

would have to operate carefully in my area, lest I further embarrass the United States Army. He cautioned me not to accept gifts of value; of great value. Just a little fifteen cent teaspoon from a soldier out in the jungle would have great value to me, but that's not what the chief meant. "You don't get involved in accepting gifts of monetary value. You always conduct yourself as you have in the past." He said, "I selected you," and these are his very words. He said, "I selected you because you're Silas Copeland." And he said, "Don't you change. Don't you try to change." In other words, he was telling me that, "I know how you've operated over the years. I know your batting record. Don't you try to change it. Don't you change it. Just continue to march."

INTERVIEWER: You were also given the challenge of coming up with the all-volunteer army, too.

SMA COPELAND: Yes. The general eluded to the all-volunteer army.

INTERVIEWER: What other major challenges did you face?

SMA COPELAND: Well, one of the greatest challenges I faced in my meeting and talking with senior noncommissioned officers throughout the Army... This filtered over into the senior officer business too, however, keep in mind that that wasn't my mission, but I did get involved because, you know, when you go into an AO and a two or three-star general, or a full colonel wants to discuss this and talk about that, etc., and they talk about the all-volunteer army. Well, you don't walk away from them. You stop and you talk to them very courteously and respectfully. So in that respect I did become involved with officers quite frequently. Now that wasn't a challenge to me, you see, because I was not about to try to change the thinking of the officers; that wasn't my mission. That wasn't in my area of operation; I'm dealing with noncommissioned officers of the Army. The big challenge during my tenure, and shoving off on this all-volunteer army, was trying to get the senior

noncommissioned officers to view themselves as a young soldier trying to be recruited into the Army. How do you want to be treated? Now heretofore, keep in mind that we have had an all-conscript army. We could fire a soldier. We could give him a 208 or 209, meaning an undesirable discharge. We could boot him out of the Army, and then all we had to do was ask for a replacement; another one. So another one was drafted from the street.

INTERVIEWER: We treated him like a second class citizen.

SMA COPELAND: We treat him like a second class citizen. You violated his dignity, day in and day out. He is dirt, and you, as a senior noncommissioned officer, you're God and you're King. You've got to change your way of thinking and your method of operating. We all have to change. Why? Because the Chief of Staff of the Army has said so, right down through the chain of command. Then you would have some senior noncommissioned officer who would get his nose crooked-up. Very seldom, if ever, was it "her." It was always "he." "Well, you know, I'm not sure that I'm going to go along with this." "Now wait a minute, sergeant. You're telling me that you have an option? I'm telling you that you don't have an option. Neither do I. I'm telling you that in order to recruit an all-volunteer army and train and retain, by 30 June 1973, you're going to have to change your way of thinking. I can see right now that you're going to be one of those that we need to work on a little." Now it was during that time that we had the RIF. The NCO RIF coming out. I don't even like to think about it, but if we had noncommissioned officers who were not supporting the program. Most likely his commander in that area, if he had to make a recommendation that he was going to either choose Sergeant Smith or Sergeant Jones, he would have to seriously consider denying Sergeant Jones, who is not supporting the effort to obtain an all-volunteer army. But it made a difference. Now I, personally, never did hold that, NEVER, over the head of noncommissioned officers. There was never a

threat communicated. I came to Fort Bliss one time, and for some reason, because prior to that time when I first came aboard I had told my administrative assistant, "When the field elements call and they want us to come and visit with them for whatever reason, tell the sergeant major of that post or the unit that we are visiting, if they plan to have a social function that I would prefer not to have it in the club. I want to have it in a facility away from where intoxicating beverages are being served." Now there's a purpose for my doing that. All my bringing up in the military, I was never able... First let me say this. I have no qualms about people drinking. I've drank. I enjoy beer. But I've never been able to hold a formal meeting and get the message across, whereby intoxicating beverages were being served. The NCO preceded you to that location by two hours, and now you have lunch and it's an hour later, so you have a group of NCOs on hand who are drunked-up three hours later, and they're ready to take that Sergeant Major of the Army apart. You know, this is not the sergeant talking; it's the liquor talking. So I put out the word, right up front, very respectfully, "Let's don't meet in the club." Now after business hours, visiting with your troops and eating and dining with them in their facilities and training with them out on the range, wherever they're doing their thing, then if you want to go to the club for a social function, that's fine, but we won't discuss business. When we walk into that club, the business ceases. The word got around. But one time, when I visited Fort Bliss, obviously they didn't comply, even though the word had gotten around. The sergeant major, who is a good friend of mine. I've known him over the years. I served with him at Fort Hood; he had been my engineer sergeant major. Now he was post sergeant major at Fort Bliss. A guy by the name of Warren. He's down in Tennessee somewhere right now. But Warren called all his sergeants major and he said, "Yeah... He got all of these school sergeants major. Man, they're tough. They got..."

(End of Tape OH 93.1-6, Side 2)

(Begin Tape OH 93.1-7, Side 1)

INTERVIEWER: Sergeant Major, when that last tape ran out you were talking about when you went out to different posts. You wanted to meet away from the club. You were talking about Fort Bliss, when Sergeant Major Warren gathered all the school sergeants major, but he didn't quite go to an area you approved of, Right?

SMA COPELAND: Well, you know, Butch... Let me back up a little bit. There's nothing wrong with socializing. As a matter of fact, it's encouraged. But over the many years in the military it's always been my experience that when you conduct official business, you should separate that from mostly socializing. When you're socializing you usually get into consuming a certain amount of alcoholic beverages. I've had some unfortunate experiences in the past with that sort of thing. When I was Sergeant Major of the Army, I much preferred to socialize when we were not doing, shall we say, a more professional approach while on duty during the day. We've already eluded to the visit to Fort Bliss one time. The post sergeant major, of course, put out the word that he would like for the senior noncommissioned officers to assemble at the noncommissioned officer club. Apparently, some had assembled quite early, perhaps ten thirty, eleven o'clock for a noon day luncheon and a social affair and then after the luncheon I was going to, I did address the group. By that time, some three hours later, the noncommissioned officers, as you can well imagine, had consumed a considerable amount of alcohol. So they became quite belligerent when I got up to make my little speel--speech--to them. This was during the big draw down and the RIF of noncommissioned officers and the new promotion system, and there were a lot of frustrations at that time, as you can well imagine, on going in the new modern volunteer army, and this is what I'm talking to the senior noncommissioned officers about. It's a

frustrating subject; it can be quite a controversial subject. There were some noncommissioned officers, who apparently had too much to drink, and, shall we say, their nose was hooked a little bit, their hearts were fluttering, and they were awaiting their turn to take the Sergeant Major of the Army apart. But that's okay. That's what I'm there for. Beat, beat, and be beaten. This is a new area that we've moved into; the all- volunteer armed forces. So this was quite an experience for this old soldier. I listened and I listened and I let these noncommissioned officers beat me, beat me, and I endeavored to answer their questions. But I found that as they became frustrated and more frustrated, and with their approach to me, the frustration seemed to catch on, so this old timer became frustrated. I said, "Let's just knock it off right here. Let's cool it and I'll come back at a later date. We'll just sit down someplace other than in this environment, which is a beautiful, nice club. We'll just sit down and discuss things." So we broke up the meeting and departed. I came back to Fort Bliss at a later date. As a matter of fact, I was invited back there by the commanding general and his sergeant major, and the local AUSA--Association of the United States Army Chapter--to come back and address the chapter personnel. I did, and that time, the following day or two I had a chance to meet again with the noncommissioned officers. But we met in their work place and it was more compatible at that time in discussing some of the problems they thought they had. So I always made it a policy that maybe it's best when I meet with noncommissioned officers and troopers that we do it in places other than where we're serving alcoholic beverages. I found that worked real well. Now after duty hours, after we met with the troops and discussed their problems and what we could do for them and what they could do for us, after that, then we would go to the club, sit down and socialize. But that was my philosophy back in those days.

INTERVIEWER: Who was your rater when you were the Sergeant Major of the

Army?

SMA COPELAND: Well. Everybody. I think just about everyone in the Army, to include out of the Army, rated Silas Copeland.

INTERVIEWER: What about your formal rater, on paper?

SMA COPELAND: You're talking about my regular annual Enlisted Evaluation Report, no doubt. I didn't have a rater, per se. I almost did. I was sworn-in... I don't recall the name of the officer. It was a colonel that came to me with a piece of paper; I suppose it was a rating form. He was discussing with the Sergeant Major of the Army who would possibly be his rater; be the Sergeant Major of the Army's rater. Now if we go back a little bit, I had worked for a good many years on a general's staff as a command sergeant major and as a sergeant major, and had been rated by a general officer. Then out in the field, in our field armies, we had sergeants major who were being rated by four-star generals, three-star generals, two-star generals, division, corps, army, Continental Army, etc. Now we get into the prestigious part of it; we're talking about the rating system. That was one reason why the E8 and E9 came into being and one reason why the position of Sergeant Major of the Army came into being. That is "to enhance the Noncommissioned Officer Corps." Let's get them up off their hunkers, get them out of the hole, and stand them up, and let's give them an incentive for doing something. So early on it was decided that sergeants major, down at division level, would be rated by their two-star general. Corps sergeants major would be rated by their three-star general. The Continental Army Commander's sergeant major would be rated by the four-star general. Now here you have the top enlisted noncommissioned officer of the Army come aboard, going to represent all these outstanding soldiers, one million two hundred and fifty thousand of them, and suddenly in lieu of being rated by a two, or three, or four-star general, now they're talking

about rating the Sergeant Major of the Army, letting a colonel, for example.

INTERVIEWER: Was he on the General Staff?

SMA COPELAND: He was on the General Staff.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember his name?

