my favorite subjects when I was in school.

Interviewer: What are the names of some of your favorite teachers?

SMA Morrell: You know, I can see them. I know the one elementary teacher that I had by the name of Mrs. Malahan, who was a hell of a good teacher. She was a strict disciplinarian. She had, like you was talking about, a sense of humor. She had a good sense of humor. She made sure that you learned the subjects, and I found that so in all of the teachers that I had at that school. Some of the teachers in the school, the male teachers, served in the Second World War. You know, it was just more strict, discipline-type era, at that particular, from what it is today, although I don't think we should never have lost that. I had a teacher by the name of Mr. Stonacher, who was also the coach of the basketball team. Of course, his philosophy was winning. If you didn't win, you were terrible. He was a good teacher. I had some other teachers there, but golly, I tried to rack my memory. I was going to

get my diploma out and see if some of the teachers was listed on that thing, which I should have done. Hell, I can see them, but I don't remember the names of them. I know that might sound terrible, but they did have a hell of an impression me, and I can still remember what they look like. I know one thing, they didn't tolerate any rowdiness or anything in the classroom or in the school at all.

Interviewer: How did they discipline the students if they broke the rules?

SMA Morrell: They got sent to the principal and they got paddled. Not only did you get paddled at school, you got paddled at home too. Of course I never had that problem. I don't know, hell, I was guess I was as ornery as anybody else, but I knew when to do something and when not to do something. But that was just something that wasn't done.

Interviewer: What was your favorite sport?

SMA Morrell: Well the only sport we had in the school was basketball. We were fortunate to have a gymnasium. That's what I played; basketball. Now what I liked to do, and still like to do, is hunt and fish, and that's what I did when I was a kid growing up. About all I did was hunt, fish, work on the farm, and that's all there was to do. I read a lot; I loved to read. I give my mother credit for that because she read everything that was imaginable, and she was always reading, so she taught me to read. She said, "There's nothing like sitting down and reading a good book."

Interviewer: Did you have any kind of part time jobs after school?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, as I got older. I worked for farmers. I worked in the hay fields and in the corn fields. Hell, I used to hoe corn and think that I never was going to get from one end of the row to the other. I made a hell of a lot of money. When I first started, I think I started with a dollar and a half a day. Then I got up to two dollars a day. Then I got to two fifty a day, and then three dollars a day. When I was in high school, probably during my junior and senior

year, hell, I got three dollars and a half a day, so I didn't do too bad. When I first started working on the farm, they had horses. Then they finally got tractors. I just done manual labor, out in the hot sun. I enjoyed the hell out of it. You started a daylight and you quit when the dew started falling. I guess it's good for you.

Interviewer: When you got older, did you spend most of your summer working?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Whenever you did have time off in the summer or on Sundays, either when you were a younger child or later on, what did you and your brothers, sister, and friends do?

SMA Morrell: I didn't have any brothers and sisters at home. They were all gone. When I was small, I had a sister and a brother at home, but then, as I got a little bit older, they got married and left. Most of the time I was fishing, if it was in the summertime. If it was in the wintertime, I was hunting or trapping. That's all I did until I got to be sixteen years old and got my driver's license, and then I started chasing the girls real heavy. Of course I started chasing them heavy before I was sixteen, but then, hell, I was good to go when I got my driver's license. So that's what I did. I went to a lot of movies. Good Lord, I don't know how many movies I saw back then. Of course, it was cheap. That was about the only entertainment that there really was around. You entertained yourself. Hell, I grew up like in a rural area. I saw other people who had televisions, but we never even had a television until after I came into the Army. Then Mom and dad finally got a television. We had a radio, but the only time you listened to the radio was when my dad listened to Lowell Thomas every night. If you touched that radio, you'd get your butt smacked, because batteries cost a lot of money, back then. Hell, I guess they did, because that's what they said. My parents, like I told you, grew up in The Depression and they knew what the value of money was. They didn't waste, and I didn't

want for anything. Hell, I had all the food I could eat. My mom was a hell of a cook. I'm telling you, that woman could cook anything. She baked bread, pies, cakes, and everything. She did it how she was taught and she never followed recipes. I wish I had been smart enough to write down some of the recipes. She did teach me how to cook and I can cook pretty good myself. She taught me how to take care of myself. But there wasn't anything to do there. Like I said, the closest neighbor was a quarter of a mile away, and the only person that was my age lived a quarter of a mile away. There wasn't any other kids in the close proximity where I grew up at.

Interviewer: In other words, when you got your driver's license, that kind of unlocked the door.

SMA Morrell: Right, that unlocked the door. I had a good time. Yep.

Interviewer: Do you remember some of your friends that you grew up with?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Jack Piercy, the guy that I did a lot of fishing and hunting with, and of course I worked for his dad. They owned a pretty good size farm. We lived on a small farm. Jack and I paled around a lot together, but we worked together a lot, because, like I said, I worked for his dad, and he worked everyday there on the farm. I had another guy that I run around with a lot. He and I was real close. A guy by the name of Ed Mackuway, who later went into the Marine Corps, not too long after I joined the Army. I think the reason he joined the Marine Corps, he knew he was going to get drafted. There were a couple of other guys. There was a guy by the name of Robert Nutter, who played basketball. Of course, Mackuway played basketball too. Both of them were good basketball players. A guy by the name of Jim Williams, who was one hell of a baseball pitcher. In fact, he went to the minor leagues and I don't know what happened. He didn't have enough discipline to stay with it, but he was a good pitcher. I think it was the Chicago Cubs that picked him up, or some major league

team. Anyway, he stayed with them for a while, and then of course I joined the Army. Then my father passed away and my mother moved back to Schultz, where we owned a farm there. My brother stayed about ten miles from where I grew up at. I just lost contact with people, of course, hell, there wasn't nothing to keep you there when you got out of high school, unless you went to college. That was a disappointment to my mom and dad, that I didn't go to college, because they really wanted me to go to college, but hell, all I wanted to do is join the Army and jump out of airplanes. The only good people to work for was the Hope Natural Gas Company, which I told you, later on become Exxon, and the electrical company; Monongahela Power Company, and Cabot, which was a gas and oil company. There wasn't any industry in that area where you could get a job with any kind of future, and a job that would pay you anything or had any kind of retire plans or job security. Now I could have gone to work for that company that my father worked for, but hell, I always said I'd be damned if I was going to work until I was sixty-five years old before I could retire. I saw too many people that worked all their life and then when they retired, they was too old to enjoy retirement and they just lived a little while and then they passed away. I said, "Hell, there's got to be something better than that." I did not plan on making the Army a career, when I joined the Army. I really wanted to be a State Policeman, in the State of West Virginia, but I got cross-wired on that, which you'll cover later on, or I can cover that right now.

Interviewer: Go ahead.

SMA Morrell: What happened was I put in to go to the Police Academy when I got out of the Army, on 4 November of '57. The school was supposed to start in January. Well, they delayed it until April and I really didn't want to go and try and find a job someplace. My idea of a job was not working in a damn factory. I liked to be outside and I said, "The hell with it." I never unpacked my duffle bag, so I

just rejoined the Army and come back in, and that was it.

Interviewer: Up around Schultz, was that pretty flat terrain?

SMA Morrell: No, that was mountainous terrain. Now I wasn't raised at Schultz. I was raised in a place called Stumptown, West Virginia. Now Stumptown was about, I guess, three miles from where we lived, or maybe four miles. I can't remember the exact distance. Hell, I walked it enough times that I should know. That was the only place where they had a store at; it was kind of a country store. So Stumptown was the place where I grew up. The school was located in Normantown. Stumptown was a very small town. Jesus, I bet there's not, I'd say, fifteen houses there, if there's that many houses there. Some of those have been built since I left there. Of course some deteriorated and fell down or got tore down since I left. So maybe there's a dozen houses there. We did live in Stumptown one time, for a short period of time, then we moved up on, what they refer to as "Steer Creek." Like I said, the closest town was Stumptown, and that was the mailing address where the mail come in, and then they dropped it off in the mail box. They delivered mail out to the homes. So I enjoyed it. Now I look back on it and really enjoyed where I grew up at. I enjoyed the school. I probably got an education that would be equivalent to two years of college today, out of that high school. Like I said, they made sure that you learned, or you didn't stay in school from the time you went to the first grade until you graduated out of the twelfth grade. We had good teachers. There wasn't anybody that stayed in school that did not learn the subjects, because they made sure that you did that, and you had better do it, because then if you didn't, you got taken care of when you got home too.

Interviewer: You graduated from high school, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: You said how disappointed your parents were that you didn't go to college. Later on, when you got into the Army, what kind

of college courses did you take?

SMA Morrell: I never took any college courses until I went to the Sergeants Major Academy. I worked every correspondence course under the sun. The other day I was going through some boxes of paper and I still had a lot of those certificates. God, I worked correspondence courses that dealt with artillery, armor, infantry, engineers. I can't even recall how many correspondence courses that I worked over the years, while I was in the Army. I never did anything until I went to the Sergeants Major Academy. What are those courses you could take and if you passed them, you got credit?

Interviewer: Are you talking about the CLEP (College Level Evaluation Program)?

SMA Morrell: No. You'd go in there and take a test, and if you passed that, then you got credit for it.

Interviewer: The CLEP has four or five tests.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I don't remember. Anyway, that's were I got all of my college at. I took two of the electives. I took English. You'd know it to hear me talk, or write, for Christ sakes. But I did good. I made an "A+" in English I and an "A" in English II, so I did good work. I had a good teacher, and that was something that I did not have when I was in high school. Our English teachers changed too often while I was in high school. That's where I got my two years of college at. I didn't get that until, probably right before I retired. When I was in the Academy, I took all of those courses and then the electives. They told me that I had enough credits to get my associate degree, when I graduated. Well, about two weeks before the end of the class, they said that I needed, I think it was two hours, or three hours more, of something. Well, hell, I didn't have time to get it. I never had time after that, because I left there and went to Fort Riley, Kansas and hell, I was a first sergeant, working from about four-thirty in the morning until nine or ten o'clock at night. Then I left there and went

to ROTC duty. That was something new to me and I didn't know what the hell I was getting into. I got there in March and I left there in January of the following year. So I never had the opportunity to do anything there, although I was going to but I come out on orders. Then I left there and went to the Ranger Battalion. Hell, there was no way you could do anything in that outfit. Then I went to Germany, and I started to do some stuff there, but I had to go on a lot of deployments with the unit that we had there. I started working on trying to finish up, well then I left there and went to the Recruiting Command and then to FORSCOM, and then I went to be the Sergeant Major of the Army. They reevaluated all of the credits that I had and they found out that I did have enough credits to get an associate degree, and that's when I got it.

Interviewer: You got that from El Paso Community College, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: I think that's one of the good programs we have at the Academy; the electives program and college equivalency testing.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. There's one thing I'm going to bring up here about education, and I don't want you to get the wrong impression. I believe in education, and I think it's a great thing. But one problem that I fought when I was Sergeant Major of the Army, and it still exists today and it's detrimental to the Noncommissioned Officers Corp, and that is, there's always been someone in the background saying, "Before you can get promoted to master sergeant, you should have a year of college and you should have two years when you get to be a sergeant major." That plays a big factor on the centralized promotion board. Well, I picked up on that. So one day I had the DCSPER (Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel) come up and I went in and told the Chief of Staff of the Army. I said, "I need eighty seven million dollars." He about fell out of his chair. He said, "What the hell are you talking about?" I said, "You know, all of the general officers are going around talking

about they first sergeants, or E8s and E9s to have a college education." I said, "Hell, that's the only way I can educate them." I said, "I need eighty seven million dollars to send them all to school." Then we got down to talking like you should be talking, and I knocked that off. An officer is very influenced by individuals if they've got four years of college, and they're looking at them on a centralized promotion board. Consequently, a lot of time if you look, that individual had been with troops a very short period of time and has not had too much troop time and they had the opportunity to go to school. I said, "How in the hell do you make a judgement call and you take an individual who has been in the trenches for X number of years, who never had the opportunity to go to school, how in the hell is he supposed to get his schooling." I said, "That's being discriminatory because you need to look at the whole person and see where they're assigned. Just because you might have four years of college, and I don't have any, that don't mean that I'm not a good noncommissioned officer and doing what the Army wants you to do." My emphasis was always on the Noncommissioned Officer Education System. Make sure people go to PLDC, BNCOC, ANCO, First Sergeant Course, the Sergeants Major Academy, and the other courses that they brought on line. That's where the emphasis should be placed on education, on the NCO side. Right now I know that the Sergeant Major of the Army goes out and talks and tells everybody to get their education. Well that's bull shit. You know, if we want them to have education, then why in the hell don't we do like the Officers Corps. Set aside the money and resources and let that person go to school. If they want them to have two years of college, then make the time available.

Interviewer: In your case, if you take a look at the assignments that you had, since you've been in the Army, even if you wanted to go to college, you didn't have the time.

SMA Morrell: Hell no. That's a good way to lose your damn job and not get promoted, because your main purpose in life was to take care

of soldiers and train them. So how in the hell are going to go to college when you do something like that? They say, "Well, you go at night time." Well, hell, when I did get off at night time, all I wanted to do was go to bed. The Army is still in that situation, and it's the mentality that the Officer Corps had, because they look and they say, "Jesus, this guy has four years of college." And that's who they hired, but if you looked at the background that individual has, a lot of times and it's damn sure is not a true background. Then another problem that you have, you've got a lot of people that works that the schoolhouse and they know exactly when they're going to pitch classes or whatever it is that they're going to do, so they've got the opportunity to go get some education. And then, are you going to promote them ahead of the people who don't have the opportunity to get an education? You can't get that across. I was never able to get that across when I was in the Army, although I watched it like a hawk. You still have that mentality out there. If a person has got the college, that the person who should go in the job. I always said I wanted a noncommissioned officer to have a PhD in noncommissioned officer business and soldier business. If we trip that damn thing, and I see where it's being tripped very, very badly, with what I gather, with what I see, with what I hear, and with what I read. That's not the way we should do business. And if we want them to have an education, Butch, God damnit then we should resource the thing and make the time available.

(End Tape OH 94.6-4, Side 1)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-4, Side 2)

Interviewer: Go ahead and continue.

SMA Morrell: Don't penalize a soldier and say, "We're going to select this other person because he had the opportunity to go to school." Now what I tried to make them understand, when I briefed the boards, I said, "Look where the individual works. Now if you've got two guys, or two gals, that have been in the same kind of places and one of

them has got college, then that might be the factor where you pick that person over the other one, because the other one had the same opportunity. But you have to look to make sure the other person had the opportunity to try and get some civilian education. But when you say that we want everybody to do that and you better get out here and get you some civilian education because you're not going to be competitive, that's a hell of a thing to do. What do they want a noncommissioned officer to do? Do they want a noncommissioned officer to be proficient in noncommissioned officer business in order to train soldiers and get the job done, or do they want them to go college and neglect the soldiers. Remember, we had that problem, back in the '70's. Hell, you had people out boot strapping and everything else, of course, a lot of people selected those people to be promoted, and hell, they couldn't lead a damn horse across the damn road, for crying out loud. That really impacted on the Noncommissioned Officer Corps and it impacted on the kind of training that soldiers got. Again, I'm all for education, but God damnit, make sure you know what you're doing when you try to make that a policy or you're trying to make that a criteria for promotion. Believe me, a lot of people do that on the centralized promotion boards, and I don't feel that that's right. I harped about that and watched that very closely.

Interviewer: How soon after you graduated from high school, did you join the Army?

SMA Morrell: I had enough credit to graduate at mid-term and then I went to work. I worked and then I graduated in May, I think it was. I worked that summer and then I joined the Army that fall. I did all of the stuff, some time in October, and then November was when I went in.

Interviewer: You didn't serve with the Guard or Reserve, did you?

SMA Morrell: No.

Interviewer: What lead to your decision to join the Army?

SMA Morrell: Well, my dad served in the First World War, and then

I had a brother in the Second World War. My other brother was in the Korean War, and he was a paratrooper. I liked that damn hat he wore, with that glider patch on there, and them airborne wings and shiny boots. I said, "Damn, man that's a hero." I signed up for the 11th Airborne Division and I got the 82nd. That was back there when they put you wherever in hell they wanted you. As long as they got the hook into you, nothing else mattered. It didn't matter what unit you wanted to go to. It's not like today. If you enlist for X unit, if there is a vacancy, you would get that and that's where you go, otherwise it's a breach of contract. But now back then. They didn't know what a breach of contract was.

Interviewer: You joined in 1954, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: What month did you say you joined in?

SMA Morrell: November.

Interviewer: What were the reaction of your parents when you decided to join the Army?

SMA Morrell: Well, they didn't like it, because they really wanted me to go to college. My dad didn't think the Army was the place to go. My two brothers sure didn't, because both of them were drafted, if I remember right. Yeah, they were drafted and they couldn't wait to get out. They just couldn't believe I was that dumb to join the Army, but that's what I wanted to do. I read a lot of books about the military and I saw a lot of movies. I thought, "Man, that's the place to be." Of course I found out where the rubber meets the road, and what reality really is, but I liked it.

Interviewer: What was your initial term of service?

SMA Morrell: Three years.

Interviewer: At which military installation did you enter the Army?

SMA Morrell: The first place I went to was Fort Jackson, South

Carolina, but they had too many troops there. We went to Fort Jackson and if I remember right, we got our shots there, some preliminary screening. I think we stayed there one night, or maybe two nights, and then we left and went to Camp Gordon, Georgia.

Interviewer: So Fort Jackson was actually your reception station.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: They also issued your uniforms there, didn't they?

SMA Morrell: I think we might have got one uniform there and then we got the rest of it down at Camp Gordon. I believe that's what happened, because they were over crowded. We were supposed to take basic at Jackson, but they had too many troops there, so we ended up going to Camp Gordon.

Interviewer: Where did you take your oath of enlistment?

SMA Morrell: You know, I don't remember. I think they did that at the reception station. Yeah, I sure they that at the reception station in Fairmont, West Virginia.

Interviewer: So you entered the Army in Fairmont and then you went down to Jackson.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Where did you receive your physical examination? At Fairmont?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, from what I remember. I don't think it was too damn much of a physical, to tell you the truth. I think they wanted to see if you could walk and talk, and if you was chewing bubble gum and didn't stumble, you was good to go.