SMA COPELAND: This was early on and there were so many colonels in that "E" Ring until I do not remember. Now bear in mind, Butch, that I had no qualms with that. As a matter of fact I think I made the remark to the officer, "Gee, you know as far as this soldier is concerned, I don't care. Officer can rate me. I'm not looking at ratings, because I'm Number One here and I'm not working to obtain a rating. I feel the chief of staff, if the time comes that I'm not performing to his satisfaction, I go. So sir, it doesn't matter who rates me." I said, "However, based on why the rating system came into being and why we changed the regulation to have the general officers rate their sergeants major." I said, "Now just look at it from the standpoint of the sergeants major out in the field. Division, corps, Continental Army, armies, etc. When the word gets around that the Sergeant Major of the Army is being rated by a colonel, if that's what you're talking about," I said, "this is going to be demoralizing. They're going to wonder, gee, why is Copeland... Why do we have a Sergeant Major of the Army in the first place when he has already been relegated, or degenerated, to being rated by an officer less than a general officer?" Well, he thought about that and he departed. When he departed I sat down and I began to ponder this over in my own mind, and personally, I was thinking, "If they want to persist in doing that, then I will have no alternative except to go to the chief of staff and inform him that this old sergeant feels that this is not right, and if that be the case, I would just as soon move on." Now this was my thinking; I didn't say this openly to anyone. Apparently there are others, the officers, were thinking as to how they should approach this thing. Well, sometime during

the day the officer came back and he said, "Well, you're not going to be rated. It's been decided..." I think they went to the vice chief of staff. I'm pretty sure they did, and talked about this situation. They sensed it was frustrating to me to even discuss being rated by someone other than General Westmoreland, if I had to be rated at all. You know at that time, when you became a general officer, there's no more rating. Full colonels at that time continued to be rated. When you made that brigadier general list, the rationale was that, okay if you're a general officer, the rating stops there. Of course they're evaluated and so on and so forth, but the system changed. I'm looking at it from that. Okay, if you're Sergeant Major of the Army, why should you be rated? And if so, by whom? If you're going to be rated, it should be your boss. Because the General Order so states that the Sergeant Major of the Army, when that office was created, he works for the Chief of Staff of the Army, and that regulation hasn't changed. If I were to be rated, I want to be rated by the Chief of Staff of the Army, and that's the way I was going to handle it if we were going to continue to enhance the prestige of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps. Goodness knows, at that point in time we needed it. So we got over that hurdle. The decision was made that, okay, when this noncommissioned officer is selected to be the Sergeant Major of the Army, that where his rating, his formal written rating stops.

INTERVIEWER: Because the rating, evaluation is no more than a management tool for promotion. Where else do you go, you can't go up. You can't go any higher.

SMA COPELAND: Where do you go? Where do you go? From there, the regulation says, "Serve at the pleasure of the Chief of Staff of the Army." If the chief of staff becomes displeased, you go. Which has never happened.

INTERVIEWER: Did they ever try to reinstate the rating, down the line? Do you know if anybody later on... You know how things change so often. Did they say, "Well,

maybe we ought to rate the Sergeant Major of the Army." Or did they, from your time, forward, they just said, "Hey, we don't need it?"

SMA COPELAND: I think from that time, forward, based on the episode or that decision that day, that the Sergeant Major of the Army should not be rated in a written form. I think that carried over from that day forward.

INTERVIEWER: How many staff members did you have?

SMA COPELAND: I had one civilian and two noncommissioned officers.

INTERVIEWER: I think a little earlier you said the noncommissioned officer you had... What was his name? Sullivan? The one you kept on that Sergeant Major Dunaway had brought on board?

SMA COPELAND: One was named, Alexander.

INTERVIEWER: Alexander. Okay.

SMA COPELAND: Master Sergeant Bobby Alexander, and another one, a Sergeant First Class, who was named, Gluff. Sergeant First Class Gluff.

INTERVIEWER: What occupied most of their time?

SMA COPELAND: Well, telephoning, field trips, writing reports, after action reports, trip reports, correspondence for the Sergeant Major of the Army. As you can imagine, the Sergeant Major of the Army received, from the field, within the Army, and without. You respond to each and every piece of correspondence. They were involved, quite frequently, with doing administration, correspondence, typing field reports, editing, answering telephone calls, accompanying the Sergeant Major of the Army on his field trips.

INTERVIEWER: Did you always have someone in the office, military wise?

SMA COPELAND: Always. I had the civilian secretary, Miss. Scott, Raylene Scott, who was an outstanding secretary. She was very efficient. She could take shorthand. She

could take shorthand and type it at the same time just about as fast as you could talk. But she was very efficient because she had been there quite a number of years working in the Pentagon, and she knew the Army quite well. She was able to handle the calls that came in to the office with no problem at all. When the sergeant major and one of his enlisted assistants moved to the field, the secretary always remained behind and she was able to handle the office quite well. Usually one of the sergeants would remain back in the office.

INTERVIEWER: When you were returning from a trip, when you came back from a trip, did the person who remained behind have a sit-down with you and give you a briefing on everything that transpired while you were gone?

SMA COPELAND: We sat down and we talked about what had happened, in so far as he or she thought I should be informed on. Not everything, but if it was something they thought at that time that I should know about, then they briefed me on it. Usually, when I was in the office, we would have a daily, or maybe every two or three day, rap session. Just to hash over and see what was going on and what we did about it. Now my office staff, as I'm sure it is today, based on my communication today with that office, I would have to say the Sergeant Major of the Army is not informed about every telephone call that comes in. Your staff is qualified to the extent that they can usually satisfy the customer, shall we say. So it was very seldom that my staff had to come in to me and get a decision on something.

INTERVIEWER: When you were out on the road, how often did you contact your office?

SMA COPELAND: Daily.

INTERVIEWER: What was the normal means of communication? Telephone or...

SMA COPELAND: Telephone. The normal means was the telephone. At the close of business, or some time during the day, I could see my administrative assistant ease off to

one side, or maybe he'd be out of my sight for a few minutes. Now I knew what was happening. He was either going to the latrine or he was going to a telephone to go back and make contact with the office, just to keep in touch.

INTERVIEWER: What about the briefing that you received? Did you ever receive any Department of Defense type briefings as to what was going on, etc.?

SMA COPELAND: Yes. Yes. The chief of staff would receive briefings. Now when that happened, they always gave me a schedule--that I kept sitting on top of my desk--as to what the chief of staff was doing that day and many a time when the chief was receiving briefings from DOD personnel, or personnel like the CONARC commander, for example--Continental Army Command--and all the modern volunteer army on goings, etc., that was annotated on his schedule that sat on top of my desk. Usually, the secretary of the General Staff would say, "Sergeant Major, I think you should sit in on this briefing." And/or the vice chief of staff would send word over by his XO (executive officer), and say, "This is coming up and the vice thinks the Sergeant Major of the Army should get in on this. Well, that's the way I got involved on attending briefings from DOD (Department of Defense) and other entities.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever receive special briefing for--right now we call it MILPERCEN (Military Personnel Center)?--where they have problems going on or where they said, "This is what we're going to do."

SMA COPELAND: Yes. Usually by the sergeant major of that area, of that detachment, he would come up frequently. "Here's what we have going in promotions. Here's the way recruiting is going. Here's the way the RIF is going. Here's some problems we're having." You see, he's the personnel sergeant major and that was before they established the MILPERCEN, per se. He was coming out of DCSPER; deputy chief of staff

for personnel. This sergeant major was in my office quite frequently, as was the sergeant major that was handling the command sergeants major assignments. He would come to my office. I would get up and go to his office, usually I would do this frequently. He would brief me and he had a warrant officer in that department and also had a colonel--a lieutenant colonel--in that department. We would sit down and just have a rap session about what's going on in the sergeant major field.

INTERVIEWER: I guess the DCSPER was the one that really had the job, whenever they came up with the all-volunteer army; to start working up the program.

SMA COPELAND: They had the job. They had the burden of proof. They certainly did. And they did, I think, a magnificent job. Now let's back up to the day I was sworn-in as Sergeant Major of the Army. Since we're talking about personnel and assignments, transferring, etc., one bit of guidance that the chief of staff gave to me on that day was, and I think it went something like this: He said,--he was talking about in my rounds visiting with soldiers in other places, etc., and this was about accepting gifts--he didn't elaborate, but he said, "Be careful on your acceptance of gifts." The general went on to elude to the assignment of personnel, he said, "Oh, by the way, I have a three-star general. His name is Lieutenant General Dutch Kerwin. He's my deputy chief of staff for personnel." He says, "That is the department that handles assignments, transfers, clubs, messes, you name it, for the Army." He said, "I prefer that you not get involved in that sort of thing." I said, "Yes sir." Now after that, many a time, sergeants major in the field would call me. "Hey Sergeant Major, I know so-and-so and so-and-so, he's getting ready to rotate from Vietnam. I'd like to have him assigned to my outfit." "Fine. Good. I'll tell you what I'll do. You send me a piece of paper and when that paper hits my office, I'm going to endorse it and I'm going to send it to that DCSPER sergeant major. He and his three-star general, they'll

take care of that for you. They'll do it." I've had general officers out in the field, division commanders for example, call me at home in the evening. "Sergeant Major, my sergeant major is leaving and I'm looking for an outstanding sergeant major. I know you know a lot of them." "Yes sir, I do sir." "Name a few of them." "Well, we've got Sergeant Major This, we have Sergeant Major Here, and Sergeant Major That. I don't know where they're located now." "Well you just give me the names. Can you help me." "Yes sir. I can help you. I'll go to General Kerwin and say "Sir, blah, blah, blah" and let General Kerwin handle it." So that's the way I got involved. It would have been an inefficient way to handle personnel assignments, because the Sergeant Major of the Army, my way of looking at it, doesn't have any business, because you can upset... It is of such magnitude, the personnel management and assignment. You just throw all kinds of monkey wrenches into it, because, first of all, you're not qualified in personnel management and assignments.

INTERVIEWER: That's not your job.

SMA COPELAND: That's not your job. You have been so informed by the Chief of Staff of the Army. He said, "That's what I pay that three-star general to do." He said, "You could very well upset the situation. Now you can assist by keeping them informed." That's what I did. That's what I tried to do. Now when I came back from a field trip, and we had some frustration in the field, reference: personnel assignment, qualification, schooling, etc. I'd bring that back and in my trip report it was so indicated, because that trip report would go to DCSPER. Not by me, but these trip reports would go, first of all, to a colonel and then from the colonel it would go to the secretary of the General Staff. From the secretary of the General Staff, usually the vice chief got a look at it. From there it went to the Chief of Staff of the Army. The Chief of Staff of the Army read all my trip reports. He so informed me, personally. Because many a time he would say, "Oh, I was looking at

your report. The results of your visit to Fort Polk." He said, "You know, it's quite interesting." Or your Fort Bragg report. Or your trip report to Europe. Or Fort Hood, etc. But it was through that means that I was able to, what I would say, better inform the chief of staff as to what was going on from the Sergeant Major of the Army's standpoint, because, you know, you don't go knocking on the Chief of Staff of the Army's door every time. "Hey, I'd better run in there right quick," like you did when you were a first sergeant and you wanted to inform your company commander. If you were a battalion sergeant major you would just go knock on the door of your battalion commander and say, "Sir here's an item." Well, it's works a little different at the Department of the Army level. You can well imagine, the Chief of Staff of the Army is a busy person. It's not always that you would be able to get on his schedule. And too, I preferred to do it that way; so did the Chief of Staff of the Army. Now that's the way we operated. Now if he and I were together in the field, and he's going his direction and I'm with enlisted personnel--usually noncommissioned officers and their men--and he's with the officers and doing their thing. But we come back together. When we get on that plane and we head for home, he would usually summon the Sergeant Major of the Army back to his desk on the plane. We would sit down and he would say, "Tell me what you saw. What did you hear? How are they doing out there?" And I'm filling him in on my observations, on what the noncommissioned officers are saying, what the enlisted men are saying, some of their frustrations. "What are their frustrations? What are they asking for? What do they want?" "Well sir, they want black-eyed peas, corn bread, ham hocks, and butter milk." "Like that?" "Yes sir." For example, when I visited Fort Hood one time, one frustration out in the field among the younger soldiers. "Well Sergeant major... The mess hall for example: We're working in the motor pool and we don't leave the motor pool until four thirty and then we go in and we

wash up and we clean up and then we go to the mess hall. By that time all the people--I think they referred to them as "strap hangers"--all the headquarters workers have already gone through the mess line and when we get there there's no ham hocks left, there's no black-eyed peas, there's no corn bread, and there's no butter milk." "Okay, I'll go on through with you tonight. I'm going with you to your mess." Sure enough, we arrived in the dining hall... Now I like that kind of food occasionally; that's soul food. I know from where they're coming. So I lined up with them and went through. We got to the mess line and picked up our tray and went through. No more ham hocks. No black-eyed peas. Very few pieces of corn bread. All the good cold butter milk was gone. "See, what did I tell you, sergeant major." "Yeah, you're right." Now the sergeant major of that battalion and some of the first sergeants were with us in line, and I'm looking at these senior noncommissioned officers, you see. We know they mean business. They were earnestly and sincerely telling me that this was frustrating to them. "Can we do something about it?" So we said, "Yes." And they did. I think what they did, they probably increased the menu. Now what some soldiers were doing, they were going across the street and not even going in the mess hall, or they refer to it today as... Because they wanted a hamburger, they wanted french fries, they wanted a cold Coca-Cola. The steaks and the pork chops and the delicious baked biscuits were going in the garbage can. Now this is going in my field trip report and when I get back that's going to DCSLOG (Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics) at Department of the Army level, and its under his auspices that all these Army menu come into being.

(The interview was temporarily interrupted.)

SMA COPELAND: Well, you know, Butch, we were discussing the Army menu and visitation to the troopers' dining facilities. But it was during that period when we were endeavoring to recruit an all-volunteer force. We discovered, right up front, that in order to

do, that we were going to have to cater to some of these newer personnel that we were endeavoring to bring into the Army. In order to do that, we sort of changed our method, our approach to the young soldier. We asked him, "What do you want? What do you prefer? We see by the looks of the food in that garbage can or that disposal pail that you're not eating your steak; you're not eating your pork chops; you're not eating much of the food. You're telling us that you..." "Yes, we don't care for that sort of food." "What do you care for?" He points to the snack bar, to the Burger King, to McDonalds across the street. We like hamburgers, cheeseburgers, french fries. We like cold drinks; Coca-Cola. We like Dr. Pepper, Pepsi, this sort of thing. Now you can't force... Now you can order, but you can't force a guy to sit down and eat that meal, like my first Christmas dinner that day. But I was already a disciplined person. I sat down and I ate all that meal; that good turkey dressing and that cold milk and ate cranberry sauce, etc. But we're talking about the modern day; the modern Army. The young soldier wanted a different menu, and we gave it to them. We put hamburgers in the dining facilities; we put the french fries; we put the Coca-Cola; we put the soft drinks; we even put the beer in the dining facility. This was all on a trial basis. But what the soldier was telling me is that they wanted a different menu, and I'm putting that in my written field report that I submit to the Chief of Staff of the Army. After the completion of my field trip, it's going to DCSLOG, so far as those menus are concerned, and the food. He's sitting down and he reading, and then all kind of personnel from DCSLOG. Of course they're already working on these menus; it's not just the Sergeant Major of the Army. But we're talking about what was Silas Copeland doing? How did you function, and in what manner? Now DCSLOG was doing the same thing. Most likely they had preceded Silas Copeland. But I wanted to make sure that, well, just in case they didn't bring this up. Now if a general officer or a full bull colonel shows up on

the scene, they're not going to talk to him. They're not going to tell him the same thing that they're telling the Sergeant Major of the Army. They're not even going to rap with him. It will be, "Yes sir. No sir. Yes sir," and this sort of thing. But you see, they sit down and they shoot straight with their sergeant.

INTERVIEWER: I guess you had the same situation when you were in the field; they talked to you. And I'm sure that if something didn't go right they would send a letter off to your office or they'd call. What were the majority of the complains about, and do you think some of them could have been solved at the post but they just weren't?

SMA COPELAND: Could have been. Many of them could have been solved at the post. Many of them could not have been solved at the post. But when I would get a letter from a young trooper and he had some aggravation or dissatisfaction, I would call back; I would call the sergeant major. If he were down in a battalion, he's got to have a division sergeant major; call that division sergeant major. Say, "Look, I have a letter here from so-and-so. Now don't you discipline him. Don't go a punish this soldier because he has a problem. It may not seem like a problem to you and I, but as far as that young soldier is concerned--he and his family--he has a problem. You recall I visited there about three weeks ago and I assured them that if they ever had something, you know, write me, or go to your sergeant major or to your first sergeant. Now they've already been informed to use the chain of command. We know that, and we all encourage it. Please use the chain of command. If you do that, usually you can get your problem solved more quickly and just as efficiently." But you see, here are the young soldiers of the all-volunteer modern Army. They came in under the auspices, "The Army wants to join you." One big mistake! But that's what we were telling the young soldiers. That was our philosophy in those days. Early on in 1970, '71. Pretty soon it changed and it worked. It worked well. But in those

days, I was telling those guys, as was the Army hierarchy, that "The Army wants to join you." Now you tell me what you want. Consequently you would get letters from young soldiers; from young wives; from parents.

INTERVIEWER: About how many would you say in a normal week's time?

SMA COPELAND: Oh, I would only have to speculate at this time, Butch. Eight or ten or twelve, perhaps. Another thing, if I was not in the office and I was in the field, and was going to be gone for two weeks or so, and a letter came in, the administrative staff and secretary that remained behind to handle these sort of things. They would put an endorsement on that letter and send it right to DCSPER. Because you see, you're dealing with a personnel problem, and you're not going to become overly involved, shall we say, with that sort of thing. If it pertained to a transfer or it pertained to something within his family, DCSPER is going to have to get involved in it anyway. So they would endorse that, if I'm out in the field for some time, and send that, with an info copy in my basket, so that when I returned I'd pick that up, look at it, and read it. Now DCSPER would come back... When they took action on those sort of things, they would come back with an info copy to my office, as to action taken. As a matter of fact, with a copy of the letter that they responded to this individual. Yeah, I got complaints from the field and we handled them. We handled them by going back to that sergeant major and/or by going... If it was something they couldn't possible handle because it would take something higher than their headquarters to look into, we send it to DCSPER.

INTERVIEWER: I guess also with your experience as a division command sergeant major of four divisions, you pretty well learned how to sort out the wheat from the chaff.

SMA COPELAND: I sorted it out. Knew it. Thought I knew it. And apparently I did. But you see, Butch, back in those divisions I gained a world of knowledge. I was

really militarily educated, because I have served at every level of these divisions for a good many years and I knew the division in and out; I had the experience. I had the infantry divisions. I had the armored divisions. Then within those divisions, any other type unit that you want to deal with. We're talking about: signal, aviation, the artillery. I got to know a lot of it. We knew how to deal with it.

INTERVIEWER: When you moved into the position as Sergeant Major of the Army, what was the major problem facing the Army at that time?

SMA COPELAND: The big major problem facing the Army, early on in 1970, '71, was the draw down and phase out from Vietnam. Releasing all the conscriptees from the Army, endeavoring to retain those whom you thought were better qualified, and then as you release soldiers and as you rifted soldiers: conscript; begin to recruit; train; and retain personnel; to makeup an all-volunteer force. Now as you did that, you had to have changes in regulations. You had to have changes in the promotion system. You had to revise your training. You had to revise and take a re-look at your way of thinking and of doing things: the leadership approach; the planning approach; the retention approach. Now getting back to that philosophy that "The Army Wants to Join You." We had to make a one hundred and eighty degree turn as we moved out in our endeavor to obtain an all-volunteer Army. The chief of staff, General Westmoreland, said many a time--whether he was addressing Congress on the Hill or whether he was addressing the troops in the field--he was saying, "We will leave no stone unturned in our endeavor to recruit, retain, and train an all-voluntary army." Now we haven't even talked about quality of the Army. Maybe we will a little later on. But it was our mission, first of all you get them in the ranks.

INTERVIEWER: I think the other day, when we were standing out there watching the rain fall, during one of our breaks, I think you said one of the major initiatives that you

were involved with was, of course, changing to an all-volunteer army and you were also the point man to go out there and to tell these people "This is what we're trying to do and all you're heard now, this is," I guess you said "from the horse's mouth." Right?