Interviewer: How old were you when you entered basic training?

SMA Morrell: Eighteen.

Interviewer: How long was your basic training?

SMA Morrell: I think it was eight weeks, if I remember right.

Interviewer: Back then we had service numbers, before they converted to social security numbers. What was your service number?

SMA Morrell: 1-3-5-1-1-2-7-3. Regular Army.

Interviewer: Regular Army.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, and there wasn't too many Regular Army people around then, because they was still drafting people at that time.

Interviewer: You had that "RA" prefix.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: The barracks that you lived in, down at Camp Gordon, were they the World War II type?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, old World War II, with a fire heated by coal. You had to have a fire guard. You had to have someone to keep the coal shoveled in the heater at nighttime. Man, it was colder than hell and of course, you know how drafty those old buildings were anyway, and two Army blankets didn't keep you too damn warm.

Interviewer: Besides your footlocker, did you have wall lockers or just a wooden rod?

SMA Morrell: A rod. I had an old wooden rod hanging there, right behind your bed. That's all you had.

Interviewer: With a shelf above it.

SMA Morrell: Yep.

Interviewer: You put your field gear on the shelf.

SMA Morrell: Yep. You didn't have too damn much field gear either.

Interviewer: No civilian clothes either.

SMA Morrell: No. No civilian clothes.

Interviewer: How was the food down there?

SMA Morrell: Well, hell, I guess it was alright. I'm here today, but there wasn't much of it. You ate a hell of a lot of C-rations, back then, even in the mess hall; about two times a week. I guess it was the rotation of the C-ration stock. Right now I understand that. They would open them up and put them in one pot, and that's what you had to eat. That's why I hate stew, to this damn day. I don't care for stew at all.

Interviewer: While we're talking about C-rations. We've made a big change in C-rations, over the years. Now they have the MREs (Meal Ready to Eat). Give me your evaluation of the MREs and what the soldiers think of them.

SMA Morrell: Well if you talk to soldiers that ate C-rations, they think that MREs are bad. If you talk to people about MREs and if that all they're accustomed to, they still don't like them. Hell, not too many people liked C-rations either, but they preferred the C-rations over the MREs. God, we had a lots of problems with that when I was Sergeant Major of the Army. We had a lot of discussions on that, because we got so many complaints from the field; from commanders, hell, everybody. I remember one general telling The Old Man that the peanut butter in the MREs tasted like urine. Of course everybody laughed like hell. They wondered what urine tasted like, but that was the comment this four-star made about MREs. Of course, I've always been known to probably should be listening instead of talking. General Wickam said, "Well, the MREs aren't too bad." He said, "I've eaten them." I told him, "Yeah, I know when you ate them, sir." I said, "You only ate them one time." I said, "If you had to live on them damn things for a long time, it probably would be a different story." It sure as hell got quiet in that staff meeting when I said that." But I knew then that I was talking too much. But anyway, I made my point. That's when we started looking into the improvement of the MREs. I think they have improved them a hell of a lot, but I think there's a hell of a lot more things that they could do to make that a better product. We went into that too quick, and that was back when we knew we was going to have to reduce the force. We wanted to get rid of all the cooks. The Vice Chief made the decision to get rid of all the cooks in the Army. Hell, you could take anybody and they could cook that stuff and fix a meal in no time at all. Well, you had problems because commanders said, "The hell with it. Just use

MREs and continue to march. You can get more training in without using the..." What the hell was those big containers?

Interviewer: Are you talking about mermite?

SMA Morrell: No.

Interviewer: Whenever they cooked the food and brought it out to you?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, but you could prepare the food out there in them containers and then open them up and you could feed. That was supposed to be an A-ration type meal. Hell, my dogs wouldn't eat some of that stuff that they first come out with: I know they wouldn't. I know how finicky my dogs are. It was terrible. We just went about it too damn quick. We didn't even train the people how to use the new equipment that come on-line to prepare the meal that was supposed to take the place of the A-ration. Hell, we didn't even train them, for Christ sake. We brought the equipment out and didn't train anybody how to use it. Hell, you'd go to units and find that they had the equipment, but they didn't know how to use it.

Interviewer: Why did they make the decision to got from C-rations to MREs?

SMA Morrell: Money. Because the individual that come up with that program sold that to the commercial side of the house and they used that in a lot of restaurants, hotels. It was used in the hotel industry. The individual that developed that program got the Army to buy off on it, and he made a hell of a lot of money out of it, because of the influence that he had with the Army. That's how the Army got involved in the MRE business. Tray rations was what I was trying to think of a while ago. Do you remember the tray rations?

Interviewer: Right.

SMA Morrell: That's how that come about. Hell, we had dog food manufacturers that first started making that damn stuff; that made MREs. Hell, we had all kinds of problems with that outfit down in Texas that

was making them. I think there was one up in New Jersey. Jesus, that was a hell of a thing. We just didn't have our ducks in order when we come out with that. I think it's gotten better. I was on a "Task Force 2000" food study, after I retired. I went up there and traveled all over the United States, to different installations, getting comments from troops on what they needed to put in there and what we needed to take out. They did improve them, but I'm not so sure how much. I told them. I said, "If you took soldiers out in the field and all you fed them was MREs for, say three or four months," I said, "when you went out to visit them, they'd probably shoot you." That was at that time that we were having all of the problems with them. I don't know if we really corrected that or not. I know all the recommendations that were given by that study group that I was on made them a hell of a lot better. Now whether that comes to pass or not, I have no idea. You live next to where military people are and you probably still hear them complaining about MREs.

Interviewer: How do MREs compare to the LRPs, the long range patrol rations?

SMA Morrell: Well, the problem with both of those is that it took a hell of a lot of water. It takes so much water to really prepare them, and water is a scarcity, as you well know. And then you didn't have a way to heat them. Then they developed all of these damn quick fixes on trying to find something to heat an MRE with. Hell, I think we had a good ration, and of course the complaint was that it was too heavy to carry. Well, hell, you didn't need to carry too much. If you were going out to the field for five days or ten days, you didn't need to carry ten days worth of C-rations, because you broke that down to only what you wanted to eat. At least it was pretty good, pretty tasty. You could fix it up with some hot sauce, and all that kind of stuff, and you could survive on it without any problem. But I don't know, personally, I would rather have the C-rations.

Interviewer: You could hand a soldier an individual C-ration pack and he could be on his way.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Or the mess sergeant would put all of the cans in a garbage can that had an immersion heat in it and heat the cans.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Then they come out that you couldn't use the water that you heated the MRE in because there was a chemical substance on the package that was not good for you. Hell, there were all kind of problems with that. The way the Army got into that is like I told you. It was because of the influence the individual had that owned that kind of an operation, and he made a hell of a lot of money off of it. And I supported it because of the position I had and we had already made that move, and hell, there was no turning back, because they cut off the C-ration production when they got into that. Hell, that's what they had and that's what they've got now. Like I say, I know that there has been a lot of improvement, but I'm not so sure that's still all that good. I know I don't think I would want to eat it for six months if I had to. If you look at the way you're supposed to feed that, there's a hell of a lot of supplementary things that goes along with it. Well, a lot of times the people weren't buying that and it wasn't coming about. You was supposed to have fresh vegetables and drinks, cold stuff, and things like that, but what the hell do you do if you're in the part of the world where you can't get it? I think we probably got into something that we shouldn't have got into. But anyway, the food in basic wasn't all that good. I can remember, on Sunday you always had cold cuts; terrible damn cold cuts. They was the worst cold cuts. It was stuff the Army had in caves where they keep it at for national disaster. They rotated that out. Jesus, you talk about cholesterol. God Almighty, I remember some of that meat they had. Hell, like I say, I don't think my dogs would even eat that. But I survived.

Interviewer: How often did you pull KP (kitchen police)?

SMA Morrell: I pulled KP maybe five or six times; that is all the KP that I pulled.

Interviewer: Was you the pot and pan man, the outside man, DRO (dining room orderly)?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I was the pot and pan man. I was dining room orderly whenever I could get there quick enough to beat someone else there a few times. Pot and pans, or peeling them damn potatoes. Hell, I can still peer them today. In fact, I most generally peel them, because my wife is left handed and, Jesus, to watch her peel a potato will crack you up. Hell, she looks like she's going to cut herself. It a good thing she's got one of them peelers, otherwise she'd cut herself.

Interviewer: What were your fellow recruits like?

SMA Morrell: They was from all over. Different parts of the United States. There were a hell of a lot of them from the big cities. But basically, they was all a pretty good bunch of people. I don't remember any major discipline problems, with the exception of one when I got into AIT (advanced individual training). I don't recall any discipline problems with anybody in basic. In AIT they put a guy on KP and he had to dig a garbage sump out in the field; he was a German guy. The mess sergeant we had was a Swede--a guy buy the name of Lawson--and he very particular how the mess was run. He was Lord God over the mess hall. You knew who in the hell was in charge and you didn't mess around with the mess sergeant or his cooks. This old boy was digging a sump and the mess sergeant said it wasn't deep enough, and he took the old mess sergeant and threw his ass in the sump and wouldn't let him out. The guy was a good soldier, but he had a little bit of problems trying to adhere to the rules. He was drafted. He had come from Germany. He had come over here, and of course anytime people come over, at that time, hell, the first thing, they got drafted into the Army. But I laughed like hell. He threw the mess sergeant in there and wouldn't let him out. I could see him down there. He would run around and try to

get out, and he'd run over there and step on his fingers or kick dirt back in on him. But believe it or not, he was disciplined but he didn't get an Article 15. He got some extra duty and that kind of stuff. We had a good Battery Commander. Hell, he was an old man. You talk about an old man, he was old. He had about twenty-seven years in the Army as a captain. But he was a good commander. Hell, we didn't have any officers in the company. We only had two. We had the Battery Commander and the Exec; that's all you had.

Interviewer: When you were going through basic training, they had the "field first," right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you very seldom saw that first sergeant. Was everything was taken care of by the field first?

SMA Morrell: Hell, I don't even know if we had a first sergeant. The only person I ever saw the field first. He was the one that did everything. Now when I got to AIT, we had a first sergeant.

Interviewer: How was the teamwork amongst your fellow recruits?

SMA Morrell: Well it took a little time to get organized, but once we got organized, hell, we all worked together. They knew that was the only way you was going to get out of the doggone place. So there was no problem with that. They come together pretty good.

Interviewer: About what time did your training day start in the morning?

SMA Morrell: Hell, O dark thirty. I'd say about five o'clock.

Interviewer: Until late at night.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, until late at night. Sometimes, all night. Hell, you didn't have set hours or anything like that. Hell, you just did it until the job was done.

Interviewer: Did you train on the weekends?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: What was your first impression of the Army?

SMA Morrell: What the hell did I get into? That's exactly what I thought. I said, "Man, I should have listened to my dad."

Interviewer: Did they call them drill instructors then?

SMA Morrell: No. We called them "sergeant."

Interviewer: Did they have the committee group or did your sergeants do the instructing?

SMA Morrell: They did the instruction. And that's one thing that I always thought about. You know, we've got drill sergeants running all over training centers and you've got instructor committees. We really had a problem at one time there. We got low on noncommissioned officers in units and I started looking at that, and Jesus Christ, they almost assassinated me. TRADOC got all excited. I've always believed that we could do a better job of utilization of people, and not have drill instructors, because all they did was march the people to the class and then someone else pitched the class, when they could have pitched the class without any problem. We've got too much of that out there. I still exists in the Army. We've got too damn many training places. Just like training drill sergeants. Why don't we train drill sergeants at one place, but hell, everybody wants a drill sergeant school. Look at all the people you tie up on that, and you take away from troop units. I was always totally opposed to that, but when you start dealing with turf out there, nobody wants to lose any of their turf because then that might create less positions at the higher level. You know, I've always said that was the worst thing we had in the Army is the damn turf issue. Everybody wants to protect it, knowing that it's not right because there's a lot of people that go without noncommissioned officers because we don't use them properly. We don't assign them to the places where they should be.

Interviewer: What was your impression of your sergeants during basic training?

SMA Morrell: Hell, they was good people. They were all Korean War

veterans; every one I had in basic and AIT. All of them had been in the Korean War. They were good people and knew what the hell they were doing. They were fair and they didn't belittle you in any way. They didn't beat the hell out of you. They were just strict and you either learned or you stayed there until you did.

Interviewer: Do you know any of their names?

SMA Morrell: No. In AIT, a guy by the name of Jackson, and a guy by the name of Bosivert. The old supply sergeant was a guy by the name of Faison. I was trying to think of the names of a couple of other guys, but I can't remember. The old First Sergeant was Jack Nightstep. He was a hell of a first sergeant. Man I'm tell you, he was top notch. That's why I said, "If I stay in this Army, I want to be a first sergeant." So they had a hell of an influence on me in AIT, because they really knew what the hell they were doing.

Interviewer: While you were in basic, what kind of daily and weekly inspections did you have?

SMA Morrell: Hell, you had an inspection every day, in the billets; in the area where you lived at. You had an in-ranks inspection because you always stood reveille every damn morning, so you always got inspected.

Interviewer: Did you have the normal Saturday morning inspection?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, God Almighty. You cleaned the whole damn place, and then it all depended on what kind you had. You might have a full field layout or just stand-by in the barracks area, or the whole barracks, or you would have a rifle inspection, an in-ranks inspection in class A uniform. Hell, it was always changing, but you always had a Saturday morning inspection, especially in AIT and when I got assigned to a regular unit.

Interviewer: During basic, did you keep your weapons right there in the barracks?

SMA Morrell: Yep. We had a rifle rack.

Interviewer: What did you have, M1s?

SMA Morrell: M1s.

Interviewer: What kind of a physical training program did you have during basic?

SMA Morrell: You know, I really don't remember having any of that in basic. I assume we did. We walked or ran every damn place we went. We walked to the rifle range. Hell, you didn't have no transportation. I guess they didn't have no vehicles because of the money. I guess they said that was enough for physical training.

Interviewer: How often did you have dismounted drill?

SMA Morrell: Every day.

Interviewer: Did you start out with squads and

SMA Morrell: platoon and then company.

Interviewer: You qualified with the M1. Is that correct?

SMA Morrell: Right, and the bazooka.

Interviewer: The 3.5, or the other one.

SMA Morrell: No, the other one. It was a piece of shit. That's what it was.

Interviewer: It couldn't punch a hole in a tin can.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, and that was the kind that you attached wires to it and the damn wires would fly off and hit you in the face.

Interviewer: Tell me about your weapons training, during basic.

SMA Morrell: We had good weapons training. Hell, they taught you everything you needed to know about an M1 rifle. We'd tear that thing down and put it back together, Hell, there wasn't that much to it, really. But cleanliness was next to Godliness. You better make sure that thing didn't have a speck of dirt on it. Hell, it was good training.

Interviewer: Did you have the thousand inch range?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, and then you had the circle.

Interviewer: That was the RIC (Rifle Instruction Circle).

SMA Morrell: Yeah. You qualified on the KD (known distance) range. You stayed there until you qualified. There wasn't any of that stuff...

Interviewer: No bolos, right?

SMA Morrell: Hell no. There wasn't any such thing as a "bolo." Everybody stayed there until everybody qualified.

Interviewer: What did you fire from, the 100, 200, 300, and 500 yard range?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: How did most of the guys do during the weapons qualification?

SMA Morrell: Most of them did good. The only people you had problems with was people that had never handled firearms. The majority of the people, hell, I guess they came from out in the country where they had been accustomed to weapons.

Interviewer: When you were growing up you did a lot of hunting so I guess you fell right into that, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I didn't have any problem with the M1 rifle. It was a good rifle, but it was too damn heavy.

Interviewer: What kind of CBR (Chemical, Biological, Radiological) training did you have?

SMA Morrell: The standard, back at that time, was to go into the tear gas that they used. It would give you good training. They'd take you in there and you knew you had to take your mask off and damn stuff would get all over you. The same thing in the chlorine. You went in with your mask on and you learned how to use it very proficiently, because if you didn't, you sure as hell could inhale a lot of chlorine.

Interviewer: That was a poison gas and it could kill you.

SMA Morrell: We had a hell of a lot of people that got pretty sick because they had a pretty good saturation of it the tent. They used tents back then, when I went through basic training. Of course, the

environmentalists would raise hell about that today. Today you couldn't do it.

Interviewer: How realistic do you think your basic training was?

SMA Morrell: Well, for the equipment that they had, back at that time, hell, it was good. It taught you how to survive, how to take care of yourself, how to use your weapon. It was okay then but it would be hell to have to do that today. You probably wouldn't survive too long.

Interviewer: Back then, did you feel it prepared you properly to function as a soldier?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I guess it gave you the same knowledge that everybody else had when they come in, so you was right up there to par with everybody else. I think the standards back then was probably more or less the same they are today.

Interviewer: Did you crawl the infiltration course?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Day and night?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: What was the most difficult thing you had to do during basic training?

SMA Morrell: You know, I read that in the book here and I was trying to think about what the hell that was. I guess one of the damn things was trying to clean a weapon to the satisfaction of the people that were inspection it. Jesus Christ, I couldn't believe the gyration you had to go through to try to get a weapon cleaned. God Almighty, no wonder they didn't have any bluing on them. That was the biggest thing; to clean it to their satisfaction.

Interviewer: What were some of the humorous things that happened during basic?

SMA Morrell: People putting their protective mask on. Remember that old protective mask that had the filter on the side.

Interviewer: Yeah, the filter canister.

SMA Morrell: They would go in there and get excited and get that damn filter up on top of their head and try to put the mask on. They had to run them back out the door. Jesus, that was hilarious as hell. You got a lot of laughs over that because, you know, you're taught how to put the damn mask on, but when they'd get in there they would get excited. When I got to a regular unit, if I remember right, we went through the gas chamber about twice a year. Well when I got into my regular unit, this same guy I was telling you about--the old mess sergeant--he went in there and he got the damn thing up on top of his head and he was choking and gagging. Hell, he damn near passed out if someone hadn't drug him out of the damn place. I laughed. That was humorous as hell. But that was the big thing that people had problems with. I guess they was kind of scared. That was the first time they had ever been associated with anything like that.