SMA COPELAND: All from the horse's mouth, and we had many horses out there. Horses do have mouths and they do bray. They pitch and they run and they raise old billy. Now this soldier, when he would go to the field, took a lot of beatings, if you will, with reference this "The Army wants to Join You" business. To "join you" that means that: we've got to be more lenient on the style of the haircut; we've got to be more lenient on their dress; we have to be more lenient on--I hate to say this--discipline. We have to relent on a lot of things in that philosophy "We want to join you." When this hit the field it was like a ton of bricks, as you can well imagine. Now the Chief of Staff of the Army--a Regular Army officer who had been in a long time--he grew up under the old school system. His sergeant major, Silas Copeland, came aboard recruited from the country. They found me around Huntsville, way out in the woods on a farm, and I grew up in the old system. You see, we believed in it because it always worked for us through three wars: World War II, Korea, Vietnam. Now, suddenly, the President of the United States, President Nixon, has said, "Look, armed forces, the draft is going to be no more. When you lose personnel you're not going to be able to turn around and conscript more people. You're going to have to recruit, retain, and maintain, voluntarily." Okay, the mission, just a blanket mission, a few words from the President of the United States. The Chief of Staff of the Army is telling his Army personnel, "By 33 June 1973--That's the target date--We are to have an all-volunteer army. Field commanders, General Staff, get with it."

INTERVIEWER: Do you think a lot of the resistance was... Did that slogan "The Army Wants to Join You" come out of DCSPER, Madison Avenue, or where?

SMA COPELAND: Well, I'm not quite sure from where it came, at this time. However, I will say this. The Chief of Staff of the Army formed a task force within the General Staff at the Pentagon. It was headed by a three-star general--Lieutenant General Foresthye--and he had select personnel. He had sergeants major that he had called--going through DCSPER--from the field who were highly articulate: who could write; who could speak; who could articulate the Army. And understand, they were old timers. They had grown up, been to the school, and knew the Army. and he selected his officers; colonels brigadier generals, major generals. Under the auspices of General Foresthye, this modern volunteer army and the method in which we were to approach it, began to emerge. Now where the philosophy "The Army Wants to Join You," whether it came out of General Foresthye's office, whether it came out of Dutch Kerwin's office--Lieutenant General Dutch Kerwin in DCSPER--or whether it came from one of the sergeants major in somebody office who was working on a project. It could have emanated from one of the younger soldiers--who was a draftee--that we had brought to the Pentagon. He could have said, "Hey, why don't we say "The Army Wants to Join You?" It could have been from a corporal.

INTERVIEWER: Something like that probably would have fired up some of those old timers.

SMA COPELAND: Would have fired them up. Like the slogan later on that came from a very outstanding general officer, "Be All You Can Be." See, we went from the slogan "The Army Wants to Join You" to the slogan "Be All You Can Be."

INTERVIEWER: Also, at the same time, what was your relationship with the Armed Services Committees. Did you have very many appearances before them and...

(End of Tape OH 93.1-7, Side 1)

(Begin Tape OH 93.1-7, Side 2)

INTERVIEWER: Sergeant Major, when the last tape ran out I had just asked you about your relationship with the armed Services Committees and if you made any appearances before them.

SMA COPELAND: I made no personal appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee. I was scheduled to go "On the Hill," so to speak, one day and testify before the Senate Armed Services Committee. However, a message came in later that my appearance on the Hill had been canceled. So I never did physically appear. However, occasionally my office would receive telephone calls inquiring into the status of enlisted personnel, reference the modern volunteer army. "How is recruiting coming along?" "What do you see in the field?" "What do you think some of the frustrations are?" "Are you going to be able to obtain an all-volunteer force?"

INTERVIEWER: What about your communication between your office and the members of Congress? Did members of Congress or Congressional Committees ask you for your input on, say, planned legislation or anything like that?

SMA COPELAND: They did not ask for it. They did not receive it, as a matter of fact. Because I'm not sure I was in any position, as an active duty person, to go and submit those recommendations to Congress. Now with that in mind, I was called upon several times to appear before DOD or Department of the Army committee personnel and sat down and rapped, if you will, or discussed what was going on in the ranks. "How's the recruiting coming along?" Now you see, that comes under DCSPER, really; Lieutenant General Kerwin, in my case. So I'm sure, I know they had been in touch. But they wanted to hear it "from the horse's mouth." We were talking about horses early on. They wanted to hear it from the horse, the workhorse of the Army who spends a great deal of time out in the

trenches with troops. "Once we get the troops in, how's the quality?" "How's the training?" "Are they comprehending?" "Can they comprehend this all technical volunteer Army?"

INTERVIEWER: What was your interaction with the senior enlisted personnel of the other Branches of the Service?

SMA COPELAND: We met, occasionally. Socially. Usually socially. I don't ever having recall having met, shall we say, legally or professionally and sat down and really talked about what's going on the Navy or the Air Force or the Marine Corps, etc. Now I did visit with them in their office, most of them located there in the Pentagon, and I also visited with their bosses; their chiefs. The Commandant of the Marine Corps, for example, invited the sergeants major of all the services--the Senior Enlisted Men of all the Services--to his private dining facility one day. We sat down and he wanted to hear us talk about what was going on in our Army, in our Air Force, he knew the Navy--of course--and the Marine Corps. So I thought that was real fine of the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Now the Chief of Staff of the Air Force had us in one day and we just sat and we rapped, informally. "What's happening out in your AO, area of operation?" Then the Secretary of Defense, Secretary Laird, had all of the senior noncommissioned officers of the various services in, and we sat down. I have a letter here that I received from him later, that I would like to interject into our discussion. We sat with the Secretary, we drank coffee, we reminisced. In sort of a round-robin, "Well sergeant major, how is the Army doing?" We filled him in until he had talked, individually, then as a group. Then he had the photographer come in and take a picture of us. Later on he sent each of us; I'm sure the other senior noncommissioned officers receive the same type letter that Silas Copeland received. I'd like for you to have a copy of this letter from Secretary Laird. Back to the

Secretary of Defense. I was able to brief him from the standpoint of a senior noncommissioned officer as to what was going on out in Army. How are we coming along? What type personnel are we able to attract into the Army?

INTERVIEWER: Did the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of Defense, although they were civilians, did they really welcome your input and encourage you to meet with them and let them know what was going on?

SMA COPELAND: Yes they did. Yes they did. Several times the Secretary of the Army would just walk into my office. Now he wasn't depending on Silas Copeland to tell him, really, because it's that General Westmoreland, Chief of Staff of the Army, and/or the other deputies and vice chief are going to keep the Secretary of the Army informed, officially. "But let's just drop in unexpectedly on the Sergeant Major of the Army, pull up a chair and have a cup of coffee and sit and rap with him." The Secretary of the Army did that, especially, Froellke. Now Secretary Reasor, a different personality altogether. And who was Secretary of the Army for a good many years?

INTERVIEWER: Cyrus Vance.

SMA COPELAND: Cyrus Vance had departed, as Secretary of the Army, before I arrived; I later met him and talked with him. Froellke would usually show up in my office. Now when I had the annual Major Command Sergeants Major meeting, we would always invite the Secretary of the Army, and he was quite enthused--he was elated--to come and address the senior noncommissioned officers of the Army. He would stand and talk, even though we had him scheduled for a hour, sometimes he would talk for an hour and a half or as long as he wanted, just reminiscing. The major command sergeants major thought, "Well this is fine." I'm sure Dunaway, my predecessor, probably did the same thing; I don't know because I didn't have a chance to rap with Dunaway prior to my being sworn-in. We would

invite the chief of staff, as the current incumbent would do, to address the sergeants major.

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever a guest speaker at conventions and meetings of veterans organizations or civic organizations? If so, what type organizations and how did they react to your...

SMA COPELAND: I was invited both while in the Army and out of the Army, to go and address groups of personnel. I recall one day that the secretary of the General Staff, General Bennett, came in and he said, "Well, you know we are on this modern volunteer army, etc., and we're doing a lot of things. We think the Association of the United States Army can assist us tremendously, especially for being a spokesman before Congress and different civilian groups, etc. Sergeant Major, you may want to include in your schedule, in your speaking schedule, you may want to keep in mind that you will be invited to address groups of personnel who are members of the Association of the United States Army." So I did. I recall several times by local chapters, chapters out in the countryside, in other states, all over the United States, to come and address the chapters. So I did that, and usually the president of the local chapter, that would be a civilian, and civilians usually operate with assistance of the active forces. The chief of staff would get feedback. He would get letters and he would so inform me. "By the way, I received a letter from Mr. So-and-So and So-in-So and he thought your address and the information you put out was quite informative." Other times you would go and just address, what I would call, a town meeting. I recall one time, right in the dead winter--it must have been late January or early February--a group of personnel from Twin Cities, Minnesota--Minneapolis, Minnesota--called my office and wanted to know if the Sergeant Major of the Army could come and address them. I looked at the schedule. "When?" And I said, "Sure I will." I would go anywhere, anytime, to address a group of civilians and/or our soldiers. This

happened many times. I don't mean to sound redundant, but usually the Chief of Staff of the Army would receive a thank you letter--that's what it was--for permitting the Sergeant Major of the Army to come and address them. Now he thought that was good. But what I was trying to do, what I would endeavor to do, was to create a favorable impression-- and we're talking about the relationship, corporate relation--and I was able to do that to my satisfaction. When the Reserves would do their active duty training--Tennessee, Texas, Louisiana, New Mexico--I would head for their training area. I'd call their sergeant major--state sergeant major--who had a two-star general who was usually a lawyer someplace; an attorney most likely. I'm trying to get with these personnel and I'm talking to the sergeant major in the Pentagon; well, the sergeant major there also. "Hey, look, division so-and-so, they're out training and I'd like to got visit with them." So I would go and visit with this civilian army. I would stay two days, three days, or four days; until I thought I had worn-out my welcome. Usually the division sergeant major or the division commanding general would get me in their office; usually it was a nice house somewhere in the countryside near their maneuver.

INTERVIEWER: So you make quite a few visits to the Reserve Component units.

SMA COPELAND: That is correct. Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Then, evidently, you had a good relationship with National Guard Bureau and OCAR (Office of the Chief of Army Reserve)?

SMA COPELAND: Yes. Yes I did. Trying to cover as much ground as I could. This goes back to the guidance from General Westmoreland, and I have a couple of letters here that I like to throw in, Butch, from General Westmoreland. Let me just say that these are letters 13 and 14. (Exhibit Numbers 13 and 14)

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

SMA COPELAND: I'll let you look at those and if you see fit... General Westmoreland had told me, early on, he said, "Now our army is quite large, and Sergeant Major, you can not imagine the number of military installations that we have, worldwide." The general went on to say, "Now don't think that you are obligated to visit all these installations and visit with all our soldiers, because it would be my estimation that you would never be able to do that during your tenure." After that I said to myself, "Well I'm going to try. I'm going to endeavor to go to every place." But you know, Butch, I couldn't do it. I didn't do it. It was impossible. The general went on to say--General Westmoreland--"Oh yes," he said, "Don't forget the National Guard and the Reserve." Well you see, I had never had any dealings with the National Guard and Reserve. I went back to my office and I pondered on that and I said, "Oh, yeah. They usually train on weekends and during summers; summer training and whatnot. So that's when I'm visiting with the civilian Army. On weekends, and during summers, and holidays, etc."

INTERVIEWER: I guess that also gave you an appreciation for really the big role the Reserve Components have in...

SMA COPELAND: That it did. It certainly did. A big, big role; the U.S. Army and National Guard. I become to appreciate them more as I visited with them and established that rapport, and listened to them talk, and watched them train and knowing full well that, we--in the regular active Army--probably view them as being immediately combat ready; to move up on the firing line and begin shooting. But the more I visited with them, and the more I looked, and the more I listened, I come to know that that's not the case. Later on that was proven, during Desert Storm as a matter of fact. Even though the Army Reserve and National Guard did an outstanding job, there were some units who were not able to get up off their hunkers and move forward. Now we all know the reason behind this, we won't

go into details here. But my point here is; I come to appreciate their status in the Armed Forces and I better understood the why fors.

INTERVIEWER: What percentage of the time did you spend out of your office, on the road?

SMA COPELAND: I would have to start by saying fifty percent. A good fifty percent of the time, knowing that our Army is not located at the Pentagon. It's located, as I would refer to it as "being in the field." Consequently, to get at the noncommissioned officers, to get at the soldiers, be among them, and listen to them, and talk to them, you had to be out of your office. So I would say it was fifty percent of the time. Also, you needed to be IN your office occasionally, because there are certain things that you need to take care of, to listen to, and look at. You can't do that in the field many times; you need to be in your office. I needed to, especially during that time, I needed to attend a lot of briefings that were taking place in the Pentagon, reference: the all-volunteer army. That was our mission; sole mission. The war is over; we're drawing the troops down; we've brought them home from Vietnam; we're reducing the forces; now we're focusing primarily on recruiting an all-volunteer army. So it behooved this Sergeant Major of the Army to attend as many briefings as possible, and they were numerous; they were many. I would attend at DCSPER. I would attend at DCSLOG. I would attend the chief of staff's briefing, when they were briefing the chief of staff. "We've got to get the chief's okay." "We've to see him on this, that, that." "He needs to sign-off on it." "We're at a dead end." "Is he going to sign it, or isn't he?" "The Sergeant Major should be there." Many times... We've all heard of Pete Dawkins, okay. Pete Dawkins was a young officer; he still had blood on his uniform out of Vietnam. General Foresthye said, "Ah, you're going to work for me, Pete." "Yes sir." He was a good looking Major; a good looking officer--Pete Dawkins. I was

proud to meet this outstanding soldier, as was all our soldiers. But, Pete was on his committee for the all-volunteer army. One day they were briefing the chief of staff in the chief's conference room. The Sergeant Major of the Army has got to be there; I want to be there. So Pete was on this haircut business; he had a half a dozen styles of haircuts. Now I think what Pete should done when he found out that the Sergeant Major of the Army was going to attend the briefing, was come to my office, or at least call me and say, "Hey Sergeant Major, I have all these seven or eight different haircut designs. Can you come look at them or can I come and show them to you?" But he didn't do that and we didn't sit and talk about it. When we got in the chief of staff's conference room and they had briefed the chief and displayed the pictures--and the one they were favoring the most--the chief turned to his Sergeant Major of the Army. He said, "Sergeant Major, comment." Pete Dawkins looked at me and he realized right then, "My God. I didn't do all my homework. I didn't go to the Sergeant Major of the Army." He should have realized we're talking about enlisted personnel out in the ranks and that's the Sergeant Major of the Army's business. "I didn't go to the Sergeant Major." Well, Pete didn't get his way because I didn't agree with Pete on that haircut. Pete wanted it longer; down to here (Interviewee pointed to the back of his neck to a position just above the collar); let them sideburns come to here (Interviewee pointed to a spot on his cheek even with the ear lobe); if they wanted to they could have a little dark mustache. They had seven different displays, I believe it was. Well, had Pete and I coordinated, it may have been that we could have come to a determination before we went to brief the chief. But yes, I attended many, many meetings; I wanted to attend as many as I could. Consequently, I needed to be in the Pentagon to attend these meetings, and then about fifty percent of my time was in the field; on the road.

INTERVIEWER: Talking about "on the road." General Abrams was the one who

authorized the travel of the Sergeant Major of the Army's spouse. Is that correct?

SMA COPELAND: That is correct.

INTERVIEWER: Comment on the importance of that decision.

SMA COPELAND: Well the importance. It's very much important that the spouse accompany the Sergeant Major of the Army. Not long after General Abrams was sworn-in, he summoned me to his office; this was after he had the Sergeant Major of the Army come in and sit down and "just tell me about our Army." I think we talked about that the other day. But this particular time he summoned me to his office and said, "Sergeant Major, I'm getting ready to go to Europe." Well I knew that, you know; through sort of a back channel. They keep you informed of what the chief's schedule is going to be two, three, four weeks in advance. But I knew the chief was getting ready to go to Europe. He said, "Do you think Mrs. Copeland would like to go with us? He said, "Now Mrs. Abrams is going." I said, "Sir, I can give you that answer right now." General Abrams said, "No you can't. I asked you, sergeant major, do you think Mrs. Copeland would want to go." I thought a little bit and I thought "Oh, Oh. I've made that decision for her." He wanted Ann's decision. He said, "No, you get back with me later." "That was very good sir." Get back with the general. So he reminisced with me a little bit and then excused me. I guess it was the next day, after I had talked with Ann. Ann wanted to go back to Europe anyway, because she hadn't been back there in a few years; since we left the 4th Armored Division, at Goppengin. I came back the next day with an answer. I said, "Sir, I talked to Mrs. Copeland and discussed it with her and she realizes that we'd be gone ten days to two weeks, thereabout." I said, "She would love to go."

INTERVIEWER: What did she do while you were out sloshing around in the mud and looking down...

SMA COPELAND: Well before I answer that question, let me say that Ann did not go to Europe. I'll fill you in on that later. Many times Ann could not go with me because, at that time, we still had our youngest child at home. He had to be looked after. Someone had to stay with him. You had to feed him, send him to school, watch over him, provide for him. Therefore, most of the time, for that reason, Ann had to stick pretty close to Russell until Russell departed his parents, coming to Sam Houston University here in Huntsville, Texas. Then Ann was able to go out more. You're right, it was during General Abrams time that the wives began to go more with their husbands into the field. Now when Ann was able to accompany me, the ladies would take her over. They had a schedule for her. They wanted her in their presence. They took her to the ACS; The Army Community Service. They explained to her what they were doing to assist the wives, to assist the young soldier on that Post. They would take her to the hospital. They would visit patients. They would talk to patients. Then they would just take her on the post and show her the post housing area. If they thought that they had a problem with housing, they would so inform Ann. If they thought they had a problem at the dispensaries or at the hospital, they would so inform Ann. It was from Ann that I was able to learn, firsthand, some of the frustrations that was going on within families of young soldiers. I was able to inform the chief of staff and the Army staff, by way of a formal written trip report submitted upon my return. The preparation and writing of these trip reports begin during the trip. It was usually on the airplane--three, four, five hours en route from the station to the Pentagon--that my senior noncommissioned officer aide and I would sit down and we would go over notes and we would put together, in draft form, that report. Then when we arrived back at the Pentagon, that senior noncommissioned officer aide--or assistant--would begin working right away on finalizing that report. They would lay it on my desk, I would read it, look it over, and

usually not make any changes, but wherever necessary. Then we would send it out. Send it to the full colonel, who was our immediate assistant. I believe, in that case early on, it was Colonel Long; later General Long, Major General Long. I believe Lieutenant General Long. But he said, "Sergeant Major, whatever you need to assist you in running your office, ask." He and I talked the same language because we grew-up in the armor and the infantry. He knew and I knew.

INTERVIEWER: So actually, Ann was really an extension of your...

SMA COPELAND: Of my office. Ann was an extension. More so than she realized. More so. I think probably Ann realized, "I'll go out here with Silas and we'll visit some wives, and we'll have coffee with them, and we'll have cake with them, and we'll meet with them. Then they're going to take me to the ACS. They're going to take me to the hospital. They're going to take me to the club. But you see, what Ann didn't realize, that she's creating a great deal of input in helping to evaluate "The Army Wants to Join You" philosophy. You see, Ann wasn't even thinking in those terms. But Ann was being used as a "filly." Silas was the horse out there; workhorse of the Army. Ann was the filly.

INTERVIEWER: Ann found out that Army wives aren't bashful.