Interviewer: There were probably a lot of humorous things that occurred whenever you were sitting around shining boots and cleaning weapons.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, there were a lot of stories. People always had stories to tell. I don't remember anybody getting into any kind of problems or anything. I remember the first time we got to go to the place where they sold beer. Of course, hell, I never cared that much for beer anyway. Although I think I drank a beer just to be one of the guys, I suppose. You know, everybody was pretty serious back then. They wanted to graduate and get the hell out of there. You were pretty well regimented to everything you did. Then when you didn't have anything to do, hell, you was trying to get some sleep; some rest.

Interviewer: Do you think that the attitudes of your sergeants had a lot to do with the small amount of discipline problems during basic training? You had good sergeants and they set the example, so there were a lot less problems.

SMA Morrell: That field first was always going around looking at

what was going on. I never saw them do anything that was out of the way. Now they may have done it when they wasn't around us; I don't know what the hell they did. When they was around troops, hell, everything was "dress right, dress" and "cover down."

Interviewer: Did you have any officers involved in any of the training?

SMA Morrell: I never saw any officers. The Company Commander would come out every once in a while, but all he did was talk to the sergeants and the field first. He very seldom said anything to the trainees.

Interviewer: Where did you take your AIT?

SMA Morrell: At Fort Bragg. I took it in the unit that I was assigned to.

Interviewer: That was back when they sent you to a unit and you were trained by that unit.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you have a leave, between basic and AIT?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you go home on leave?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: When you reported to Fort Bragg, what unit were you assigned to?

SMA Morrell: "A" Battery, 319th Field Artillery.

Interviewer: Was that with the 82nd Airborne Division?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Tell me about your AIT.

SMA Morrell: It was good. Like I said before, the instructors were all combat vets out of Korea.

(NOTE: The interview was briefly interrupted.)

Interviewer: We had a short pause in our interview here. Sergeant Major, you were saying that the NCOs within your unit were combat

veterans.

SMA Morrell: Uh huh.

Interviewer: What MOS (Military Occupation Specialty) did you train for?

SMA Morrell: Whatever the hell the artillery MOS was back then, Butch, and I don't remember what the hell that was. We trained on 105s; the old split-trail 105s (105mm howitzer). I worked on that for a short period of time after I finished AIT. Then I went into the forward observer section and was a forward observer for a long time.

Interviewer: When you joined the unit, did the unit continue its mission and at the same time train the trainees? How did they conduct that AIT?

SMA Morrell: If I remember right, we just trained as a unit and that's what the unit did. We just trained on the weapons that the unit had; the howitzers. It didn't change after AIT.

Interviewer: It was an OJT (On the Job Training) program rather than a structured program.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. It was OJT type training.

Interviewer: How effect do you think that kind of training is, versus the structured AIT we have now?

SMA Morrell: I guess it creates a lot problems for a unit because they're got to pay attention to certain things and train that person, that is brand new, on that type equipment, to make sure they understand the operation of it. Hell, I didn't see anything wrong with it. I thought that was a pretty good way to train. But really, now come to think about it, there wasn't that many of us. There wasn't a big influx of AIT people. It was more of less replacements, I guess is what you'd say, because of the draft back at that period of time. I don't know how many AIT people there were, but there wasn't that many people. So hell, I thought it worked pretty good.

Interviewer: Whenever you enlisted, you didn't enlist for any

certain branch. They just assigned you to the artillery.

SMA Morrell: That's right. I really wanted to go into the infantry. That's what I thought I was going into, but I ended up in the artillery. The only thing I got, that I said I was going to get, was airborne. I was assigned to an airborne unit.

Interviewer: How long after you finished your AIT did you go to Jump School?

SMA Morrell: The next week.

Interviewer: You took it right there at Fort Bragg. Right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Tell me about your airborne training.

SMA Morrell: Man, they run the hell out of you in that thing. I think the biggest thing was running every morning. You received training all day long, and the instructors were hell on wheels. They thought they were the gift of God, I guess. That was some pretty tough training. I was always scared of heights. I hate to climb anything, but it didn't scare me jumping out of an airplane. That didn't bother me. But if I climb up on the roof of this house here, I'm like a damn cat hanging on for dear life. I've always been scared of heights, but it's just different being in an airplane. Now the first time I jumped out of that 34-foot tower, I did not want to do that, but that was more discipline, I guess. Of course I got raked over the coals because my eye was shut and my body position was none. Well I sure as hell got smart right away, because I didn't want to jump out of that damn thing forever. So I talked to myself and got up there and I got satisfactory jumps out of it, so I didn't have to do it anymore. That would bring smoke on you.

Interviewer: The worst word in the world is "unsatisfactory."

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right. Of course we lost a lot of people out of airborne training because they wouldn't jump out of the tower. Then some of them didn't want to quit, but they just couldn't jump out of the tower.

Interviewer: Was the pre-jump phase there pretty much the same as they had at Fort Benning?

SMA Morrell: I don't know. I assume that it was. They didn't have those 250-foot towers at Bragg. Hell, I never saw any use for them anyway. In fact, when I was Sergeant Major of the Army I tried to get them to do away with them because they had a hell of a lot of people injured on them. Hell, you get the same thing out of a 34-foot tower, but whoever the hierarchy was that had them built when they were down there, it's like anything else, a general builds something and then it takes an act of God to get rid of it. I don't know why and I just think it's a waste of time and money. One time I did a study on the injuries that was sustained on that. I never heard of anybody getting hurt jumping out of a 34-foot tower, but people have got hurt off that 250-foot tower down there.

Interviewer: How many qualifying jumps did you make? Five?

SMA Morrell: Five.

Interviewer: Did you have a night jump?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long was your jump training?

SMA Morrell: I believe it was three weeks, if I remember right. You had one week of ground training. Then you had the tower training. Then you had the jump training. So I think it was three weeks.

Interviewer: When you count all of the jumps you made with the 82nd, with Special Forces, and while you were a Ranger, about how many jumps did you make?

SMA Morrell: Jesus Christ, I wouldn't have any idea. Hell, I wished I had kept a log of it. I would like to know myself. My body tells me it was too damn many; my old legs and knees and back and neck. Hell, I've jumped three or four times in one day. I really did too damn much jumping. I jumped even when I was Sergeant Major of the Army. I had to be a damn fool for doing that, but I did. But never again.

Interviewer: Never again, huh.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right.

Interviewer: In January of 1977, you went to Ranger School. At that time you were forty-one years of age. Another outstanding accomplishment, you were also recognized as the distinguished honor graduate. How did you come about going to Ranger training at that late age?

SMA Morrell: Well, I'll tell you why. I always wanted to be a Ranger. I always liked the Ranger Tab. I knew a lot of people that were Rangers. When I was in Special Forces I put in to go to Ranger School, but hell, they said, "You don't need to go, we do the same kind of training and it's not going to do you any good." I don't remember us ever having that many allocations to go to Ranger School. Then when I graduated out of the Sergeants Major Academy and went to Fort Riley, Kansas, they started the 1st Ranger Battalion in...

(End Tape OH 94.6-4, Side 2)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-5, Side 1)

Interviewer: As the last tape ended, you mentioned that they were getting ready to start the 1st Ranger Battalion, and after you left the Academy, you went down to Fort Riley. Go ahead and continue.

SMA Morrell: I was assigned there to "A" Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry, 1st Infantry Division. I read something, and I don't know if it was in the Army Times or where it was, or a message came out that they wanted volunteers to start that Ranger Battalion. I volunteered but I was refused because I was in a REFORGER unit; that's what came back. I put in for that about three times, if I remember right, while I was assigned there. I got there in '73. I was First Sergeant of "A" Company 1st of the 2nd Infantry until, I think, '75. Then I got Shanghaied to Division Headquarters Company as the First Sergeant. I stayed there until '76. Then I got tapped to go to ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) duty. Hell, I had been with troops

all of my life and I really didn't want to go to ROTC duty, so I got up there and I come out on the CSM list too. I tried to tell them that I would be on the CSM list and don't send me to ROTC duty. But hell, nobody would listen to you. So then I got a call from Phil Ragsdale, who was the assignments guy for the E9 Branch. He said, "How would you like to go to the 1st Ranger Battalion, 75th Infantry, at Fort Stewart, Georgia?" I thought he was bull shitting me. So I talked to him for a little while. He thought I was Ranger qualified because of my Special Forces background. I told him, "I'll tell you what, if you'll send me to Ranger School, I'll go." That was on the 13th of December of '76. On about the 20th of December he called me back and said, "Okay, you're going." On the 2nd of January of '77, I left to go to Fort Benning. It was colder than hell when I left Minnesota. In fact, I took my bird dog with me to a friend of mine down there, because I had two other dogs too, at the time, and I didn't want to leave them there with my wife. So I took my bird dog down on the plane that I flew down on. My buddy picked me up in Atlanta and kept my dog until I graduated out of Ranger School. That's how I come to go to Ranger School. Now, for the rest of the story. Probably people will give you many different versions of this, but Phil Ragsdale told me that they couldn't get anybody that was a command sergeant major and who was Ranger qualified to take that battalion at that time. None of them wanted it. They didn't want to pay the price that you had to pay to be the Sergeant Major of a unit like that. In fact, I was told that a hell of a lot of sergeants major took their damn Ranger Tab off so nobody would know that they were Ranger qualified, because they were afraid that they would get assigned to that battalion. They couldn't get nobody. That was unknown to me until Ragsdale told me that, later on in years. So that's how I got assigned to the 1st Ranger Battalion. I really wanted off the assignment that I had up there. I did not like ROTC duty. Hell, there wasn't nothing to do and I was bored, although

I had a hell of a lot of free time. I acted as the adjutant while I was there. I had a good boss. The lieutenant colonel that I worked for was good people. It just wasn't my cup of tea, and hell, I always wanted to go to Ranger School, so I said, "Hell, I'll go to Ranger School." That how I ended up going to Ranger School and everybody thought I was a damn fool. In fact, Sergeant Major Jeff Green, was the School/Post Sergeant Major at Fort Benning, and Snake Collier was the Sergeant Major of the Ranger Department. I'll never forget, he called me down there to talk to me when I first reported in. He said, "Do you know what time of the year it is?" I thought, "Man those people must think that I really am dumb." I thought, "Man, maybe I really am dumb." Hell, it was January. Hell, I knew what time of the year it was. He said, "This is a hell of a time to go through Ranger School." I said, "Well shit, I don't have any choice. You know, I can't pick the time. When they said I can go, I go." They thought I had a screw loose. Hell, I probably did have, I don't know, but I enjoyed it. I think that was the best damn training and the most realistic training I ever received in the Army. They had good instructors, for the most part. I helped a hell of a lot of people get a Ranger Tab. They never would have gotten a Ranger Tab if I hadn't been in that class. I enjoyed it.

Interviewer: Do you think that your Special Forces background helped you a heck of a lot?

SMA Morrell: Oh yeah. That, plus what I had always done. Hell, I always had been with troops and I had always been out in the field, and that kind of stuff. Hell, it was just like things that I had always done, so I didn't have any problem. In fact, I enjoyed it. Looking back on it, I didn't enjoy some of the stuff. The weather was colder than hell, and the rations were few and far between. I lost a hell of a lot of weight, and I didn't weight too damn much at that time anyway. Man I was beat to hell when I come out of there because they used me a lot as the point man, because of my navigation expertise with a compass

at nighttime. In fact, when I got to the Florida training phase, they wouldn't allow them to let me navigate because, hell, I was navigating for everybody, but I still did it anyway; the instructors just didn't know it.

Interviewer: At the age of 41, did you get harassed by the younger kids?

SMA Morrell: No, I really didn't. Some of the instructors wanted to know what an old man like me was doing there; going to Ranger School. Of course they had the POW (prisoner of war) camp down there. When they blindfolded me, they beat the shit out of me. If I ever find that son of a bitch that smacked me in the stomach, I'll take a 2x4 to him. Then I tried to get some of them to come to the Ranger Battalion, and they wouldn't do it. I said, "Payback would be hell." I did everything under the sun to try to get some of those guys, but they didn't want to do that. No, I didn't get harassed by anybody because, like I said, I helped a hell of a lot of people that would never have been able to graduate out of that course, and I made them do things that they should be doing, because you really had to be physically fit and you had to be mentally tough in that son of a bitch if you were going to graduate out of it. I don't you'll ever find too many people slipping through the crack in that course. It's just not designed for that, and it shouldn't be designed for that anyway.

Interviewer: When did you receive your Special Forces training?

SMA Morrell: In '62.

Interviewer: What lead to you decision to go to Special Forces?

SMA Morrell: Well I read about Special Forces when I was in Germany, and about what they did. I ran into some of them over there that was stationed in Germany at that time, and I saw some of the training. I just thought, "Hell, I'm always looking for adventure in the military, and hell, that's the place to go." When I reenlisted, I reenlisted for Special Forces and I got in that without any problem.

Interviewer: How long did you serve in the Special Forces?

SMA Morrell: From '62 to '73.

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit about Special Forces training.

SMA Morrell: Well it was tough training, but I think it was more on survival type skills and working in small groups. Clandestine operations was a big thing back then. We learned to work with indigenous people. You had to be cross-trained in every other specialty that was on the team. You received medical training, commo training, engineer training, and of course I was the heavy weapons guy; weapons was my expertise. It was good training; damn good training. You had a hell of a lot of classroom training and you had a hell of a lot of tests. You had to go and be evaluated in a field environment for quite a period of time. I don't remember how long that was before they awarded you your special qualification, so it was good training.

Interviewer: Did you make any HALO (high altitude, low opening) parachute jumps?

SMA Morrell: No, I never had the desire to do that.

Interviewer: Did you receive language training?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I had French language training and Spanish language training.

Interviewer: Did you receive any Vietnamese language training?

SMA Morrell: No. Just French, and Spanish when I went to Panama. I had French before I went to Vietnam, because that's who we worked with. We worked with people that the French had worked with, and most of the leadership spoke French. Of course the spoke Vietnamese too, so I don't know why they send us to French training instead of Vietnamese training.

Interviewer: Continuing our discussion of your military training. When you were in Berlin, you attended the NCO Academy. Is that correct?

SMA Morrell: Right.

Interviewer: What rank were you at that time?

SMA Morrell: E5.

Interviewer: What unit were you assigned to at that time?
Combat Support Company, 2nd Battle Group, 6th Infantry.

Interviewer: Approximately how many soldiers did you have in your class?

SMA Morrell: Jesus, I don't even remember, Butch.

Interviewer: Was it a large class?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, but not that large. We had four platoons, if I remember right. They were not large platoons.

Interviewer: Were most of the soldiers in that class about the same rank; E5 and E4?

SMA Morrell: No, there was not any E4s. It was all E5s and E6s.

Interviewer: Tell me about your days there at the NCO Academy.

SMA Morrell: You had to give class presentations. There was a hell of a lot of emphasis on that, because that's how people were trained; that's how they trained back then, even at the company level. You had a hell of a lot on drill and ceremonies, and physical fitness, and how to conduct physical training. I don't remember that much on any kind of tactical training. Hell, I don't think we did any of that. I think most of it was structured on the parade field and in the classroom.

Interviewer: You had a lot of spit and polish, right?

SMA Morrell: Oh Jesus, too damn much spit and polish.

Interviewer: Tell me about some of the inspections that they conducted there.

SMA Morrell: We had in-ranks inspections and there were different uniforms that you had to be in. We had stand-by inspections in the barracks. We had weapons and footlocker and wall locker inspections. That's back when you had to have that damn old tooth powder, and you had to have a God damn shaving brush, and you never used the damn thing. How many pair of drawers were you supposed to have? Hell, I never did

wear them kind of drawers that the Army give you. You had to roll them up in cardboard. Finally what I did was, I just got a set of damn equipment and that's all it was ever used for. Hell, I ended up throwing it away, years ago, because all it was, was stuff that you couldn't use. I got a footlocker when I got married, and I kept the damn footlocker, and hell, you had to come in and display your equipment and I'd just bring the footlocker in and hell, it was always setup. What a waste of time.

Interviewer: We had the Williams shaving stick, the two-piece Gillette razor.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, everybody had to have the same damn thing. Hell, I never used tooth powder in my life.

Interviewer: Those people made a lot of money off of the soldiers. You couldn't use the stuff.

SMA Morrell: No. But you know, for that time frame, hell, they had good instructors at the NCO Academy. In fact, I went back to be interviewed to be an instructor in the school, but the Company Commander that I had didn't want me to go, and he wouldn't release me. That was okay by me, because now looking back on it, I did better by staying in the unit anyway.

Interviewer: I think the last item concerning your military schooling is when you attended the Sergeants Major Academy. When did you graduate from the Sergeants Major Academy?

SMA Morrell: December of 1973.

Interviewer: Which class did you attend?

SMA Morrell: Class 2.

Interviewer: Tell me about your days out at the Sergeants Major Academy.

SMA Morrell: Well, you never knew where in the hell you stood. You was like in the dark all of the time out there, and that's how all of my classmates felt; the ones that I attended class with. Jesus, I'll

never forget the faculty group member that we had. Hell, most of the time he was sleeping. He was a major, and hell, he would be asleep in the class. And then in the other rooms that we had, hell, they'd do the same thing. You never knew where in the hell you stood at. I thought, "What a hell of a way to end an Army career," because they never told you anything; how you were doing or not a damn thing. Jesus, I did do some hard work there. Even Karen will tell you that. Hell, I worked at nighttime, because of the student-led discussion that you had, to read all of that stuff. A hell of a lot of it, at some levels, you never used any of that before. Then trying to do the electives and try to get all of the college courses in order to try get a associate degree while I was there. Jesus, I really was under the gun, because I only had about seventeen years in the Army, at that time, and I had been promised to stay in Panama another year, and then I come out and went up there on that. Jesus, I enjoyed it. Looking back on it, I enjoyed it, but when I was there I sure as hell didn't enjoy it, because you never knew what the hell was expected out of you. Then the other problem, I guess there was sixteen or seventeen, somewhere in that number, of Special Forces people that was in that class. Well hell, I knew them guys and we all kind of hung together, and that wasn't looked too favorably on by the cadre that was there at the Academy at that time. We worked together and studies together. And probably we had a leg up on a lot of people that didn't have that kind of group of people to do those things with. Hell, that was tough. I was glad to get the hell out of there. Now you talk about a guy that was wanting to get the hell out of Dodge, that was this old boy right here. I couldn't wait to get the hell out. In fact, I wanted the hell out of Texas, when I graduated, but I couldn't make it out of there because I had a wife and three kids and I had to stop at a hotel some damn place; I was on my way to Fort Riley, Kansas.

Interviewer: Did you say you had a major as your faculty group

member?

SMA Morrell: I had a major. Yeah. Jesus, you never knew where and the hell you stood at.

Interviewer: I guess it took about the first four classes to get the bugs worked out.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Let's start talking about your units of assignment. Throughout the interview, we've talked about...

SMA Morrell: Let me say one other thing about the Academy, at that time. Then you paid the price on that damn thing when you got assigned to a unit, because everybody looked down their nose at you; the senior noncommissioned officers did. There was a hell of a lot of jealousy in the Army at that time, of the people that got selected to go to the Sergeants Major Academy. Jesus Christ, I couldn't believe the problems associated with that. When I got to Fort Riley, Kansas, and there was quite a few of us assigned to Fort Riley out of that class. Now I tried to go back to the 82nd Airborne Division, or Special Forces. Hell, I even had a letter. Back then you'd get a letter of acceptance and a lot of times they would look at that favorably, but hell, they didn't on that one. I ended up at Fort Riley, Kansas. They had a few there from Fort Riley, and when they found out that I was going to Fort Riley, Kansas, they said, "Hell man, you can't pick anybody up for being AWOL (absent without leave) at Fort Riley, Kansas until the third day that they gone." I said, "What the hell are you talking about?" They said, "Hell you can still see him on the third day." I said, "Jesus." I fell for that one. I bit on it. I said, "Good God Almighty, what am I getting into?" Well I found out what the hell I was getting into.

Interviewer: That problem with the non-graduates versus the graduates lasted quite a few years, didn't it?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, it damn sure did. There was a lot dissension in the Army over that.

Interviewer: Now all of our noncommissioned officers at the senior levels are graduates, aren't they?

SMA Morrell: Well, you've got to be if your going to be a command sergeant major. I locked that in when I was there to make sure that if you're going to be a command sergeant major, then you had to be an Academy graduate.

Interviewer: I guess some the last MACOM sergeants major that weren't Academy graduates were Ken Tracy, Ron Hammer, Walt Kreuger...

SMA Morrell: No, Walt Kreuger was a correspondent guy

Interviewer: Oh yeah.

SMA Morrell: He was a graduate of first correspondence class.

Interviewer: Throughout the interview we have mentioned your assignment to Berlin. When you left Fort Bragg, you went to Berlin. Is that right?

SMA Morrell: Right.

Interviewer: What unit did you say you were assigned to in Berlin?

SMA Morrell: Combat Support Company, 2nd Battle Group, 6th Infantry.

Interviewer: Did you reenlist to go to Germany?

SMA Morrell: No, I reenlisted to go back to the 82nd Airborne Division, when I come back in the Army. I went back in January of '58 and I went to Berlin, hell I don't know, some time that year. I think it was in the latter part of the year. I wasn't there too long. Maybe five months, or something like that, and then I come out on orders to go to Berlin, Germany.

Interviewer: After your first tour, when your time was up to ETS, why did you make the decision to get out of the Army?

SMA Morrell: I thought I wanted to be a State Highway Patrolman.

Interviewer: How long were you out of the Army?

SMA Morrell: About eighty-three days. Just close enough to where I could come back in the rank I got out with.

Interviewer: What led to your decision to come back in?

SMA Morrell: I put in an application to go to the State Police Academy. They delayed the course from January until April. Hell, I was married and I had two children, and I liked the Army. I found out that I really liked the Army after I got out. I looked and I was going to get a job at a couple of places. I could have got a job, but I said, "The hell with it. I'm going back into the Army."

Interviewer: When you reenlisted, did you reenlist for the same unit you had been in, or did you just reenlist for the 82nd?

SMA Morrell: No, I reenlisted for the same unit that I was in. It was a good unit. Really it was. It was a top-notch unit.

Interviewer: You said shortly thereafter you came out on orders to go to Germany.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Since you reenlisted for that unit and then shortly thereafter you got orders to go to Germany, what were your feelings about that at that time?

SMA Morrell: Well, I really tried to get out of the assignment. The Battery Commander sure as hell didn't want to lose me. I said, "What the hell. I've got to go." And away I went. In fact, I didn't know I was going to Berlin until I got to Frankfurt. I was supposed to go to Baumholder, but I ended up going to Berlin. We got to Frankfurt and I guess they had already screened the records, so they sent me to Berlin.

Interviewer: What rank were you when you went to Berlin?

SMA Morrell: E5.

Interviewer: What was your duty assignment there?

SMA Morrell: At first I was assigned as the squad leader on a 4.2 mortar. I stayed on that for, hell, I don't know how long. The FDC (Fire Direction Center) sergeant had to go on emergency leave and they put me in to run the FDC. We shot an ATT (Annual Training Test) and I

got my ass chewed out because we only fired a 98.6, I think it was. The Old Man was pissed because we didn't shoot 100. Hell, 98.6 was pretty damn good. That was back when you had a number, and we caught hell on that. Anyway, the sergeant come back and he took back over the FDC and then the mortar platoon sergeant left, so I took over the platoon. We finally got another one back in and I went into recon after that.

Interviewer: Where did you do your training? Over at Grafenwohr?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, that's where we did our live firing; over at Grafenwohr. We went down there once a year. The rest of the training was done in small training area that we had there, where we could shoot the sub-caliber device and do all of that training. Then we did training in the Gruenevald, which was a big forest that they had there in Berlin.

Interviewer: What kind of leadership positions did you hold in the unit?

SMA Morrell: I was a squad leader, a platoon sergeant, and I had the recon platoon for a while. I was hard as hell, back in those days, really you didn't have too much rank in the units. Rank was hard to come by. Hell, somebody had to damn near die in order to get promoted. There was no promotion flow; none at all. I don't recall hardly anybody ever getting promoted. After I made sergeant, hell, promotions were few and far between; there just wasn't any.

Interviewer: How was the leadership of the NCOs in the unit?

SMA Morrell: It was damn good. We had some old combat vets there. The First Sergeant was a guy by the name of Ortiz, and he was combat soldier. He was a good first sergeant. Then we got another one in that wasn't too good, because he was more on the political side than was he was being a first sergeant and taking care of people like he was supposed to take care of them. All in all, it was not too bad.

Interviewer: Did you have good unit morale?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Yeah, the morale in the unit was always high.

Hell, we were always winning all kinds of inspections that they had. Hell, we always came out top notched.

Interviewer: During that assignment, which NCO had the most positive affect on you?

SMA Morrell: Well, there were two guys. The First Sergeant of the unit, and then we had another sergeant first class there by the name of Gray. He was a Black sergeant that had been in Korea. He was a hell of a good noncommissioned officer. Then we had a guy by the name of Hill. I was thinking about that yesterday. Old Hill was a sergeant first class and he was one of those shake-and-bake that they refer to, that came out of the Korean War, and he came out a master sergeant; out of the Korean War. He was a hell of a good soldier. You know, there was a lot of spit and polish in Berlin at that time. Hell, you paraded every damn Friday. You had a parade on the quadrangle out there. Come hell or high water, you had a parade.

Interviewer: What were some of the strong points in your unit's performance?

SMA Morrell: Well in that environment, at that time, where we were at there in Berlin, we were able to do the things that everybody else did that had better and larger training areas, and where they could do live fire without having to use the sub-caliber devices. The unit was pretty damn proficient. The leadership was good. We had good officers. It was just a good unit.

Interviewer: Whenever you look back, what were some of the weak points you can remember?

SMA Morrell: I would say probably not being able to train like you should be training, because of the place where you were at; being in a city like that.

Interviewer: Did Karen and the family get a chance to accompany you to Berlin?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. She came over later. It was hell trying to

get quarters, back at that time. Jesus Christ, you had to get on a waiting list and the waiting list was forty miles long. I finally got on the waiting list when I got there, and she came over about a year later, I guess, or somewhere around that time. She came over in '59.

Interviewer: At that time you had two girls, is that right?

SMA Morrell: No, I had a boy and a girl. My second daughter was born while I was in the NCO Academy. In fact they notified me when I was in the NCO Academy. The Red Cross had called and said my wife had given birth to a daughter.

Interviewer: What were some of the biggest problems that faced the married soldier and his family who were living in Germany at that time?

SMA Morrell: Well, you was in a city, and hell, they didn't have a structured program for families. Hell, you just kind of did your own thing. You made friends with other people and that's who you socialized with. I lived right behind the theater and every Saturday my wife would always take the two kids and go to the matinee movie. They go to the movie every Saturday, as sure as the daylight comes. They always had kid's shows on. Hell, I didn't see anything wrong with it; we survived and had a good family life. Hell, I was always home. I don't have no money to go do anything else. We went out about one time a month, because, hell, I was making two hundred and five dollars a month then, as an E5; that's what the base pay was.

Interviewer: One of the advantages during that period of time was that the mark to dollar exchange was a heck of a lot higher than it is now.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, you could get four twenty to the dollar, downtown. Karen and I used to go out with another guy and his wife, once a month. You could get a good meal and a bottle of wine for five bucks, and that was for both of us. I remember that. But you couldn't do that too often because you had to get a baby sitter, and I just didn't have the money.

Interviewer: How old were your children at that time?

SMA Morrell: Well, my son was born in July of '57, so he was a over two years old. Dawn was born in '58, so she was about a year and a half, so somewhere around there. They were just small kids.

Interviewer: How were your quarters?

SMA Morrell: We had good quarters. They were outstanding. They were the best damn quarters that you could find. Hell, they were furnished very good, back at that time.

Interviewer: While you were with the 6th Infantry, in Berlin, did you get promoted?

SMA Morrell: No.

Interviewer: How did the promotion system in the unit work?

SMA Morrell: It beats the hell out of me. I never did figure that out. There just wasn't any promotions. I don't remember anybody getting promoted from '58 until '60, when I left there and went to the 14th Armored Cav. I don't remember anybody getting promoted in that unit. Now I think some people got promoted in battalion, but I don't remember anybody getting promoted in the unit that I was assigned to. Now people got promoted to PFC and corporal or spec. four. But I don't remember anybody else getting promoted; not even to the senior grades.

Interviewer: Somebody had to either be reduced or die in order for someone else to get promoted.

SMA Morrell: That's absolutely right.

Interviewer: How long were you with the unit there?

SMA Morrell: Two years.

Interviewer: Then you went down to the 14th Armored Cavalry, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Why did you get transferred to the 14th Cav?

SMA Morrell: They were phasing out the Combat Support Company, and like I said, I had an artillery MOS. They were phasing that out and I

don't know what the hell the reason for it was. Looking back, I should have stayed there and changed my MOS, but I was a little reluctant to do that because, hell, I was trying to get promoted and I wanted to stay in the Army, so I said, "The hell with it, I'll just go down to the 14th Cav, in Fulda."

Interviewer: You left Berlin in 1960. Right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Right prior to the wall going up.

Interviewer: What month? Do you remember?

SMA Morrell: Hell no, I don't remember, Butch. I believe it might have been in the summertime. Hell, I'm not sure. Karen would know, but hell, she's working. I don't remember.

Interviewer: You were stationed at Fulda?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: You continued your recon duties when you got to Fulda, didn't you?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I got assigned there and was in a mechanized howitzer battery. I worked there as recon and worked in FDC. I worked at recon for the Headquarters for a little while, there in the 14th Cav. I supposed to come out of there, and then The Wall went up. That's when we all got extended in Germany. Who and the hell was President then? Kennedy? Yeah, Kennedy, was President. I had a case of the hips about that because I had already put in for reenlistment for Special Forces and had reenlisted, and then I got that six month extension.

Interviewer: At that time, the mission of the 14th Cav was to patrol the boarder. Is that right?

SMA Morrell: That's right. Run the damn border.

Interviewer: When you got there, what unit were you assigned to?

SMA Morrell: I was assigned to How (howitzer) Battery, but I worked for Headquarters in recon for a while until they guy assigned there. They had a position for that but they didn't have nobody to fill it. When I come down there I was still assigned to How Battery, but I

worked there as recon for the Headquarters, for about three or four months. Then I went back down to How Battery.

Interviewer: Which battalion?

SMA Morrell: Shit, I don't know.

Interviewer: Whichever one that was stationed at Fulda.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: They had battalions stationed at three different places, didn't they.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. They had them at Bad Hersfeld, Bad Kissingen, and Fulda.

Interviewer: The Regimental Headquarters was at Fulda, wasn't it?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: The 14th Cavalry and the 2nd Cavalry shared the responsibility for patrolling the East/West border.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long were you with the 14th Cav?

SMA Morrell: Well, I stayed there from 1960, when I got there, until 1962. I want to say that I left there in... I don't know why I've got March on my mind. Hell, I don't know when it was when I left there. But anyway, it was in '62.

Interviewer: Compare the 14th Cav with the 6th Infantry, as far as leadership, esprit de corps, morale.

SMA Morrell: We had better morale up in the 6th Infantry than what we had down in Fulda. Jesus, Fulda is way out in the middle of nowhere. You've been to Fulda, so you know what I'm talking about. The leadership wasn't all that strong in that unit. The Battery Commander was not too good. Then we had some of those people we were talking about yesterday, that had got Riffed, that were NCOs in the unit, but most of them was in the training business and that kind of stuff. Hell, they never got out with the troops or anything. The leadership was a very junior leadership, really. We had an old first sergeant, by the name of

Campbell, who was a Black guy who was a hell of a soldier. He told me about when they had the segregated Army, when they had the all-Black units. He said he would have liked to have seen them keep that. I wished now, later on in life, that I had more discussions with him about that, because he liked that better. He was a hell of a knowledgeable and good quality first sergeant. He really knew how to run a unit, but he did have problems with the Battery Commander. We had a couple of other officers there that had a hell of a lot to be desired. By in large, we had some pretty good noncommissioned officers. They were old noncommissioned officers who had been around for, hell, I don't know how long. Some of them were even combat veterans from the Second World War.

Interviewer: When you moved down to the 14th Cav, what occupied most of your time?

SMA Morrell: Hell, we was always out in the field, running the damn border, and supporting that kind of stuff. We had alerts. Jesus Christ, every time you turned around, you was on alert.

Interviewer: The Berlin Crisis had just recently surfaced and then the Wall went up, so that increased the alert status.

SMA Morrell: Oh hell yeah. Man, you had to get to an alert area and you had to get there in so many minutes. That's when you kept live ordnance on your vehicles. You had your basic load on your vehicle; ammunition and everything.

Interviewer: There were a lot of tense times during that period of time.

SMA Morrell: There sure as hell was. That when I saw deterioration start in the Army. That's when drugs started to come in. Then we started to have some racial problems at that particular time in that unit. That's when things started really going to hell in a hand basket, I guess.

Interviewer: That's when discipline problems started to increase.

Did you have many AWOLs?

SMA Morrell: No. I don't recall any AWOLs. I think we had a guy go AWOL when I was at Fort Bragg, and really, the guy just couldn't get back on time. They threw his ass in the stockade anyway. That was just SOP (Standing Operating Procedures) back in that era. I don't recall anybody going AWOL in the unit that I was in, in Berlin, or down in Fulda.

Interviewer: When you left the 14th Cav, where did you go from there?

SMA Morrell: I left there and went back to Fort Bragg, to Special Forces.

Interviewer: You went back for Special Forces training.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I went through the Training Group. They had a Training Group where everybody was assigned and then you got put into...

(NOTE: There was a pause in the interview.)

Interviewer: We had a short pause while the Sergeant Major answered the door. We were talking about your assignment back to Fort Bragg where you took your Special Forces training. Where did you go after your training?

SMA Morrell: Well, after we completed training, I got assigned to "C" Company, 5th Special Forces Group.

Interviewer: What was your duty assignment then?

SMA Morrell: I was a heavy weapons sergeant on an "A" detachment.

Interviewer: What was the training normal routine for an "A" detachment, at that time?

SMA Morrell: Well when I got assigned to an "A" detachment, you cross-trained a lot in other MOSs that was on the team. We did a lot of field training and a lot of airborne exercises. Working exercise where you worked with indigenous personnel and you learned how to train those people. We'd get some units and they would go out and act as guerrillas and you would train them. You would go on raids and ambushes. We had

small boat training, water training, field craft training. We were busy all of the time.

Interviewer: You were with the 5th Group, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. They just started the 5th Special Forces Group. I think they just activated that about '62. I'm not sure, but I think so.

Interviewer: Then the 5th moved to Vietnam.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, later on. In 1964.

Interviewer: Yeah, and the 5th Group's Headquarters was in Nha Trang.

(End Tape OH 95.6-5, Side 1)

(Begin Tape OH 95.6-5, Side 2)

Interviewer: We were talking about the 5th Special Forces. It had just been organized in '62. Go ahead and continue.