SMA COPELAND: Yes. Army wives would come forth and they would shoot straight with Ann; yes they would. Even though Ann didn't know it, when I'm listening to her put forth... "What did you all talk about, dear?" "What do they talk about?" "What's their frustrations?" "What are they saying?" "How do they view this?" Ann didn't know it, but it was going in a field report, an official field report going to the General Staff of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army, and then maybe something that somebody already pickup on. Yes, Ann was an extension to that Office. But not as much as what she would liked to have been, because, as you recall back in those days--the early '70s--I call him

"General Proxmire..." I think even today he still awards the "Rusty Spur," or something like that, to units and the people he thinks have messed-up, screwed-up royally. He awards it to general officers also. I didn't want to receive that award, really. But none the less, we knew we had to be very careful in the manner in which we used vehicles. In the Pentagon, you know, they have a transportation department there in the Pentagon. We had a very outstanding, highly qualified, sergeant major, enlisted wise, heading up that outfit. I don't recall the name of his commander. But DOD, in general, had to tighten the screws on the use of military vehicles. Now I had no problem if there was an official function that Ann and I were invited to. They dispatched a military sedan.

INTERVIEWER: I think what we ought to do here is to clarify. Down the road somebody might be reading this and say, "Who is General Proxmire." We're referring to Senator Proxmire, who sometime thought he was a general and knew everything, right?

SMA COPELAND: Yes, absolutely.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, continue about the transportation.

SMA COPELAND: But anyway, General, not General Proxmire, but Senator Proxmire, okay. It seemed that suddenly he became interested in the function and operation of the military, and he wanted to make sure we were not abusing the system, so to speak, and we complied with it. We were able to roll with the punches. But none the less be that as it may, we were able to obtain military transportation in both aircraft and wheeled vehicles. If we were going fairly close in--four or five hundred miles--we would call Davison Army Airfield and we'd get a chopper; they'd send a chopper over to pick us up and transport us to Davison Airfield, then from there on the little two-engine aircraft. So we never had any problem. However, we were very cautious that we did not misuse the system. For example: When Ann and I would go to the White House... You know, in that

job your invited to attend many civilian functions, that was your duty to do so. At that time we had the POW/MIA (Prisoner of War/Missing in Action) Action trying to do things to make it a little easier for the dependents--the wives and children--and the parents of the MIA, for example. So annually the Army and/or the Services in general--DOD--would bring in four, five, or six hundred personnel into the D.C. area. They would quarter them. They would feed them. They would set them up. DCSLOG--in so far as the Army--would handle the Army part of it. Ann and I would go and visit, and we'd mingle, and we would talk, and we would socialize with these personnel. I remember one year, Ross Perot... Did you ever hear of Ross Perot?

INTERVIEWER: I think I have. (Laughs)

SMA COPELAND: The first time I met... The first and only time I met Ross Perot was when he came before the MIA/POW families in the Washington, D.C. area. General Palmer--our vice chief of staff--and the Sergeant Major of the Army--Silas Copeland--went and met with them and Ross Perot was our guest speaker. I was introduced to Ross Perot. That was the first time, even though he lives a hundred and eighty-seven miles up north of this location, Huntsville, Texas. I had never known him, personally. But he made a good delivery. A delivery that I thought was fitting for the occasion, because, you know, Ross Perot was an avid supporter. He spent millions and millions of dollars of his money toward the effort of endeavoring to locate, identify, and extract POWs from Vietnam. He was there that evening--in Washington, D.C.-- meeting with the POW/MIA wives and the Army hierarchy to demonstrate to them that he had every intention, and he was doing everything within his capability--money wise, personnel wise, airplane wise--to assist them, the relatives of the

POW/MIAs, in getting their loved ones out of Vietnam. So I met Ross Perot. Then Ann and I, there were times we were invited to the White House. I recall this one time, vividly. We were attending church services in the White House this Sunday. And I decided, "Gee, as Sergeant Major of the Army, you should be in uniform." So I put on my dress white uniform and Ann put on one of her TWO nice dresses. On my white uniform, I had my ten hash marks--thirty years of service--and I had my medals and brass, and all the accouterments. After the church services... This is in the Blue Room. If you watch today where the President has his press conferences, that's where it will be; in that Blue Room. After church services, the President and the First Lady and the pastor went in the hallway leading from the Blue Room to the main dining room, I believe, and formed a reception line.

INTERVIEWER: Which President was this?

SMA COPELAND: President Nixon.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

SMA COPELAND: They formed a reception line. As you know, President Nixon was in World War II. He was in the Navy during World War II, for a while, and he was used to white uniforms in the Navy. So when Silas and Ann stepped up and was introduced to the President of the United States, he shook my hand. He took my hand and he held it. He said, "Now you know, here's a sailor. Here's a sailor," and he began to count the hash marks on my arm. He counted ten hash marks. President Nixon said, "This sailor has been in the Navy forty years." As you know, each hash mark on the enlisted man's sleeve is four years, signifies four years in the Navy. Then he turned my hand loose and he began to look at my medals. He touched the medals and he said, "Further more, he's highly decorated. And there's no telling how much sea time he has." I think Ann was about to crack up, I not

sure, because I'm not looking around; I'm looking right at the President of the United States, and listening. But I often wondered, "Should I have corrected the President or should I let it go?" Then I thought, "For the purpose of my being here, things have gone well thus far, so let it go. Let it be." I always look back on that sort of thing. But you see, what we were trying to do--what we were doing--we were putting the Sergeant Major of the Army--the first enlisted person of the Army and his wife, his lady--put him out front; put him on display. What better place to do that than right in the White House of the United States.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever go back for another meeting or...

SMA COPELAND: We went back. We went back several times. Any time that the President was going to pin or decorate an enlisted man, and usually that had to be the Distinguished Service Cross and/or the Medal of Honor. They would bring in the families of that individual; the wives, the children, the parents, etc. There would be several... You know, you would decorate a half dozen or so soldiers and you'd have the families. They'd have the Sergeant Major of the Army and his Lady there. Then when the decoration ceremony had been completed, there would be a little social function right there in the White House. So we did that many times. Now those type functions, and the church function, were usually the extent of our visitations in the White House with the President, staff etc. Now I always wanted to attend a State Dinner just to see... Well, for education. Now one day I was called by one of the officers in the White House; a colonel by the name of "Coffee." Colonel Coffee had served in the 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam. I obtained a military sedan and went over there. When I arrived, Colonel Coffee met me out at the main entrance. He said, "Well, I thought it might be better if me show you, in detail, through the White House." I said, "Yes sir. Yeah." He said, "The President is out of his office." He proceeded to conduct me on a two-hour tour, it seemed to me. This was near the lunch

period, so we had lunch in the White House. But he wanted to subject the Sergeant Major of the Army to the highest echelon of our government, because the government is my business at the low level. Now he wants to move me from the lowest to the highest; and he did. He proceeded to conduct me in just about every area of the White House. He took me into the Cabinet Room. He said, "Would you like to sit in the President's chair?" "Yes I would." I went and I sat in the President's chair. He said, "Now this is where the President sits when he calls his Cabinet in." "Oh, yes sir." "Would you like to go in the President's office?" "Yes sir, I would." We went in and I sat in the President's chair. "Would you like to go to the President's theater?" "Yes I would, sir." So to the basement we went. Well, what Colonel Coffee was doing, he was educating this soldier. He was extending my education; my military education. I appreciated it, more so than he knew. Now, Butch, you can bet your bottom dollar that when I went back to the field, when I sat and rapped with soldiers... You know young soldiers. I was a young soldier one time and I just wanted to listen a lot of times at what people have to say. I never will forget what General Vuono told us. I have a letter from General Vuono. Number so-and-so. I'd like for you to put this letter in our discussion. But General Vuono, when he was Chief of Staff of the Army--he had four years--he and his Sergeant Major, Bill Gates--an outstanding soldier--when they called us back in--the former Sergeants Major of the Army--we sat down and talked. He always told us, his parting words, he said "Now you have a great deal of experience, military experience. You have a great deal of knowledge." He said, "Go out in the field and impart that knowledge to our young soldiers, because they want to hear what you have to say." Well when I went through the White House, and when I met the President, and when I attended church services in the White House, I couldn't wait to get back to the field. Now this was before General Vuono's day. But that was in keeping with General Vuono's

philosophy; you tell it. I was proud to do that. The soldiers sat up and looked and said, "You were in the White House?" First of all, you're at the Pentagon. Now that's a big step to most soldiers. Even when I was a senior noncommissioned officer, I always said, "My God, I would like to visit the Pentagon." And finally one day, after having been a sergeant major for many years, I was up there attending an AUSA meeting and I finally got up the courage to go and visit the Pentagon. I just walked down the hallways. So it was gratifying to me to relay... Now another time that I had to visit the White House, and this was furthering my military education. They had a two-star general over there at the time--an army general--taking care of the military personnel, or maybe it was the White House communications staff. But I was invited by the major general to come with him, as were the other senior noncommissioned officers of the other Services, to go and have lunch on President Nixon's yacht, located on the Potomac River; located down near the Naval Department. So we showed up there that day and were escorted on to the yacht. We sat at the President's dining table and we had lunch. We sat there and reminisced and talked with the major general who was assigned to the White House. But you see, what these personnel who had assignments at the White House, what they were doing, they were educating, continuing to educate militarily, the senior noncommissioned officers. Just because you obtain that top rung position, your education doesn't stop; it's just begun.

INTERVIEWER: In the case of Ann, she was included in all your military functions and everything like that when you were in D.C., right?

SMA COPELAND: Yes, that's correct. Yeah. Ann would always go and accompany. She would always talk, listen, socialize, and be a good trooper. We've promoted Ann now from first sergeant to sergeant major. And I guess it was with that rank that she retired; as a sergeant major.

INTERVIEWER: She might be the chief of staff, right now.

SMA COPELAND: Well, yes. Yeah, right now, she's since been promoted. Upon retirement, we promoted her to chief. She's now chief of staff. Copeland, Incorporated.

INTERVIEWER: How did she cope with your heavy travel schedule?

SMA COPELAND: She coped with it well. I know it was frustrating for her. Probably lonely. But she was used to those sort of things, if a wife can get used to that, having been in the military some twenty-eight, twenty-nine, and thirty years at that time. She had other wives close by; right there at Fort Myer. I'm sure they socialized; got together. But I can imagine it was frustrating for her.