SMA Morrell: Okay. Like I said, when I finished training, I got assigned to "C" Company, 5th Special Forces Group, and I was with an "A" detachment. We trained, based on what was happening in Vietnam, because there was already "A" Teams deployed there from the 7th Special Forces Group, and also from the 1st Special Forces Group out of Okinawa. So we continued to train and we got alerted that we would be going to Vietnam in January of 1963. So training really geared up for that part of the world, with language training and where we were supposed to be assigned to. We were supposed to go to IV Corps. We did a lot of RB15 (inflatable rubber boat) training, because of the rivers that went down to that particular "A" Camp, whenever and the hell it was, we was supposed to be assigned to. We deployed for six months, and when we got to Saigon-- that's where the Provisional Headquarters was at that time--our assignment was changed. They was having a meeting back in Washington, D.C., and the State Department, along with the Central Intelligence Agency, was running the country at that particular time. They called it "Combined Studies, " I think. They had an "A" detachment in every zone,

or whatever they called that in Vietnam, but they didn't have one in III Corps, or maybe it was II Corps. Where and the hell was that? I think it was in III Corps. Anyway, we got diverted to a place that was north of Saigon and it was north of a little town called Phuoc Vinh. The name of the village that we went into was called Nuc Vang. The reason they put us in there, there had not been anybody in that particular zone since the French got run out of there, whenever that was. They want that for their briefing so they could say that they had someone in all parts of Vietnam, during that time. We built a camp there and we had a hell of a lot of Cambodians, at the time, who were indigenous to that particular village. We trained them. We trained a force there. I don't remember how many people that we had. We had three or four companies, I think. There wasn't anything there. Hell, we had to hack everything out of the jungle. There was a remanent of a camp there; a triangle with dirt built up as a parapet around it. There was no structure except a pole structure with a banana-leaf rooftop on it. There was no siding on it. We had two machine gun emplacements on each one of the triangles. We went in there and I had an M1 rifle, and hell, I didn't have no ammunition. We had an M1 and it had a clip and we had a .45, and one clip of ammunition. So when we got there, we took the machine guns that was already there with the RFPF (Rural Free Popular Force) and stripped the ammunition out of the belt so we would have eight rounds that we could put in the clip. But hell, we didn't have no more clips for the weapon when they sent us in there. We stayed there for, hell, about ten days without anything. We drew some small arms harassing fire. And shit, we didn't have very much ammo, and hell, hardly anything to defend ourselves with except the machine guns that the RFPF had. They had two A6 machine guns, or A4s. Hell, I think they were A4s. We never got anything until we got on the radio. Wireless Morse Code was what we used then. You know, the old dum, dum, ditty, ditty. The Old Man sent a message down to Saigon and told them

to go to hell down there, because every time he sent a message that he needed someone to come up there or an airplane sent up to Phuoc Vinh so he could go down there and talk to them about equipment, they would come back and say, "We need more reason why you need an airplane or why you want to come." So he told them to go to hell. Then when the Commander come out and he looked and he said, "Jesus!" You know I don't know who in the hell was figuring out what was going on in Vietnam at that time, but Jesus, that was terrible. But anyway, we started getting equipment in and we trained those people that we had. We cleared the area. I think that was Route 13 that went up through there, if I remember right. I know Phan Rang was north of us. It was "D" Zone, that's what it was. "D" Zone, north of Saigon. There had not been anybody in there. Well, we run some operations out of there, and patrols, and that kind of stuff. Hell, that was a bad place. I'll never forget, they talked about "Agent Orange," and I had that checked out later on, when I was Sergeant Major of the Army. The Old Man said, "See if you were in areas where they used Agent Orange." I wish I still had the pictures. I had pictures of it and they got wet in the basement up at Fort Myer. When we moved in up there, the basement flooded and it ruined a whole bunch of damn pictures that I had. But I had pictures of the C-123s spraying Highway 13. Hell, it went right through the village where the camp was. To show you how the government will lie to you, they came back and said, no, they didn't use Agent Orange in that area where we was at. That was a damn lie; they did. Hell, we used to watch them fly up through there and tell them, "Pour that damn stuff on that jungle." Anyway, we stayed there for six months and come out of there in June, I think it was, of '62.

Interviewer: Did you have a full "A" detachment?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: How many members in an "A" detachment?

SMA Morrell: Ten enlisted people and two officers. We lost four

out of there because of hepatitis.

Interviewer: When you first moved into that area, since there hadn't been Americans in that area before, how was the relations with the CIDG (Civilian Irregular Defense Group) people?

SMA Morrell: Oh, we had good relations. We built good rapport with them. They really liked us because we brought money in there, and hell, they hadn't seen any money in years and years. We had to hire people to help clear the land where we could setup a firing range. They were very glad to see us come in there. Then, of course, we paid the people that we recruited into the force.

Interviewer: At that time, did the Americans provide the food and everything CIDG soldiers and their families?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, we had to buy all of the food that was consumed there. We bought that in the little town that was about, hell I don't know, five, six, or seven miles down the road.

Interviewer: Was Nuc Vang a permanent camp after that?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, but I don't know how long it stayed a permanent camp. But we were replaced by another "A" detachment when we left.

Interviewer: Was your specialty still heavy weapons?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I'll be darned if I didn't get promoted, but I got promoted before I went over there. I got promoted to staff sergeant, in '62. Of course I was already an E5, and that when they come out with the stripe change, so hell, I still wore the same stripe. Remember, they made sergeant first class, the E7.

Interviewer: Yeah, and the staff sergeant is what used to be the E5.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, so I never changed the stripes.

Interviewer: Tell about some of the combat operations you were on.

SMA Morrell: To start off with, we just patrolled locally to make sure there wasn't anything too close to the camp. We put a mine field up, I remember. I wonder what and the hell ever happened to the mine

field, but we laid a mine field around us. Of course, we put out a lot of ambushes every night, using hand grenades. Hell, we didn't have any claymores at that time. But we just run patrols because we really didn't have anybody trained there for a long time, because we had to take them from step one, all the way through. We had to arm them with different weapons, and qualify them. Jesus, that was really tough to try to build that force, but we were successful in doing it. We had a hell of a good force when we finished, but it took a long time.

Interviewer: Later on they had a Vietnamese Dai Uy (captain) as the camp commander. Do you know when they started doing that?

SMA Morrell: We didn't when we went there the first time. We did get some Vietnamese Special Forces people at that camp. I think probably in '63, about in the middle of our tour, they did that at our camp. I don't know if they had already done that everywhere else, or what the case may be. It most generally consisted of a captain and four to five noncommissioned officers.

Interviewer: During that first tour, things hadn't really started heating up in Vietnam as much as it had when you went back '64.

SMA Morrell: No. No, there were just skirmishes here and there. You know, they come in and hit you, or mortar you, or use harassing-type fire, setup ambushes. We got ambushed a few times while hauling supplies in from Phuoc Vinh, either what we was buying down there or what was shipped in to us.

Interviewer: You had to convoy everything then, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. We only had two damn trucks, and hell, they were old World War II trucks, for Christ sakes.

Interviewer: That's something I could never understand, the time that I was over there working with Special Forces, in '64, and '65, all of the trucks were World War II trucks.

SMA Morrell: Uh huh.

Interviewer: You went back to Vietnam in September of '64, and you

had a full year tour that time.

SMA Morrell: Right.

Interviewer: That was a PCS (Permanent Change of Station), wasn't it?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. In fact, the airplane that I went on took the colors for the 5th Group over to Vietnam. The colors were on our airplane and we took them to Nha Trang.

Interviewer: Colonel Spears was the Group Commander, wasn't he?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, he was. I don't know if I even saw him. I guess I did. Hell, we didn't stay there very long. We got into Saigon and then flew to Nha Trang. We had a formation there to do the colors, and then we left there and went to Pleiku; that's where the "C" detachment was. Then from Pleiku, we convoyed up to Duoc Pec. They had a split "A" detachment in there. They had half of them down at Duoc Tao on that team, and they had half up at Duoc Pec.

Interviewer: Duoc Pec was a hot area too.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, it was way out in the middle of nowhere.

Interviewer: Did you go over with a detachment?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Yeah, I went with the same detachment that I went with in '63. I went over with four people that was on that team when we went over the second time.

Interviewer: At that time you were a sergeant first class, is that correct?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, God damn, I got promoted again. Somebody must have kicked the bucket. But then promotions started coming, I guess, pretty fast. At least they were a hell of a lot better than they had been in the past.

Interviewer: Whenever you got up to Duoc Pec, that was already an established camp.

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Yeah, that had been established, and that was a hell of a complex they had up there. Everything was up on top of a

hills. It was in the high country; up in the mountains. That was a beautiful damn area.

Interviewer: Tell me about some of your combat operations during that tour.

SMA Morrell: That was II Corps, and we had such a large damn area to cover, because we were right up on the north edge of II Corps, which bordered I Corps, which was to the north, and then you had the border with Laos. Hell, we used to go over into Laos, according to the damn old maps that they had and what the people told us. We would sometimes go over into Laos because it was that close. We had Montagnards up there and they was damn good troops. In fact, some of the company commanders of those units fought with the French, so they were a pretty well seasoned force. Hell, I think we had five companies there.

Interviewer: Was that the Rhade tribe or the Koho?

SMA Morrell: Hell, I don't remember, Butch. I really don't. One of the drawbacks that we had was that we had to go all the way to Pleiku to get a lot of things that we needed. Finally they put a "B" detachment in Kontum and then we could run down there, but still, there was a hell of a lot of stuff we had to have from Pleiku, and we had to run convoys. Hell, we run a convoy every week because we had to go down and get food for the people and you could only get enough food to last for five days. That was an experience in itself, running a damn convoy. You always had problems. Hell, I don't know how many streams and stuff you had to cross. Hell, it was a nightmare because all they had to do was set something underneath and blow it up. When you run a convoy, you run that thing as fast as the damn thing could go on the road that you was traveling. Then you run the combat operations and one of the drawbacks that you had on that, you was in the mountains and, Jesus, it took you all day to get to the top of one of the damn mountains, where you had to go back and go down on the other side. You'd go out for about three days and then you would have to start working your way back, because,

hell, you've run out of food. So you was limited on what you could do. Hell, you couldn't get any air support. You had a hell of a time trying to get aircraft to even fly convoy cover. It was tough, but we survived. Interviewer: Compare the enemy activity during your first tour with the enemy activity during your second tour.

SMA Morrell: Well it really accelerated. That's when things got hotter and hotter, as you well know, and there was more activity. It went from guerrilla type units to more real hard core units. Interviewer: Wasn't it in January of '65 when the NVA (North Vietnamese Army) really started getting active?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: I think the first camp where they identified NVA participation was when Kanack got hit.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Then the NVA participation really increased.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, it got pretty hairy.

Interviewer: You went back to Vietnam for a third tour. Correct?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, went I left out of Vietnam, in '65, I went back to Fort Bragg and was assigned to the Training Group and I was an instructor in the Heavy Weapons Department, from '65 until some time in '66, and then I got orders to go to Panama. I got assigned to the 8th Special Forces Group, in Panama, but I went TDY to Washington, D.C. to go to Berlitz Language School to learn Spanish. I got assigned to Panama in '67.

Interviewer: Before we continue our discussion of Vietnam, why don't we talk about that Panama tour.

SMA Morrell: Okay. I really didn't want to go to Panama. I wanted to go to Fort Bragg of Okinawa. Well, hell, everybody wanted to go to Bragg or Okie, so I ended up going to Panama. I got assigned to "A" Company, 8th Special Forces Group, down there, and what they were doing in Panama, at that time, we was running teams into different

countries, training people. We had a lot of countries come in there for training. I worked a lot with the Jungle Operation Training Center; we had work out there. We were still training, based on the tactics that was being used and the kind of stuff that Special Forces was doing in Vietnam. We had a lot of airborne operations. I stayed on an "A" Team and I shot on a marksmanship team there for a little while. We won, by the way. We had a hell of a good marksmanship team. I was supposed to stay down there for three years, and in '69, I left out of there and went back to Vietnam; I was in Panama about two years. In Vietnam, MACV (Military Assistance Command for Vietnam) Reconno had a detachment there of all Special Forces people. MACV Reconno ran a thing there, out of Nha Trang, but they also had training for replacements that were coming in. The replacement thing was going on, on Hoang Trai Island, which was off the coast of Nha Trang; across the bay. They had a training area setup where they brought all of the replacement that were going out to "A" detachments. There were a bunch of guys on Hoang Trai Island that knew me; some of the people who were in MACV Reconno. They wanted me to go out there because I was an instructor in the Training Group before, when I got reassigned, back in '65. They knew me and they wanted me to come over there and be an instructor. Well, hell, that was good for me. I went over there and stayed until, I guess, three months before I left Vietnam. They brought me back over to the Headquarters and they made me the Local Purchase NCO. I'd go down and buy stuff that the "A" camps wanted, but you couldn't get through the regular supply channels. I did that for about three months, I think.

Interviewer: So when did you get to Vietnam, and when did you leave?

SMA Morrell: The third time?

Interviewer: Yeah.

SMA Morrell: I got there in '69 and left in '70.

Interviewer: What rank were you then?

SMA Morrell: Sergeant first class. I was still a sergeant first class. Hell yeah, I still hadn't got promoted. But what really pissed me off on that. Remember, in '69 they went to the centralized promotion system? I went before a promotion board, and everybody that went before the promotion board, their records was supposed to be sent to the centralized promotion board. Well, they had a sergeant major in a company that was down there, and that son of a bitch didn't send mine in. I didn't know about that. Well then I got to Vietnam, and finally I got a chance to come back over to Nha Trang. I started questioning and asking about. Hell, this was about six months later. I got screwed on that one. So I was back in the hopper. Well, hell, I don't remember them promoting anybody. I guess there was a lot of people in Headquarters that got promoted. I left out of there and went back to Panama. Hell, I was in Panama just a short period of time, and then I come out on the E8 list.

Interviewer: When you left Vietnam after your third tour, where did you say you went?

SMA Morrell: Back to Panama. They wanted to send me to the 10th Group, at Fort Devens. I hadn't lost anything in Massachusetts and I sure as hell didn't want to go there, so I said, "Send me back to Panama." That's where I went. I think it cost me a dozen red roses, it I remember right. So when I went back down there, I went on an "A" team and then I had my own "A" detachment for a while. Then I went up to Headquarters Company as the first sergeant. Then they finally got a first sergeant that come in, and I went down as the Group Intel Sergeant.

Interviewer: That was in the 7th Group. Right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. They disbanded the 8th Group and made the 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group out of it.

Interviewer: During the time you were assigned to Panama, was your family able to join you down there?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, they came down in '67. I lived in temporary quarters, them kind that was up on stilts, until I could finally get permanent quarters. They had a place where you could park underneath. My son was up in the kitchen and he spilled a glass of milk. It ran through the cracks and on top of the car. I was down there polishing the car and I said, "What the hell is that?" You could see out that building. What a hell of a fire trap that was. Of course you had to pay your full quarters allowance for it. There wasn't none of that stuff like later on when you pay a sub-standard allowance when you lived in sub-standard quarters. Jesus, that was the pits there. God Almighty it was terrible, terrible, terrible. I think that was the worst place I ever lived. Hell, it was just a little bit better than a damn tent.

Interviewer: You probably had better quarters on your "A" camps.

SMA Morrell: Well hell yeah. We sure did. God that was terrible. Of course, I had three kids then. We survived that without any problem, but it was hell.

Interviewer: How long were you in Panama that time?

SMA Morrell: I stayed there from '70 to '73. It was about May of '73, when I got alerted to go to the Sergeants Major Academy.

Interviewer: While you went back and forth to Fort Bragg, what did you do while you were at Bragg? Didn't you say you served on the Training Group?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. I was a heavy weapons instructor.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you can think of that we need to cover concerning your Special Forces assignments?

SMA Morrell: No, I don't think so.

Interviewer: I think we pretty well covered that.

SMA Morrell: That was a hell of a good outfit. One good thing about that particular period of time, they had all of those problems going on in the Army--the racial problems and the drug problems--but I

never saw that during that period of time. We never had any problems with that, whatsoever.

Interviewer: Being in an all-volunteer special organization like that, you didn't have to worry about things like that.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: In 1976, you were assigned to ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) duty at St. John University, in Minnesota. How long were you at St. John?

SMA Morrell: From March '76 until 2 January of '77. I didn't get there until the middle of March.

Interviewer: Then after that you went to Ranger School.

SMA Morrell: Right.

Interviewer: You were a sergeant major then?

SMA Morrell: No, I got promoted to sergeant major while I was up there.

Interviewer: What kind of a promotion ceremony did they have for you?

SMA Morrell: The Colonel had a little ceremony there in our detachment area, and he promoted me. It was a nice ceremony, by the way. It really was. He did a good job.

Interviewer: About how many cadets did you have?

SMA Morrell: Well, we had a four-year program. I forget what the hell you call it. One, two, three, and four. We didn't have that many. That was kind of a liberal college, for Christ sake. In fact, during the Vietnam War, hell, they had instructors there, but they kept their uniforms at the college. They'd come there and change, and when they left they changed back into civilian clothes. We never had any problems. I didn't experience none. The professors didn't like military people. They thought they were the scum of the God damn earth, I guess. Now all of them wasn't like that, but the biggest majority of them were. The president of the college was a hell of a nice guy; he was a Catholic

priest. It was a Catholic college. I got along good with him. The Colonel got along good with him too. We had good people there. All of them had served in Vietnam. But I don't know how many cadets we had, Butch. There was not that many. We didn't commission all that many people either, each year. I would say maybe ten, twelve, fifteen people. There just wasn't a desire there to be in ROTC.

Interviewer: What town was that near?

SMA Morrell: Saint Cloud, Minnesota.

Interviewer: Tell me about your activities while you were up there.

SMA Morrell: Well, I increased my running ability immensely. I swam a lot. I fished all the time; that was a hell of a place to fish. I hunted in the wintertime. I was colder than hell. I shoveled the hell out of snow. I raised a hell of a big garden. Just about anything you planted would grow in the summertime. I enjoyed the hell out of that. We did training up at Camp Ripley with the student, but the priority of the students was on their college education. That's what they had to have in order to get commissioned, so you really didn't have that much training that you could do, except on the weekends. That was a hell of a thing to plan. We took them up there for weapons training, land navigation training, night compass training, or whatever you could do with the time that you had. We had a marksmanship section. You know, the function of ROTC is really to get the people educated. They're got to graduate and have a degree in order to get commissioned. Then they went to two weeks of summer camp, every summer. I never went to summer camp, because I got there too late to get in the planning for going out there, so I didn't have to go to Fort Lewis. I enjoyed it. The students were damn good. I run into a lot of them, later on in the Army. They did pretty good. Some of them got and joined the Guard or Reserve. I ran into them when I visited the Minnesota Guard up there. The majority of them turned-out pretty good.

Interviewer: What was your primary duty?

SMA Morrell: Just about anything I wanted to do. Mainly, I took care of all the correspondence. Then I had a master sergeant that worked for me, and a supply sergeant, who was a civilian, and a civilian clerk, and a military clerk. I think we had four officers that taught military subjects, and the colonel. Now I taught a few subjects. I'd go in and talk to them about noncommissioned officers, and things like that.

Interviewer: Who was your Professor of Military Science?

SMA Morrell: A guy by the name of Colonel Mike Skahan. He was a hell of a good guy. He was a good man. He was a good officer.

Interviewer: What do you remember most about that assignment?