INTERVIEWER: How often did you go over to Europe? How many trips did you make to Europe?

SMA COPELAND: I believe it was three trips during my tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army.

INTERVIEWER: How had things changed?

SMA COPELAND: Well, because we were drawing down from the Army-- from Vietnam--we had begun to phase-out some troops from Europe, because we were reducing our strength in Europe. But with that in mind, with the big push on "The Army Wants to Join You," and trying to obtain an all-volunteer force, and in keeping with General Westmoreland's philosophy "We will leave no stone unturned," that meant that we were able to get more money to make sure we're not leaving a stone unturned. Now as we were able to get more money, we were able to improve the appearance of the billets, for example, in Europe. Not only in Europe, but Stateside as well. We were also able to improve the appearance of motor pools, clubs, messes, dining facilities, throughout Europe. Actually, that program had begun before I departed Europe to go to Vietnam, with my boss, initially,

Colonel Perczdirtz, and then division commander, General Sutherland, which I would like to give you a letter marked Exhibit two or three, from General Sutherland--after I departed the division--attesting to some of the functions as Sergeant Major of the Army. I think this is the place to do that. But in that area, even before I became Sergeant Major of the Army, time wise, we had begun to improve billets, motor pool, messes, clubs, throughout USAREUR, United States Army Europe, proper.

(End Tape OH 93.1-7, Side 2)

(Begin Tape OH 93.1-8, Side 1)

INTERVIEWER: When the last tape ran out, I think we were just finishing up the visit to USAREUR. Also, during the break we were talking a little more about Ann's involvement, etc. You said you would like to make a couple of further remarks before we go on. Go ahead.

SMA COPELAND: Well, I think one observation I think we should include here is to how Ann became involved and was able to assist me in carrying out my duties as Sergeant Major of the Army and assist the Army, overall; it was her visitation when she went with me on many of my trip. This one year, I think it was '72--Summer of '72--the Military Affairs Committee in Colorado Springs... At that time we had the 4th Infantry Division stationed at Fort Carson. But we were invited out there, as were the wives and the senior sergeants of the other Services, to spend a week with them and partake of the festivities that were ongoing in Colorado Springs. This was all part of the PR, or public relations. So I broached the chief of staff and the vice chief that we'd been invited and I was wondering if I would be put on leave or whether this was considered part of my regular function as Sergeant Major of the Army. "Unequivocally, this is your duty. You should do that and establish the public relations with those people in Colorado Springs." So the wives were

flown out on one airplane and the sergeants were flown out on an Air Force airplane. We arrived out there and was met with bands and bells and ten-gallon hats, etc.; this was during the rodeo time in Colorado Springs. You, perhaps, have been there or certainly you know about. We went there and spent a week. I think we arrived on Monday and departed the following Monday, thereabout. But this was during that annual affair where they're having their annual rodeo, town marches, lot of visitors coming in, the cook-offs down on the street, etc. The 4th Infantry Division had their mess trucks downtown; they had them beautifully displayed. They cooked breakfast and they cooked lunch, as did many other local entities. We attended rodeos. We were conducted through that Cheyenne Mountain. NORAD (North American Air Defense Command) is located up there. At that time it was a highly classified entity, but none the less, the commanding general at that time was kind enough and courteous enough to conduct us through that mountain. We had a wonderful time there in Colorado Springs during this week. Ann was able to assist, as were the other wives of the other services. Well I thought that was fine. Again, upon completion of the mission, a trip report was submitted; nothing but favorable, all favorable.

INTERVIEWER: I think Ann said, also, that Senator Proxmire was the one that nixed her trip to Japan with you, too. Wasn't he?

SMA COPELAND: He nixed the trip. It was either Japan or Europe. I don't recall which one. Ann was scheduled to go, as per General Abrams--the chief of staff--concurrence, but Proxmire nixed it. The word came down that he was hot and heavy after us. The Army at that time, Butch, was in a curious situation in that we were: getting out of Vietnam; we were reducing our strength; we were trying to recruit an army; and we were trying to deal with the frustration of Congress and the public in general. The demands were quite challenging, so you had to be careful in this area that you didn't do this and

careful in this area that you DID do this. You had to cross all of your t's and dot all of your i's. You had to walk lightly and you had to carry a big club. These were challenging times.

INTERVIEWER: How many times did you visit Vietnam?

SMA COPELAND: I believe it was three times during my tenure.

INTERVIEWER: What was your normal itinerary during the time you were there? About how long were you there on each trip and what was your itinerary?

SMA COPELAND: I would be there for a week's time duration, or thereabouts. The itinerary, again, the senior noncommissioned officers had long before picked up that this soldier wanted to visit soldiers. He wanted to meet with soldiers. He wanted to visit with soldiers. He wanted to be placed in a position whereby soldiers could get at him.

INTERVIEWER: Were you by yourself or were you with the chief?

SMA COPELAND: By myself. Sometimes I would go with the chief, but the chief would go in one direction and the chief would very seldom spend more than a day in Vietnam. Then he was off to other parts of the world. I would meet him at some predetermined location. Either he would come back to Vietnam or "I'll see you in Hawaii" or "I'll see you in the Philippines." But no, the chief and I went our separate ways once we arrived in country.

INTERVIEWER: So when you visited Vietnam we were starting to stand down at that time, too. Is that right?

SMA COPELAND: That's right.

INTERVIEWER: I guess there were a lot of questions in the minds of the NCOs and the soldiers. "What are we going to do? What are the plans?" Right?

SMA COPELAND: Yes. Yes, big question marks in the minds of the soldiers?

"Where are we going?" "What are we going to do?" "Well, you're leaving Vietnam, if you can stay straight. You know, if you can slide until your tour ends or until your unit is drawdown, providing you have eight or more months in country. Then most likely, being a conscriptee, when you arrive back in the States and begin your processing--if you want--most likely you can be processed out of the Army." I think we had a cut-off. If you were within three or four months, or four months, then it wasn't feasible--militarily--to go ahead and reassign you to a unit. He could be released early, or he could be reassigned, or he could reenlist in the Army, and he could be promoted most likely. But during that time the Army was in a state of flux: a fluid situation. There was a lot of movement going on in the Army. A lot of units were being disbanded. There were a lot of transfers. A lot of personnel management was ongoing. At that time, I would not have cherished being assigned to the Personnel Management Branch of the Army.

INTERVIEWER: About your trips to Vietnam. You said you made three trips. So the interval between each of those three trips must have been very short, correct?

SMA COPELAND: Could have been six or eight months.

INTERVIEWER: What was the reason you made that many trips to Vietnam in that short period of time? To monitor what was going on, or why?

SMA COPELAND: To accompany the chief of staff and, again, to visit. To show this is not a forgotten army, in Vietnam, because we still had a lot of soldiers over there; to visit with soldiers and to be with them and talk with them.

INTERVIEWER: Reassure them.

SMA COPELAND: Reassure them. Boost their morale, if that could be done. It usually would assist them and enhance their morale, somewhat.

INTERVIEWER: What about your visits to Korea? How many trips did you make?

SMA COPELAND: I made one trip to Korea during my tenure. Having served there in 1950 and '51--during the ongoing police action--this time I had a little better chance to look around at those places that I had fought over as an infantryman many years prior. The sergeant major, of course, had my itinerary already laid out. But pretty soon, right up front, he sensed that my having fought there as an infantryman, that I wanted to take a little more time and sort of look things over. In that respect I had a very enjoyable visit. I got to meet one of my previous commanders on my visit there. He used to be my commander, back in Germany, in the 2d Brigade, 4th Armored Division. Now he's in Korea, I think they call it DCSCOM over in Korea, and he's a major general. When we arrived in his AO, in his area of operation, he extracted me from the NCOs. He said, "No, you're not having lunch out here, you're going to my quarters. You're having lunch with us. Mrs. Perczdirtz wants to see you. She wants to talk with you." We were close family back at Goppengin. So I agreed with that, you know. So we sat and we had lunch; we had coffee and a sandwich. We just talked and rehashed old times. Now it was there that I got to thank General Perczdirtz, personally, for some comments that I later read that he had made about Sergeant Major of the Army Copeland; about his brigade sergeant major at that time. I thanked him very kindly, and I continued to visit with his senior noncommissioned officers and troopers. But I had a lovely, enjoyable, relaxed visit. They toured me through the 2d Infantry Division which, as you know, to this day, continues to occupy the DMZ.

INTERVIEWER: Out of Camp Casey.

SMA COPELAND: The Demilitarized Zone, out of Camp Casey, on the 38th Parallel. Now what they did not realize was that they were carrying me right into an area in which I was fighting, as an infantryman, when I deployed from Korea on July 25, 1951. There again, as I gazed across the mountainside and as I looked across the valley, I know they

were wondering, "Now why is this guy so tentatively eyeballing this area?" But what they didn't realize was, at one time--in combat--I had transported on my back, as did all in my unit--2nd Battalion, 8th Cav--ammunition up that mountainside in preparation to defend that zone. But it was gratifying to go back there and just take some time to look at things and talk with the soldiers. Then, as the soldiers would talk, and I'm listening, and when they would hesitate and when the opportunity presented itself, I would come in--I'd break in--and say, "Well, permit me to tell you about this area. Do you want to know about the area you and I are occupying? I'll tell you. I went over it going up and we whipped the North Korean Army. Then the Chinese forced us to withdraw over this area; make a retrograde movement. For the second time, I fought over this area. Then, thirdly, we stopped the Chinese and we pushed them back, and I came over this area again--as an infantryman-- just like you guys, except my rifle. My rifle was an M1 rifle. Then I had a carbine, which wasn't worth a darn, as far as I was concerned, in close combat. I relied upon that M1 rifle more so that I did upon the carbine." The NCOs said, "Would you like to spend the evening." "Yes I would." "Where do you want to eat?" They said, "Let us answer that. You want to go to the enlisted dining facility." "Yes, I do." We went and we had dinner with the enlisted personnel in their dining room. The NCOs had a nice little set of quarters set-up, so we went there and spent the evening. But I had a very relaxed, very informative, and a very good "looking back" on my days in Korea.