SMA Morrell: Well, I had a hell of a lot of time that I spent with the family. It was a hell of a place to fish. I found out, don't ever get on a damn sailboat unless you've got someone who knows how to sail. **SMA Morrell:** A good friend, a guy by the name of Captain Smith, who later died--I think he got involved with Agent Orange in Vietnam--we got on one of those little catamarans there at the college, and sailed out. He said, "I know how to sail." We ended up swimming and pushing that damn thing back. That's the last time I was ever on a sailboat. But anyway, there was a bunch of good people, and they were very capable. In fact, one of the officers, he was down at the Pentagon when I came up there as Sergeant Major of the Army. It just wasn't my cup of tea. A lot of people you talk to liked their ROTC assignment, but hell, I just like to be with soldiers, where I was busy all of the time. Of course I stayed busy up there, but like I said, I had a lot of free time, but I used it.

Interviewer: Whenever you went down to the Ranger School, did Karen stay up there?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, she stayed up there to sell the house. That was the first house I ever bought, and the last one I bought until I

had this one built. And did I take a beating on that damn thing. Holy

Smokes, it cost me money. I wish the hell I had it now. But's the

price you pay for being a soldier.

Interviewer: We've covered your overseas assignments to Panama,

Vietnam, and also your first tour in Germany with the 6th Infantry and

the 14th Cav. Let me ask you about your second tour in Germany. In

July of 1979, you went back to Germany. What unit were you assigned to

then?

SMA Morrell: Special Forces Detachment, Airborne, Europe.

Interviewer: Didn't they used to call that the 10th Special

Forces?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, it used to be. Well, you had a battalion. The

1st Battalion of the 10th Special Forces Group remained there. Then you

had, I guess, a higher element and they called it Special Forces,

Airborne, Europe. You had an 06 that was the commander. Then in the

battalion you had a lieutenant colonel who commanded the battalion.

Interviewer: Where were you located, or assigned?

SMA Morrell: Bad Toiz. In Flint Kaserne. It's still there but

they moved the Special Forces out of there.

Interviewer: I think they've moved everything out of there,

haven't they?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. Nothing is there.

Interviewer: You were the Sergeant Major of Special Forces,

Airborne, Europe.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long did you serve in that capacity?

SMA Morrell: I stayed there from July of '79, until October of '81.

Interviewer: What occupied most of your time during that

assignment?

SMA Morrell: Well, you had a battalion that Special Forces

Europe kind of was an overseer. Then you had a community, of course

they had their own community commander, but still the guy who I worked for was in charge of the whole kaserne. So you had problems just like you would with an installation. We had a headquarters company that come under me. You had the first sergeant, and then the S1, 2, and 3, that was assigned to that. One of the biggest problems that I ran into when I first got there, hell, we didn't have nobody in "A" detachments.

Everybody was sick, lame, or lazy. I think they were mostly on the lazy side. Hell, I think I had eight master sergeants and all they did was answer the telephone, because they couldn't be assigned to an "A" detachment. Some of them were crippled up, but I think most of it was complacency, so I had a hell of a time trying to get rid of people that was assigned in order to get people in that would work in an "A" detachment. Then we ran what they called "The Platoon Confidence Course." Platoon from throughout Germany would come down there to go through mini-ranger type training out at this course that we ran with our people. We had people assigned there; all of them were Ranger qualified. So, hell, the problems that you had was trying to get good quality people and then assignments going out, and just the normal things that you run into in any unit.

Interviewer: Wasn't Flint Kaserne where the 7th Army NCO Academy was located?
SMA Morrell: Right. We had the 7th Army NCO Academy there. Then you got a hell of a lot of visitors there. People were coming there because of the area where it was located. Hell, every day was a different day in that place, but it was a hell of a good assignment. It was a nice to be. I liked the German people. They were very supportive of the people there. I liked to ski. I learned how to ski real good while I was there. I skied in the wintertime. Of course, we took winter training, ski training, and that kind of stuff. And that was one hell of a place to fish. I fished with a guy that help write the German Constitution, after the Second World War. He owned all of the fishing

rights there and had a lake below a dam, where the Isar River started. He had fish in there and they'd go downstream, but they'd come back up there because it was a beautiful place. The only people that had ever fished there was kings and presidents. I met him at a Bierfest. He spoke some broken English and I spoke some broke German, and he found out that I liked to fish. He'd let me come up there and fish, Jesus Christ, I used to catch some of the biggest damn trout, twelve, fourteen pounds. Come to find out he had put fingerling land-locked salmon in there, that he got someplace there in Europe. Them things were humongous. I caught a twenty-five pounder there on time, when the Secretary of the Army come over to visit. In fact, The Old Man told me, "Don't be late coming back from fishing, because the Secretary is going to be here." I drove up right behind the Secretary, and here I have this humongous salmon. Of course he had to get his picture taken with it. We ate the damn thing the next day, I guess. I took it up to the club and had them cook it. I had a hell of a good time over there. We had good troops, after we got everything straightened out. We did have alcohol problems. Hell, I guess everybody in Germany had those problems, but we had a hell of a time trying to get that cleaned up, but that's just part of the Army.

Interviewer: You went from there to USAREC (United States Army Recruiting Command), right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. With claw marks all the way from Bad Tolz, Germany to Fort Sheridan, Illinois. I was hanging on.

(End Tape OH 94.6-5, Side 2)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-6, Side 1)

Interviewer: We just finished discussing your assignment to the Special Forces in Germany. Before we go into your MACOM assignments, I would like to ask you about your assignment as Battalion Sergeant Major of the 1st Ranger Battalion, 75th Infantry, at Fort Stewart, Georgia. When were you assigned to the Battalion?

SMA Morrell: I was assigned there in March of 1977. Well I was really assigned there, I guess, the first part of January, because I was assigned there when I went to Ranger School.

Interviewer: You were there how long?

SMA Morrell: Well I got there in March of '77 and I left in June of '79. I believe that's when it was. Yeah, I left there and I went to Germany.

Interviewer: As the Battalion Sergeant Major, what occupied most of your time?

SMA Morrell: Training. Training day, night, seven damn days a week. That's all we did, was train, train, train and running exercises. We worked a lot with the forerunner of the Delta Force; Blue Light. Then when Delta came on line, we worked with them quite extensively in operations that they were conducting.

Interviewer: Before the Delta Force came on line, you had the counter terrorist assignment, didn't you?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, before Blue Light came into being, they had the counter terrorist capability.

Interviewer: Sergeant Major Gates told me about one of those exercise when they flew out to Nevada, while he was with the 75th Rangers.

SMA Morrell: They went on a hell of a lot of exercises. But the Nevada exercise, if I remember right, was conducted with Blue Light, or it could have been with Delta Force. That was more of a Ranger operation than it was a counter terrorist type operation. In fact, I don't remember, Butch, if we really had Delta with us on that operation. I don't think we did. I think that was strictly an in-house Ranger type hostage situation that they went in on.

Interviewer: How was the morale within that battalion?

SMA Morrell: Oh hell, morale was sky high in that battalion.

Interviewer: Did you find that in the Army if you let the soldiers

Gates was one of your first sergeants, wasn't he?

Interviewer: While you were with the 75th Rangers, Sergeant Major

was the best training I ever saw conducted in the Army. It was the best training I ever saw conducted during that period of time. It ever observed in the Army was conducted during that period of time. It keep them in the Battalion. But some of the damnest training I have qualified, and you had them going to other schools as an incentive to because you had people to send to Ranger School to become Ranger even though it wasn't all that great, you still had a hell of a turnover just the Rangers. That really kept you busy, because your turnover, force or whether it was an individual-type operation that called for always had a real live mission, whether it was operating with Delta were trained in all aspects of what their mission in life was. We training that we did, we really had that unit trained. The soldiers division at Fort Polk and he commanded the Infantry Center. But the general. Of course Lohr went on to make two-stars and he commanded the one, I would say, was old Joe Stringam, who later on made brigadier probably the best officer trainer that the Army ever had. The second a trainer. The first commander that they had of that Battalion was battalion; me and a guy by the name of Joe Stringam, who was one hell of

SMA Morrell: Well, the training. We retrained that whole

1st Ranger Battalion?

Interviewer: What is most memorable about that assignment to the

price. They're too much on that eight to four business. if they wanted to pay the price, but hell, they don't want to pay the didn't tolerate it. I always said that the whole Army could be that way few problems, but they were very few and far between, and you just knew what the hell it was, and you had no problem. Oh, you did have a pay the price. You had standards there, and discipline, and everybody Ranger Battalion, but the hell of it is, the leadership don't want to

SMA Morrell: Yeah, and the whole Army could be just like the do what they're trained to do, that you have high morale?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. He was as hard headed as a damn rock, but hell, was a hell of a good first sergeant. When I first went there, that was one of the problems that we had; we had no NCOs. Believe it or not, I couldn't get a damn soul in the United States Army to help me get noncommissioned officers in that unit. If fact, I had the guy that is the Command Sergeant Major of Fort Benning right now, old Bill Acebes. Bill ran two companies and he was a staff sergeant. He had Headquarters Company and then I sent him down to Charlie Company. Hell, he got promoted to E7 and E8 there in the Ranger Battalion. But that was one of the big problems I had when I went there. You just didn't have that experienced leadership that you needed. I had a hell of a time trying to get people to come to the Ranger Battalion, even people that were Ranger qualified because they knew what the standards were. They were high standards and you had to meet those standards. Everybody took PT. You didn't see any fat boys in that damn Ranger Battalion, from the Commander right down to the last private in the last rank. Everybody was physically fit. You did physical training every damn day that you weren't deployed some place. Even when you were deployed you did it if you were in a place where you could do it. I know I did PT a hell of a lot in the desert. Every damn year we deployed to the Mojave Desert, doing desert training on my birthday. What I enjoyed about that, there were no double standards. There wasn't any of this stuff, "Well, you do it. That's the standard but I don't have to do it." Everybody did it. I always had a saying in that Ranger Battalion. "Whenever we pass out shit pie, everybody get a piece, from the damn Commander right down to the last private in the last rank," and they all knew that. You'd find me and the Colonel out where the troops were. If the troops were out in the swamp, with water up to their ass, that's where he and I were. I know that a lot of troops said, "Jesus Christ, here comes that old sergeant major. He's older than dirt and he's out here." But I was always out there with them, and the Commander was too. That's what was

good about that Ranger Battalion.

Interviewer: Did you have pretty good retention?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, we had good retention in there, but we

had a hell of a lot of people that joined that because of the

advertisement that the Army had out. We had people who had college

degrees, in that battalion. They were very highly educated people, but

a lot of them just came in for three or four years, and then they didn't

want anything to do with it, and they got out. A hell of a lot of them

went to OCS or to ROTC and got commissioned. Some of them out of that

battalion even went to West Point. I guess you would say that we had a

high turnover rate, and then you had to watch them like a hawk. You

know, you had too many of them people that read them damn books about

Papuan, and all that shit. You had to watch some of them people to make

sure they didn't mistreat people. That's one of the big problems I had

when I went there. There was a lot of, what I call, soldier abuse that

was going on at the time. Of course, we got all of that stopped and we

turned that around. But there were some hardcore people in that Ranger

Battalion, and a hell of a lot of them were privates, and PFCs. Hell, I

see them now, out and around, and they're E8s and E9s. They've done

well.

Interviewer: Your first MACOM assignment was as the Sergeant Major

of the United States Army Recruiting Command, or USARFC. You were

assigned to USARFC after you returned from Germany, where you had been

assigned to the Special Forces Detachment, Airborne, Europe.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: When were you assigned to USARFC?

SMA Morrell: In October of '81.

Interviewer: How long did you serve there before you went to

FORSCOM?

SMA Morrell: Until September of '82.

Interviewer: Where was the Headquarters for USARFC?

SMA Morrell: At Fort Sheridan, Illinois.

Interviewer: During the break you said that you weren't looking forward to going to USAREC, but once you got there you thought it was a good assignment because of what you learned.

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: Tell me about that assignment.

SMA Morrell: When I graduated out of the Academy, I said that I was never going to another school; I said the hell with it. Then I went to Ranger School, and I said, "Never will I go to another damn school again in the Army." So when I went to USAREC, hell I didn't know anything about recruiting. I probably didn't know how to spell "recruiting." But anyway, I went up there and I really didn't think the General was going to hire me, because Walt Kreuger said, "You know, that guy doesn't cuss or anything." I said, "Walt, I really don't care for that job. That really scares the hell out of me." He said, "Well, if you cuss a little bit, you probably won't get it." Well hell, he cussed just like I did. I said, "Damn, Kreuger done set me up." But anyway, I went up there and talked to him. Well I had a meeting with him before, when he selected me. I went up there and he said, "Well, you need to get up to speed on how we do the recruiting." Hell, I thought, "Here we go again." And really I did. So I went down to the schoolhouse and when through a fast course there on recruiting. I had good instructors. They were very professional and knew what the hell they were doing. I ran into more people that had combat time. You know, that started to drop off in the Army; people out of Vietnam. Hell, they had a lot of combat veterans out in the recruiting force. They were some damn good people. But what I focused in on was soldier problems and family problems. Jesus, I got out there and found out they really didn't take a look where they assigned people. You know, we still have got a lot of places in America where you can't assign a minority. Hell, they wasn't paying any attention to that. You know,

the soldier could survive, but if he was married, nobody wanted to rent to him. The Army doesn't do a very good screening of the people that are selected for recruiting duty, because of the finances and the high cost areas where we have to put recruiters. That had a hell of an impact on people. Jesus, I could tell you horror stories about medical problems that I run into, on the family side, and even on the soldier side, because a lot of times they would go to a doctor, and then whatever care area they was in, the hospital was supposed to pay that and they didn't pay the people. They was getting letters of indebtedness from the doctors. Hell, I pulled the rest of my hair out; of course I didn't have any anyway. It was terrible, I'm telling you. It was a God damn shame. I could not believe some of the problems there. So that was my main focus; to try to sort that stuff out. Then I got into it with the Department of the Army. They thought I was dumb enough to give them a letter stating that I wanted them to be careful about how many blacks they assigned out there. I had a black sergeant major out in Idaho or Iowa, or someplace, and he was out there by himself. Of course he had the whole damn areas out in there. I asked him, "What the hell do you do?" He said, "When it starts to get dusk, I find a hotel and I go in it, because you just have to be careful." So you had to watch where you assigned people at. And then you had finance problems and problems trying to get the support that they needed Jesus crewman, it was unbelievable. Some of the places where they recruited at, Butch, I don't know if you ever visited any recruiting stations in some of the cities. Jesus Christ, I visited some places where they had to come out a put a guard on the damn car that I came in on with another recruiter, so they wouldn't steal the tires and stuff off of it while you were in the recruiting station. We had processing stations where you had the MBPS (Military Entry Processing Station) at. There were in the damn places in the city where, hell, you wouldn't dare go there after dark. It was terrible. But of course,

recruiting was successful. They always recruited the numbers that the Army wanted. That was because of the caliber of people that they had out there. They were some of the finest noncommissioned officers that I ever ran into. It's a damn shame that the Army doesn't take more of an interest in them. You know, they're interested when they're doing good, but when they're not doing good, they're beating up on them. If you're a motor sergeant and you've got ninety-six percent of all your vehicle running, hell, you're a pretty good damn motor sergeant. I'll tell you one damn thing, you can't be nothing but a hundred percent recruiter, because if your mission was five a month and you got five each month for five months, and last month you got five, and it's five this month, and you only get three, then you're a damn dirt bag. It's unbelievable, the shit that happens to recruiters. It's just the fallacy of the way that it operates, and consequently, there's a hell of a lot of things that General Krohl and I got done while I was there to try to make life a little bit better for recruiters. But still, there's a hell of a lot that could be done to make life a little bit better for them. You know, a lot of people think that all recruiting is, is that you sit in a damn recruiting station and people come in and join the Army. The majority of the people who walk through a recruiter's door are not qualified to come in the Army, so they've got to get out and hunt those people. They have a lot of problems. A lot of high schools won't let a recruiter in the damn things. They won't give them a list of the people that are in the school. They can't get that. They don't want the recruiters in there. Jesus, it just goes on and on and on. It is not an easy job. The majority of them were successful, but a lot of people really screwed their career up, too. I didn't like the way they assigned people out there. I don't think an ES should be assigned to recruiting duty. The same as I didn't want an ES assigned to drill sergeant duty, because they didn't have the experience. If you assign ESs to recruiting duty, those individuals

probably haven't been E5s very long and they haven't learned how to be a sergeant and to be confident in their MOS and what they are doing. They go out on recruiting duty for three years and then they changed that to four years. Now they have finally changed it back to three years, thank God. Then normally, when that individual came off recruiting duty he would be in a position to be promoted to E6, and hell, he hadn't learned how to be an E5, so I didn't want E5s out there. But do you think I could get God damn MILPERCEN to understand that? Why them people that never got their God damn boots muddy up there said, "No," and they sent them out there and it just created all kinds of problems. The same thing with the drill sergeants. What the hell do you do with an E5 of trouble, most especially if they've got females around. Hell, you don't need that. The leadership did not need that; they had enough problems, but try to make them understand that. Then the other problem was the dumping ground. At one time they'd send some sorry officers out there. Jesus Christ, it was unbelievable. Of course, they started turning that around and now they really pay attention to who they assign out there. They assign people who have been successful commanders. That helps out a hell of a lot. If you're out there as a sergeant major, or a first sergeant, and you got a company commander in that's got a fourteen OER (Officer Efficiency Report), what the hell are you going to do with a person like that? Hell, they already have enough problems. So if they assign the best people that they had, on recruiting duty, it sure would help them out a hell of a lot, and they still had problems. That kept you going twenty-four hours a day. Now you talk about being on the road, partner, you was on the road. And when you was on the road, there was never a time that you talked to anybody that you didn't run into problems out there. Hell, you had people that had family members that were sick and it was costing them an arm and a leg to try to survive. It was horrible. We had people in the mid-west,

when the gas crunch was going on. Remember that time? We had a sergeant first class that was living in a duplex, with three bedrooms and one bath. Hell, I wouldn't have traded a good damn tent for it, and he was paying twelve hundred dollars a month; that was the going rate, and you could take it or leave it. It was unbelievable. I could tell you God damn stories that would fill up forty tapes about recruiting, but it was a hell of an experience. It was good. I learned a lot. Like I say, it helped me out when I went to FORSCOM and when I went to be Sergeant Major of the Army, and I focused on them, even when I was FORSCOM Sergeant Major. I continued to try to intervene on different things that would come up that would help them out, and I damn sure did that as Sergeant Major of the Army. When you got promoted to Command Sergeant Major, you lost your recruiting pay. I said, "That's a hell of a note. Nobody else in the Army loses money when they get promoted. You're supposed to make money." So one thing that I did while I was Sergeant Major of the Army, I got that put back in. That was a damn knock-down, drag-out in order to get that done for them. Then we got an increase in recruiting pay, out there, which was needed. One thing that still needs to be done, and if I had known it at that time I would have done it when I was Sergeant Major of the Army, and that is, people were discriminated against in the Recruiting Command, because you get promoted to, say, sergeant major, and you only have so many sergeant major slots in recruiting. Well, that's not too bad because people retire and you can kind of move around, but if you're a command sergeant major, there's only the USARMC Sergeant Major and the Brigade Sergeants Major, and that's the only place you can be assigned. So if you get promoted to command sergeant major, then the God damn Army don't want you, and they'll tell you, "I don't want you ass in the Army. You've been in God damn recruiting duty too damn long." Now that's a hell of a note, and that exists right today. And I've talked to every God damn commander in USARMC, to include General Simpson, when I was

do. They get the job done, but the Army sure as hell don't take care of people out there. Sometimes I'm amazed how they do it and what they can

SMA Morrell: That's right, and there's a hell of a lot of good

recruit bad people.

Interviewer: Good people recruit good people, and bad people

that. Shit.

not going to have an army. But you just try to make people understand

SMA Morrell: Why if you don't have recruiters to recruit, you're

important jobs in the Army. We don't have the draft anymore.

Interviewer: In today's Army, that recruiter has one of the most

as I'm concerned.

talks about recruiting, because they don't give a shit about it, as far

raised all kind of hell, and I get very emotional about it when anybody

he's not. I just think it's a God damn shame, and I always have. I've

course the Secretary. He should be aware of that kind of stuff, but

shit less about them, to include the Chief of Staff of the Army, and of

think the God damn Army would do that? Why, hell, they couldn't give a

command sergeants major and you'll have a place to assign them. Do you

then that will give your NCOs, your sergeants major, a chance to be

and make Command Sergeant Major positions in your bigger battalions, and

experience there. So I said, "How about taking ten or twelve battalions

of them might have sixteen or seventeen. Hell, you want to keep that

fifteen years in the Recruiting Command, or fourteen or fifteen. Some

guy that gets promoted to sergeant major out there, probably he has

need to keep the continuity in recruiting. You know, if you've got a

the God damn door and joins the Army. You've got good people and you

and they just feel that when you're a recruiter, everybody walks through

done a God damn thing, because they didn't know nothing about recruiters

about it, and I talked to Sergeant Major Kidd about it, and they ain't

Sergeant Major of the Army, since me. I talked to Sergeant Major Gates

up there in December, about this problem, and I even talked to every

what Bob Ivey told me. He said, "Well hell no, I want to see the guy." kind of hold him back to go to the XVIII Airborne Corps." Now that's Bob Ivey said, "Well, there's a guy out there, but we'd really like to he wanted someone that had more experience, or whatever; I don't know. don't think General Cavazos cared for the slate that he got. So he said command, I guess they had a slate of people, and from what I gather, I Bob Ivey, who was the FORSCOM Sergeant Major. When General Cavazos took SMA Morrell: Well I went for an interview. I was recommended by

Interviewer: How did you get selected for Forces Command? for over thirty, and was picked up for over thirty. SMA Morrell: No I wasn't. Also, I was in recruiting when I put in to Forces Command.

Interviewer: You didn't serve there very long before you went down I really did. Hell, I figured I'd end up my Army career right there. out, but what a bucket of worms that was. But I enjoyed it at USAREC. through the counterparts I had in the Navy and Air Force to help that couldn't do it. I was successful, as Sergeant Major of the Army, to that, and I could never get anybody to trip that circuit. I just right now. The Navy and the Air Force aren't worth a damn when it comes housing. They're not very God damn reciprocal, I can tell you that good with the other services. If they're married, we let them live in them live on the installation. You know, the Army reciprocate real fight with the other services, if they had housing available, to let and then they would take his housing allowance. Then it was always a some of the higher cost areas, where an individual could get a house should never have done away with that program. We got that back in, in We used to have contract housing out there and they stopped that. They outlined. To make life a little bit better for them and their families.

SMA Morrell: Well, being able to do those things that I just Interviewer: What did you find most rewarding about that job? them. I'll tell you that much.

So they called me and told me to come to Fort McPherson for an interview with General Cavazos. So I went down and, hell, I went in and was talking to him. He had some picture of bird dogs in there, and we were mainly talking about bird hunting. We were sitting there, just kind of talking about quail, quail hunting, and bird dogs. Hell, I guess he had read my record and I'm sure he talked to people that knew me. So a little buzzer sounded, and his wife came in. I forgot what his wife's name was: I always called her Mrs. Cavazos. He introduced me to her and he said, "This is the new Forces Command Sergeant Major." That's how I got the job. So I went out and told Ivey that I got the job, and he called Connelly up and told Connelly I was FORSCOM Sergeant Major. And then, Walt Kreuger was in Germany. Hell, I had not been out of Germany a year. Kreuger had what they call a Professional Advisory Board, or PAB meeting, in Germany. When Ivey called Connelly and told him Glen Morrell was selected as the FORSCOM Sergeant Major, Connelly called Kreuger. Well Kreuger got up at this meeting and said, "Well, they have filled the FORSCOM slot." One of the sergeants major said, "Well who got it?" He said, "A guy by the name of Sergeant Major Glen Morrell." The guy said, "Well where did he come out of?" Kreuger said, "He was the USAREC Sergeant Major. He came out of the Recruiting Command." The guy said, "How did a God damn recruiter get to be the FORSCOM Sergeant Major?" And I hadn't even been out of Germany a damn year, for Christ sake. I laughed when old Kreuger told me that, and Connelly does too. He laughs about it. I thought it was hilarious, you know, the mentality of people. But that goes to show you how a hell lot of people feel about recruiting and what they say. I still am a hell of a believer in the Recruiting Command. I go and speak at different functions that they have. Hell, I'll do anything for them that I can. I speak at their delayed entry program function that they have here, for the recruiters. Hell, I help them out any way that I can.

Interviewer: You've got a USARFC reunion and a conference coming up, don't you?

SMA Morrell: Yeah, the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth. They're bringing back all of the former Commanders and Command Sergeants Major for a recruiting update for recruiting in the year 2000.

Interviewer: That ought to be interesting.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, it should be. Oh, they've got a hell of a Commander up there right now, that's really NCO oriented, and that's General Simpson. Hell, you couldn't find a better guy. You don't have anybody in recruiting except noncommissioned officers; that's who your recruiters are. Now in the Headquarters you've got some lower ranking people. But all of your recruiters are noncommissioned officers, so I told the recruiters, when I talked to them in November or December, and then when I found out that he was coming up there, and when I go around and talk, I tell them, "Hell, you can't beat it, to have a guy like that, because he understands what NCOs are all about." So that should be a plus for them. Now I'm not saying that nobody else didn't understand them, and you know him because he was at the Academy.

Interviewer: Yeah, he was at the Academy.

SMA Morrell: He's a hell of a good general.

Interviewer: When did you go down to Forces Command?

SMA Morrell: I guess the later part of September of '82.

Interviewer: The Headquarters was at Fort McPherson, right?

SMA Morrell: Yeah.

Interviewer: How long were you at Forces Command?

SMA Morrell: I was there from, let's say 1 October until about the 25th of June.

Interviewer: Then you became the Sergeant Major of the Army.

SMA Morrell: Yeah

Interviewer: During that assignment, what occupied most of your time?

a big problem for people away from military installations. Even if a had people assigned out there that were dying on the vine. Medical was again, you ran into the same damn problems you ran into in USAREC. You

for a long, long period of time, on assigning quality people. Then NCOs, assigned to the Readiness Group. The Army did a shitty job there that out there, trying to get qualified people, again both officers and

SMA Morrell: Yeah. There were a lot of problems associated with

time?

Interviewer: Did they still have the Readiness Regions at that

the 25th.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I guess. I don't remember, but we didn't have

Interviewer: Where did it go? To USARPAC?

SMA Morrell: Yeah. We didn't have the 25th.

Interviewer: Did they drop the 25th?

SMA Morrell: Panama and Alaska. I didn't have the 25th.

United States) plus the 25th Division and the separate brigades in...

Interviewer: You had all of the divisions in CONUS (Continental

drink a coke, and I'd go somewhere else.

airport with another suitcase with clothes in it. We'd sit there and never ending process. Many times my wife would meet me at the Atlanta trying to get that stuff ironed out and get it on line. Hell, it was a

Then the NCO academies. You know, we were fighting tooth and nail bureaucracy that they've got to go through in order to get things done.

what problems the Guard and Reserve had, because of the layers of guy and a hell of a guy to work for, and work with. Also to find out

look at, it would be a hell of a book. Like I said, he was a smart

Jesus, if I had a book of everything that General Cavazos told me to See what kind of problems soldiers had, or that the installations had. Army and by Forces Command, and if they were workable out in the field. to find out the policies that were implemented by the Department of the

SMA Morrell: Well again, training and going out and really trying

dollars last year alone, in training, the National Guard Bureau did. It

have that damn thing solved. Hell, they lost three or four million off the money to give to them for the training side. They still don't

(National Guard Bureau) and OCAR (Office, Chief of Army Reserve) to come

trying to find the money. You had a hell of a time trying to get NGB equipment, or whatever they needed. Another problem you had was money;

those kind of things, and they didn't want to let them have the
SMA Morrell: Yeah, because you might have to borrow equipment and

with support in that area?

then you had problems with the guard units accepting them, and problems they gave the USAR Schools the mission to go and train guard units, and time was that you had the USAR (United States Army Reserve) Schools and

Interviewer: Did you find that one of the problems during that

solidify the Guard and Reserve working relationship.

I went up to be Sergeant Major of the Army, we did a hell of a lot to solved that. I know during my tenure, and during Barker's tenure, when There was a problem there. It was kind of like the cat and the dog. We in, and then I hammered on the Guard and Reserve about working together. now; I guess they still do it. We really brought the Guard and Reserve in on that. Oscar Barker continued that. I don't know what they do

know if they continue to do that, we brought the Guard and the Reserve that long. One good thing that we got off the ground there, and I don't

SMA Morrell: Yeah, but I hold held one, because I wasn't there

Interviewer: Did you hold Annual FORSCOM conferences?

don't understand that. They pay the price on that later.

anybody understand that. Some people do, but a hell of a lot of people up on a credit check, and that's damage to a soldier. You can't make

something, and then you go in for a credit check, shit, that stuff shows

but when you get three or four things on payments that are due on

trying to get them to pay the god damn bill. People didn't realize it,

guy or gal wasn't married and had medical problems, it was a problem

was up at NGB Headquarters. You've got people suffering now because they're locked into the same system that the active side is. You've got to go to school before you can get promoted. You've got a hell of a lot of people stacked-up out there that can't get promoted. That doesn't do retention in the Guard or the Reserve any good.

Interviewer: Now that they are going to cut back the Guard and Reserve, what do you see as the future for the Guard and Reserve?

SMA Morrell: Well, I just talked to the Enlisted National Guard Association, for the State of Florida, up in Panama City about three weeks ago. That was one of the topics that I talked to them about. I think it's going to be detrimental to them. And I can't believe that I read where the Chief of Staff of the Army come up and said, "Well he'd like to get annual training extended to three weeks." I fought the hell out of that when I was Sergeant Major of the Army. I said, "Hell, you're going to destroy the program." If you know anything about the Guard and Reserve, and I'm not talking about people on AGF (Active Guard and Reserve) status, because hell, they're going to get paid their full time, but you take a guy that belongs to a TPU unit, where he drills once a month on Saturday and Sunday, and then he goes to two weeks of annual training, most generally he uses vacation time from that job to do that. His family never gets a God damn vacation. Hell he might drive a hundred and fifty miles to go to drill with that unit. They don't get no money for that because of the location of where the unit is. Your leadership always has to go more than that in order to get the training planned. Jesus there are some problems with that. If they extend the damn thing to three weeks, along with trying to get promoted in the Guard and Reserve, hell, that's really going to affect the program. You look at the Guard and Reserve, and they always harp about people not being MOS qualified. Well hell, no wonder they're not MOS qualified. If you join a Reserve unit or a Guard unit, you don't want to be a private all of your damn life, so you can only go so far

to change that. There are a lot of things that could be done if the understand that. That's just the nature of the beast. You ain't going

of stuff. Hell yeah, I understand that and everybody else should have been born at night, but not last night." I understand that kind sergeant is the School Board Chairman." He said, "You know, I might you're coming from, but I'm a school teacher." He said, "That first sergeant's ass." He said, "Well, Sergeant Major, I understand where told the Company Commander, "You know, you need to get on that first boy network" out there. Hell, it's like an example I run into where I **SMA Morrell:** Yeah. You know, you're always going to have the "old

maybe it would be more successful?

during the down-sizing? Do you think that if they got rid of that, **Interviewer:** Do you think the "old boy network" will also hurt

qualified. And they don't have the resources.

leaders that they put in. The other thing is getting the people are good. The reason you find some good units or some bad units is because, again you go back and it's because of the leadership; the to be a good soldier. They do their damnest and a hell of a lot of them their soldiering ability. Hell, they want to be a soldier and they want wrong with the Guard and Reserve. Nothing is wrong with them, as far as problems in the Guard and the Reserve. There ain't a God damn thing

your head against the wall. But they're really got some serious all of the God damn answers to everything up there. That's like beating get it through NGB, and you can't get it through OCAR, because they know that they have. There are some things that could be done, but you can't the people in the positions so they will become proficient in the MOS

talking about a little bit of money, but not that much in order to keep them promote two grades above what the position calls for. You're you have that MOS problem. Now what I would like to see them do is let first class. You've got to get in those positions. So that's why that from a private, to a PFC, to a spec four, to a sergeant, and a sergeant

Department of the Army had more influence, and if FORSCOM had a way to have more influence. They do have quite a bit on OAR, on the Reserves, but they don't have that much on the Guard, because the Guard belongs to the governors of the states. By cutting the force and restructuring the Guard and Reserve, which now you're going to have all of your combat service support is going to be in the Reserve, and all of your combat arms is going to be in the Guard. You know, they've got a problem with that because the Guard had got to have some combat service support capability for crisis that might happen within the state. You know, that's a hell of a thing, and then they come up wanting to extend the annual training. Shit, that's because the Army is being cut and they want to send people overseas and try to pickup the shortfall. That's where someone has got to stand up and say, "God damnit, enough is enough. We can't do this, and this is what the shortfall is going to be." They're got to make sure the civilian leadership understands it and then if they want to buy off on it, make sure it's publicized so everybody knows where and the hell it's coming from, and go on from there. But I think they'll destroy the damn program if they're not careful, and it took a hell of a long time to get the Guard and Reserve where it is right now. You heard a lot of senior people, in years past, bad mouth the hell out of the National Guard and the Reserve. Why hell, no wonder. We've never done anything for them. We didn't start doing anything for them until probably the first part of 1980, to try to develop them into something. The United States of America is flat on its ass, if we don't have the Guard and the Reserve. I can tell you that right now. Even with the force that we had eight years ago, we still needed the Guard and Reserve. We damn sure need it now, with the small force that we have. We couldn't go to war without them. We couldn't sustain ourselves worth a damn without the activation of the Guard and Reserve, so we had better put some money down and the Department of the Army better know what the hell it is they're doing,

and the civilian leadership better know what they're doing, or we're damn sure going to be in trouble, Butch.

Interviewer: Back in 1973, they came out with Operation Steadfast and created the Readiness Groups and Readiness Regions to supplement the dedicated advisors. Before that, the dedicated advisors were on their own. They didn't have admin team, MAIT (Maintenance and Administrative Instruction Team), or MET (Maintenance Evaluation Team) support, or anything like that.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, that's right, he didn't have anything. Then the other problem that you had with that was, Congress went and passed the bill to increase the AGR people, but hell, they never funded the damn thing; that was a problem. And now they're talking about cutting AGR positions. I forget, off the top of my head, how many they told me. Hell, that ain't going to help that problem none. In fact, it's going to be a bigger problem.

Interviewer: You've got to have those AGR people there to maintain the continuity.

SMA Morrell: Well hell yeah. What they're going to end up doing is really destroy the damn program if they're not careful. You know, if I wasn't going to get promoted and join the unit, then why and the hell would I want to be a member of the Guard or the Reserve. And then they're going to build some incentives into it. You know, the damnest thing is the ID (identification) card business. I've always said, "If you've got an ID card, I don't give a damn if you're a guardsman, a reservist, active army, or retired. Hell, you should be able to go use any of the facilities that everybody else uses. Hell, we need it in the MWR (Morale, Welfare, and Recreation) account. The commissaries need it to build and refurbish commissaries. And AAFES (Army and Air Force Exchange System) needs the damn thing to build PXs (post exchanges) and make prices cheaper. Hell, they still fight that issue. They won't let them use the commissary. How many people

would use the damn commissary? Hell, everybody don't live close to a military installation, so that's an incentive. Give them some kind of incentive to join the Guard and Reserve, for Christ sakes. Everybody wants an incentive, Butch. You know that as well as I do. If there ain't no god damn incentive, you ain't going to have anything. I fought that issue and we did get it a little bit better than what it was, but then they come up and said they was going to let them use it all of the time. Well they didn't do it. I said, "You've got to be sixty years old when you retire from the Guard and the Reserve." I said, "You know, you've got a guy that serves thirty-five years, and he retires. He's fifty-five or fifty-eight years old. He's got to wait two more years. Well why can't he use the facilities if they're available where he's at, or she's at?"

(End Tape OH 94.6-6, Side 1)

(Begin Tape OH 94.6-6, Side 2)

Interviewer: We were talking about the changes in the future of the National Guard. One of the things that surfaced was the use of military ID cards, etc., in the PX. Do you have any other feeling on that?

SMA Morrell: I think that if we're going to maintain a good Reserve and National Guard, which we have got to have, then there has got to be some incentives in order to maintain the strength that is going to have to be maintained in both the Guard and Reserve.

Interviewer: One item that I neglected to ask you concerning your tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army, and I just thought about it, concerns the MACOM Sergeants Major conference. Every year you have the Major Army Command Sergeants Major Conference. Would you like to make a comment concerning that particular conference?

SMA Morrell: A hell of a lot of issues were solved at that conference, because every MACOM conference I had I always had the principle staff come in and brief them on what the hell was going on

at the Department of the Army level. They had the opportunity to surface any question that they wanted to, to the individual who was responsible for policies and everything that happened in the Army. The Chief of Staff of the Army talked to them. The same thing applied. They had a dialogue with him and with the Secretary of the Army. That's what was good about the MACOM Sergeants Major Conference. Hell, then they could trade ideas back-and-forth. It really gave them the opportunity to surface anything and hell, a lot of times things were solved right there, or it was put into an initiation action on changing whatever needed to be changed. So we got a hell of a lot of things done in the Army through that process, and I think it was a hell of a good process. Of course I realize time and money is a scarcity, but

sometimes I thought maybe that should be done twice a year, because in a year a hell of a lot of things happen. But that's hindsight, you know. I think that's a damn good program. Jesus, if anybody has a problem and they don't surface it there, then they deserve that problem. The other thing that was helpful about that is the commands they was coming from, the commanders worked a lot of the problems through the command sergeants major because of the interface they had right there with the principle staff, where a lot of times they don't have that opportunity. So a lot of things got done. There were a hell of a lot of good things done for the noncommissioned officer, soldiers, and the families through that program and the meetings, etc.

Interviewer: Each year you get to go back to those conferences. Is that right?

SMA Morrell: Well, I have not been back to a Sergeant Major of the Army Conference since I retired. I went fishing the first time, and the second time I was tied-up on something, so this will be the first time. Personally, I don't like... I never combined a MACOM conference with the former Sergeants Major of the Army, and I don't think that should be done. Now that's Morrell's God damn opinion. The reason for that is, a

lot of times you'll be talking about the same problems that was on your watch and I think it would tend to get former Sergeants Majors of the Army coming up and talking when I don't think they should be talking. I think if a MACOM has got a problem, that MACOM and that Sergeant Major of the Army are the ones that have got to solve that God damn thing. What the hell is a retired former Sergeant Major of the Army going to do? Hell, he just eats into the time that MACOM should be there with the other MACOMs and with the Sergeant Major of the Army. So I never had the former Sergeants Major of the Army at any of the MACOM conferences that I had. I didn't like it and I didn't want it like that. Now the last two they have had them with the MACOMs. I've even heard some MACOM Sergeants Major say that they're not comfortable in that setting, and the same thing with some of the former Sergeants Major of the Army. They said they're weren't either; they told me that. **Interviewer:** Earlier on in the interview, I asked you some brief questions about the family. First of all, when you got married; your wife's name and her maiden name; and where Karen was born. What I'd like to do is continue now asking about the family. How did you meet Karen?

SMA Morrell: Well, my father was sick and in the hospital, and she was a student nurse. That's where I met her at.

Interviewer: How long after you met her did you get married?

SMA Morrell: Oh, I think about three months, probably.

Interviewer: During the time, throughout your marriage, did she work as a nurse?

SMA Morrell: No. She quit when we got married. She never went back to school until I retired. When I retired, that's one thing she wanted to do was go back to school and get her nursing degree. Really the bottom line, what she wanted to do, and she never told me this until later on, but she said she wasn't about to be a private for a frustrated first sergeant, when I retired, so she went to school. Now she laughs

about it. She always wanted to get her degree. I said, "Hell, I don't care. Go. That's fine with me." If I knew back then what I know now, I might have said, "Hell no, you stay in school and finish," because hell, I would have had a big bank account because she could have worked everyplace where we were stationed.

Interviewer: What was the first post where Karen and the family joined you?

SMA Morrell: Fort Bragg. I didn't live on post. Hell, there weren't any quarters available back then, for a corporal. There was no way in hell you could get quarters. We lived in Dunn, North Carolina when we first got married. We had an apartment with one bedroom, a small kitchen, and a small living room. It had oil heat in it. I'll never forget. The heat went off one time and I beat that son of a bitch with a hammer, trying to get it to work. It was cold. Come to find out, it didn't have no damn oil in it. That was my first association with oil heat. We had a hell of a time; it was a very small place. Then we moved from there because it was, I don't know, twenty miles from Fort Bragg. I don't remember exactly how far it was, but it was too damn far. The price of gas then was, what? Twenty cents? Hell, I don't know. It was so damn cheap, but still it was money. So we moved into a twenty-seven foot trailer in a trailer park; Marlin Trailer Park. The highway took that when they built a highway. Do you remember where the old NCO Club was? Out there where you turn left and go out that way. It was out there at the end of that road. In fact, I think that was an old gravel road through there. We lived there in '56 and '57. Then I bought a trailer when I reenlisted and came back into the Army. I bought a mobile home and put it in a park out there. We lived in the mobile home, hell, from '58 and then I traded it in on a bigger one, after I came back from Germany. I brought it down to North Carolina and put it in the same trailer park. Hell, it's still there. She came back and stayed there when I was in Vietnam, and when I came back from

back to Vietnam, she stayed there. We sold it in, Hell I don't know, some time in '70; we didn't live in it anymore. We lived in all kind of different quarters in the Army. Some of them were a hell of a lot better than others. Some of them were so damn small that you couldn't turn around in them. In Bad Toiz I had about twenty-eight rooms in that house there; in the half of a house I had. Of course, I only had one child living with me; my youngest daughter. You know, it would have been ideal if you would have had children, in a big house like that, but you know how the Army is. So I had all different kinds of quarters.

Interviewer: What do you think were the worst military quarters that you lived in?

SMA Morrell: That sub-standard housing that I lived in, in Panama. The best quarters that I lived in were the ones I had in Bad Toiz, Germany. The next one, I would say was the house I lived in when I was Sergeant Major of the Army. That was a very comfortable house. There was just Karen, myself, and two dogs. Hell, it was nice. I liked that house.

Interviewer: Whenever you were first married, and you were a young soldier, how difficult was it to make ends meet on your salary?

SMA Morrell: Well, that's one thing that was installed in me when I was a kid. If you buy something, you've got to pay for it, and a man's word was his honor. So I made damn sure that we didn't over extend ourselves when buying something and not get fooled into getting credit cards when they became available, and end up paying for a damn credit card for the rest of your life. We lived on a hell of a tight budget. I know, in Germany, many times I'd get pennies. At the end of the month I'd come up with ten pennies in order to buy brochen and a cup of coffee there at the NCO Club when we'd take a break, when we was in the motor pool working, which most generally we were, there at Fulda,

every damn day if we weren't out in the field. Money was always tight at the Morrell household. We always had everything for the children. I supplemented our food, when we went to Fulda. I fished illegally, I would say. Of course, hell, that was back when you could do that, I guess. I got caught a lot of times, but we always played dumb and always carried cigarettes and a bottle of whiskey in the car, and that's why we got off the hook. I supplemented it with trout. Even today, don't mention fish to my wife--she'll eat some fish, but not too damn often--because she made the statement, "If she ever got to the point to where she never had to eat fish, by God she never was going to eat another damn fish." I understand that. Hell, I like fish and I eat fish all of the time. When she's not here, and she's working in the evening, hell, I have fish for dinner because I like it. Jesus, we had some hard times. Of course, I sure everybody did, in the Army. Hell, we had two children, but of course, money went a hell of a lot further then than it does now, but it was tough.

Interviewer: Where were each of your children born? Were they born in a civilian or a military hospital?

SMA Morrell: My daughter Kimberly Dawn was born November 6, 1958, in a civilian hospital, in Karen's hometown of Parkersburg, West Virginia. My second daughter, Angelia, was born 17 December 1962, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in a military hospital. My son was born at Fort Bragg, so we had two children born at Fort Bragg. You better ask me that again tonight, because I'm pretty sure Eddie was born at Fort Bragg, but hell, she may have went home to have him; I can't remember. Jesus, that's terrible.

Interviewer: What is your son's name?

SMA Morrell: My son's name is Glen Edward; the same as mine.

There's no second of Junior. I said I wasn't going to have no second or Junior.

Interviewer: How well did your children adjust to the frequent

SMA Morrell: Yeah, so I feel bad about that today, but I just say, "Well hell, that's the breaks of the ball game. If I had it to do over again, we would have left her there. I've always been very protective of my kids. We had a good family there that we could have

much.

Interviewer: Particularly in her senior year, when it means so

That was tough.

terrible. She was in a brand new school and in a different environment.

took her up there. She did alright; she graduated. But that was

That's when they didn't have that thing where you could stay, so we

want her to stay down there. We would have had to rent off post.

horrible that we did that. But what the hell could you do? I didn't

Minnesota. That was a terrible God damn mistake. Really, it was

would have graduated in May or June; whenever. I took her and went to

was a senior at Fort Riley, Kansas. We left there in March, and she

Now one place where we did screw-up at was, my middle daughter, Dawn,

but the kids always felt that way. They really enjoyed the schools.

that what the civilian schools were. I don't know the reason for that,

had. The military schools, I think, were a hell of a lot better than

good, like the school in Panama. What a hell of a school system they

majority of the schools that the kids attended, believe it or not, were

education that they got and the different things they got to see. The

tell you today that they're a hell of a lot better off because of the

you. I think it was about thirty something, if I remember. But they'll

forget how many schools my youngest daughter attended. Karen could tell

problems. The kids always adjusted well, which kids normally do. I

wherever I was at, then by God, we was going to go. We never had any

separated. If there was a possibility of her and the kids going with me

said that if we didn't have to be separated, we was never going to be

SMA Morrell: Well one thing that we did when we got married, we

moves that you had while you were in the Army?

Interviewer: Is he married?
 University. He's been working there for, I guess, ten years or more.
 SMA Morrell: Accountant. Yeah, that's what he does. That's what
 for them.

Interviewer: Actually he's the purchasing agent and the accountant
 buys the equipment, and all that kind of stuff?
 do you call the guy that handles the money, updates the equipment, and
 Littlestown, Pennsylvania. He lives in Hanover, Pennsylvania. What
 operation of Littlestown Hardware and Foundry, which is located in
 SMA Morrell: My son works for a foundry. He oversees the
 their occupations?

Interviewer: Where are your children living now, and what are
 thing there was wives that knew each other. It worked out alright.
 work in that area. Now when the whole thing deployed, then the only
 and that kind of stuff. Special Forces had a chaplain that did good
 about half. They maintained a good network and took care of one another
 married, initially, and then there was five or six the second time;
 Team Sergeant's wife, but hell, I think there was only four of us
 detachment I was on. It was the commander's wife, the XO's wife, the
 mostly it was made up of the family members of the team, like the "A"
 SMA Morrell: Yeah, Special Forces had a pretty good network, but
 the families.

Interviewer: Back then, did they have family support groups for
 SMA Morrell: Yeah.

accompany you?
 mobile home whenever you deployed to a place where your family couldn't
Interviewer: Did you say Karen and the family stayed in your
 her there to finish up.
 take her with us, in another way I look at, maybe we should have left
 left her with, but hell, I don't know, in one way I'm glad that we did

SMA Morrell: Yes, he's married and he'd got two children. That's probably the only two grandchildren I'll ever have.

Interviewer: What about your two daughters?

SMA Morrell: One lives in Hinesville, Georgia and the other one lives in Tampa, Florida.

Interviewer: Are they both married?

SMA Morrell: No. They are both divorced. They married two of the sorriest son of a bitches that I think I ever saw in my life. I say that, but of course I never did like girlfriends and I did not like boyfriends. But they saw their mistake and corrected that right quick; especially the youngest one. It took the middle one a little bit longer. But thank God there are no kids involved. They'd tell you today, if they had just listen to their daddy. And I remind them of that too. If I had it to do over again, I'd probably have done things a little different, but hell, when kids are growing up, what the hell are you going to do? But I might say, they never created any problems at all for me in the military. They were very supportive of all of the things that I did. They never gave me one minute's trouble. They never got into trouble. I think they was afraid. I fished in Panama, and I taught all of my kids how to fish when they were knee high to a grasshopper, and they liked to fish. When marijuana came out, I told them, "If I ever hear of you kids doing that, I'll take you fishing and God damnit, you'll never come back, because I'll deep-six you out there someplace." I really think my kids believed it. And probably if I had got into one of my irate tantrums, I would have probably done that, to tell you the damn truth, because I would not have tolerated that. I wanted a career in the military. I liked it and I know that family problems can sure as hell can give you a lot of headaches. I had an understanding and I never had a minute's problem out of any of them. Only one time I had a problem with my son. He run the damn General off the road out at Fort Riley, Kansas. He was playing tennis. He's a hell

of an athlete. He's a hell of a swimmer and hell of a baseball player. He probably could have been a good athlete. In fact, he coached the Olympic Team for a while, in swimming. He won a hell of a lot of medals in that. In fact, all of the kids did, in swimming. I think he won one record, if I remember right. But anyway, he was down playing tennis; he and the admin clerk that I had in the company. I had a Volkswagen then that I let him drive, because I had two cars. They had beat somebody and they was happy as hell. The General was coming in to the club. I told him to quit going down there. Hell, they thought he was a young officer, I guess. Hell, I don't remember. But they was pretty nice about it. It was General Red Fuller. I don't know if you ever heard of General Fuller, or not. He was a cantankerous son of a bitch. But anyway, they called and said, "Look, you had better have a talk." So I did. I never had anymore problems. But I laugh now about that. I even laughed then. I thought, "You didn't run him off the road enough." He was something else; Fuller was.

Interviewer: What sort of support roles did Karen play when you were a first sergeant and a command sergeant major, as far as programs for the families?

SMA Morrell: When I was a first sergeant, we always had the

platoon sergeants and some of the other people in the company over to out house. We always had single soldiers over to the house for dinner and not just because it was Christmas or Thanksgiving. Periodically

we'd have them over to the house. She was involved in the Wives Club, and with wives in the company. She always did that. She worked with

the Red Cross. She worked with ACS (Army Community Services). God, I don't know how many hours she worked that. Good gracious, if she ever

got paid for all of her volunteer work that she had done, I'd go on a cruise. No I wouldn't, cause I don't like damn cruises, but hell, I'd

go on one big fancy damn fishing trip. That's what I'd do. But anyway, she was always involved like that. She was really supportive and she

helped me out a hell of a lot, because she could take care of some family problems that would have built up and would have become a problem that I would have had to contend with.

Interviewer: Tell me about her support role when you were the Sergeant Major of USAREC and of FORSCOM.

SMA Morrell: Well the same thing within USAREC, but USAREC was so damn scattered out. She did volunteer work for the Red Cross and ACS. When the kids were small, she was a Brownie Scout leader for, hell, I don't know how many years. She helped with the Swim Team when the girls and my boy were swimming. Everything the kids were interested in, she was always there supporting whatever that was. She was always volunteering and she was the ACS Coordinator for FORSCOM. Then she had something to do with ACS at the Department of the Army level, with the Community and Family Support Center. She spent many, many hours.

(NOTE: There was a pause in the interview.)

Interviewer: During the break we couldn't remember if we talked about your second daughter or not. We talked about your oldest daughter and your son. Where does your second daughter live?

She lives in Hinesville, Georgia.

Interviewer: What's he job?

SMA Morrell: She's going to school right now. She used to work for a catering outfit there. Hell, I don't know how many years she worked there. She's a hell of a cook. She can cook anything under the sun. Now she's going to school and she manages, part-time, a dry cleaning place there. You know, Karen wrote down some stuff here about her most memorable times. She was talking about skiing there in Germany and Austria, and all of that. About the kids learning a foreign language. You know, they did get the opportunity to learn a foreign language. I made her fill out some of this stuff here, because hell I didn't know what it was. Shit, I wouldn't be nothing without her anyway. Hell, I would probably have been some drunk laying in a ditch

someplace, I guess.

Interviewer: I think we've pretty well covered everything in the guide here. What I going to ask you a question that I think will sum up your more than thirty-three years of service.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, almost thirty-three, Butch.

Interviewer: What is an American Soldier?

SMA Morrell: What is an American Soldier? Well, to me an American Soldier is a person that had been trained and has the desire to be the best that there is at whatever their job might be, and can do any damn thing under the sun, provided their needs are taken care of and they've got good leadership. They'll go the extra mile time and time again. Hopefully we'll always have those kind of American Soldiers, who will always be successful in carrying out whatever the United States does in the way of foreign diplomacy and foreign policy. I hope the hell we always have that type of person serving in the United States Army.

Interviewer: I like to say, on behalf of General Nelson, Major Kelly, Dr. Dray, and all of the folks up at the Center for Military History, I want to thank you very much for participating in this very important project. Also, on behalf of Colonel Van Horn and Sergeant Major Strahan, out at the Academy, and Mr. Larry Arms, the Director of the NCO Museum, I would like to say thank you. Most definitely, I would like to thank you for your hospitality.

SMA Morrell: Well, I don't know about my hospitality, Butch. Hell, I didn't feed you lunch yesterday and I got my ass chewed out for that, by my wife.

Interviewer: I'd like to say, on behalf of myself and the NCO Corps, I want to thank you for your almost thirty-three years of dedicated service to the NCO Corps, to the United States Army, and to our Country.

SMA Morrell: Well, I've enjoyed it, because of guys like you and what you did for the Army. You're left a hell of a legacy behind too.

Not only in the field that you worked in, but then when you came on-line with PLDC. Probably our NCO Education System is a hell of a lot better off today because of you and George Bietzel and old Althiede, although I think I probably chewed you all's ass out a few times, because of some of the things that you guys come with on that, but Jesus, things were moving so fast and furious then. It would have never been done if it hadn't been for guys like you. You know that as well as I do. Hell, you did a hell of a job. I just hope we continue to have people like you all, that continue to do the things that have been done down at the Academy.

Interviewer: Well, I appreciate that. And I appreciate being able to sit down and kind of put the old uniform on and stroll with you down Memory Lane.

SMA Morrell: Yeah, I'm sure you've got a hell of a lot of tall tales doing all of this stuff here. Well, I just wish old Bill Woodridge would have done his part, God damn it, but that's the way the ball bounces, I guess.

(End of the interview)