INTERVIEWER: While you were there, and you listened to the young soldier as he started talking, what kind of problems surfaced? First of all, residing in Korea or being stationed in Korea. Second of all, within, perhaps, their organization.

SMA COPELAND: Well, the problem that the young soldier thought he had was boredom, because this is combat for that division. I believe you're still awarded the Purple

Heart if you're wounded. I think when you're assigned to that division, if you're out on the line, I believe you can qualify for the Combat Infantryman Badge. Don't quote me on that, but I think that stands today, because you continue to get fire, gunfire, periodically across that DMZ, unless they made a truce just recently. But during that time, we're going back to '70, '71, '72, '73, you had to be in a state of readiness at all time in that 2d Infantry Division. Not everyone in the division is on the line, simultaneously. But those who were not on the line, if they're back in their home areas, so to speak, they have a lot of time to reflect. What they were telling me, "We get bored." "Well don't you have clubs?" "Yeah, we have clubs." "Can't you get a pass and go out?" "Yeah, we can get a pass and go out." "Do you get mail from home?" "Yeah, we get mail from home." "Does that boost your morale?" "Yes it does." "Just the fact of being here in Korea," to use a term, "sergeant major, it stinks." And literally, if you've been to Korea. You're not used to the food, the surroundings, and the sanitary conditions of the Korean people, to use their term, "it stunk." So, now could you call this bad morale or poor leadership? I wouldn't put that in that category. I'd just say, "You're just here and you're just miserable." "Yes." "We have theaters. We have education centers. We have bowling alleys. We have recreation facilities. Yeah, in that respect we're fine, but we're miserable. This is Korea."

INTERVIEWER: If you're miserable, you must be a happy GI because you're complaining.

SMA COPELAND: You must be happy. Absolutely. So I departed that area with a real good, favorable, impression. I sure did. Here's a combat division, on line, in Korea. Here's a group of young soldiers and seasoned noncommissioned officers and officers, standing vigilant for the United States of America, and doing their thing. Doing exactly what they were supposed to be doing. They're properly fed, properly housed, properly clothed,

and properly led, but are miserable. "Fine, you're a good soldier. That's it."

INTERVIEWER: Let's do a little reflecting and probably during this time I'll have you reflect back on various times in your life, also some of the times when you were Sergeant Major of the Army. Your relationship with the three chiefs that you worked with, etc. Just kind of look back and kind of tie a lot of this up we have been talking about here. I think one of the first is, when we started talking about your career there was an event that happened to our country that may have kicked it off a little bit. Where were you and what were you doing when you learned that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor? What was your reaction and the reaction of those around you?

SMA COPELAND: Where was I located when Pearl Harbor came about; when they attacked? I was located in Riverside, Texas. From this position here in Huntsville, Texas, is twelve, thirteen miles from here. East from here, northeast. I was working. I was a clerk in a feed store and that was what I was doing when Pearl Harbor came about; when the bombing took place at Pearl Harbor. That's what I was doing when I met Ann, as we discussed earlier on. What did I think? Well, what came to my mind was that, "Ah, the recruiters are finally going to get me." Because prior to that time I had been getting correspondence from the Army that "We want you to join the Army." Now back before the Pearl Harbor bombing, we had begun, I believe, the conscription. The conscription was for one year. The song permeating, going around, was "I'll be back in a year little darling." Meaning, when you left your sweetheart or your wife, you were going into the military for one year and you would be back home to resume your relationship with your sweetheart, wife, family, etc. But the bombing of Pearl Harbor on that horrible Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, stopped the song, "I'll be back in a year little darling." But what was Silas' reaction when that bombing took place? What were his thoughts? My thoughts were,

like millions of other young red-blooded Americans, "Yes, I'm going." Some said, "I'm not going to wait. I'm going now." And they did. Even though I was a very patriotic individual, I did not step forth and say, "Hey, look, take me now." I waited until the Army sent more, more literature. Further more, I waited until my draft board said, "You come. We want you now." Remember that picture of Uncle Sam pointing his finger and saying, "I want you." A couple of years ago Ann bought me one of those posters. I have it some where around here. We will never forget those posters. But I knew. What was I thinking? I knew right then that I was going into the military and my thinking was, "Most likely I will go soon."

INTERVIEWER: When did you make your decision to... Before we talked about when you had a chance to get out and you and Ann sat down and talked about it. Why don't you, once again, recap that portion of your decision to stay in the military.

SMA COPELAND: Well, of course the first time, the first time I enlisted in the regular Army the war was still going on in the Pacific. Well, it wasn't going on; it had ceased about August 25th, thereabouts. But it was in December 1945, that I made a decision; but it was a hasty decision. It wasn't a career wise type decision that I made. It was a "Get yourself home as quickly as possible" type decision, and one way to do that is to enlist in the regular Army for three years; you could not enlist for less than three years, back in 1945. That decision was made predicated on my wanting to get home to the family. Now it wasn't until about 1954 that I made another hasty decision to terminate my military career. Some of the contributing factors... One of THE contributing factors was that to continue at the rate I had been going, the family is going to be separated--what I considered to be unnecessary--for a long period of time. I just couldn't cope with that and it was having a catastrophic effect upon the family. It was demoralizing; really dehumanizing.

What you're doing is separating man and wife, and eventually, that's going to be permanent. I didn't want that to occur; not in my family. I've seen that happen many a time in the military. So we said, "Okay, I'm getting out. I'll try something else." But as we looked back and noted, at that time I believe I had completed approximately twelve years, twelve years on active duty. And heretofore, before those times, you could not become eligible for retirement, unless it was medically with a disability or you could not become eligible unless you completed thirty, thirty years in the military. When I looked upon that, I said, "Gee, twelve plus what is thirty years? That's a long time down the road. This entails many, many, many more separations. Fourteen months, sixteen months, two years overseas without family. I'm not sure that we can handle it." These were the contributing factors in my making the decision to get out. Zero back in on the family. So I opted to get out after twelve years. I came home, visited with the family, loved the family, talked about where we were going, what we were going to do. "Am I going out and look for a job, get a job?" "Am I going to use the GI Bill?" "I can walk across the street to Texas A&M University, enroll as a student, get my hundred and twenty-five dollars a month." "Can I subsidize and can the family subsidize on that?" "No. You get a job." "Can you do that and become a full time student?" "I don't know. I've never been placed in that position." So we talked about these sort of things. "If you opt to go back in the Army under the proviso, if you do it under ninety days after separation, you go back with your rank. Then can you make it, financially speaking?" "Yeah." "Do you want to continue marching? A career?" "Yeah." So we made that decision. That was a traumatic time. Really traumatic for this soldier. Now children wise, they don't know what's happening and why it's happening, or what's going on because I don't think at that time, even with the... Dorothy Ann had twelve years in the military at that time. Paula, about eight years. Bob was just coming aboard. Russell was

somewhere out in the wilderness; we had not, at that time, discovered him. But shortly, a year thereafter, we did; we found him. But this was a traumatic time for us. None the less, we made the decision, "Okay, let's try it again."

INTERVIEWER: We were talking about how, back in the past, the Army, when it had a reduction in force--or a RIF--it seemed like the officers who were to lose their commissions became noncommissioned officers and they occupied NCO slots. What effect did this have on the NCO Corps?

SMA COPELAND: It had a demoralizing effect because... Let me qualify that term "demoralizing." Everyone want to be promoted, I think we could safely say. Anyone with a lot of initiative and who has an urge to excel and move forward wants to be promoted. Now in the 4th Army area, in which Fort Hood is located--that's where we were stationed at the time after the big drawdown in World War II--the Army was trying to salvage, if you will, or retain the best quality people that they could possible influence. Now one rationale--I think the Army was thinking in those terms--was that if you're an officer you're got to be better qualified than a noncommissioned officer. "Noncommissioned officers, you can rake them up off the street all day. You can pull them up out of the gutter. But if you're an officer, now you've got to be better educated, better qualified, higher motivated, therefore let's endeavor to retain some of these highly qualified officers. Now we can't keep them as an officer, but we can offer them a master sergeant rating; master sergeant, first sergeant. If they want to opt for those positions and give up their rank, we will pin on the stripes." Now, as you fill those slots with RIF'ed officers--reduction in force officers--that takes away a slot from the regular, what I would call the regular noncommissioned officer. Consequently, he or she is not going to be promoted, because that vacancy is filled by a RIF'ed officer who is working in the officer's club; who is

working in the golf course pro shop; who is working with special services; who are working at other places. I have seen them, after a company formation, dismissed and excused until the next formation the following morning; go wherever you may. I've seen this happen. But at the same time an E6 was occupying and actually doing the first sergeant job. Now getting back to your basic question, did it have a demoralizing effect in the Noncommissioned Officer Corps? Yes it did. Now later on in life, I better say, I had the privilege of serving in civilian component duty with some of these RIF'ed outstanding noncommissioned officers, and they had been RIF'ed for seven or eight years. But with whom was I serving? Was I serving with a noncommissioned officer or was I serving with an officer, in so far as association--day-to-day relationship--knowledge, performance of duty, experience, past experience? I was serving with officers as far as they were concerned.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about the discussion you had with General Abrams, right after he took over as chief, when you addressed the problem of not only the reduction of the Officer Corps but also the NCO Corps. Tell me about that sit down with General Abrams.

SMA COPELAND: Well, during a briefing--an update briefing I would call it--with the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Abrams, the general broached the subject of reduction in force of the noncommissioned officers. I think one reason why he brought it up was that in my written reports for the chief, I was probably outlining many of the frustrations that were ongoing among the Noncommissioned Officer Corps. One of them was certainly the reduction or forcing of the noncommissioned officer out of the military without the benefit of having any severance pay; without the benefit of having any other means, at that time, of supporting his family. I related to the chief of staff, General Abrams, that the officer was much better off in that when we RIF him or her, we gave them severance pay. This sort of smoothed, somewhat, their transition from being RIF'ed from the military into

civilian life. The general wanted to know if I had any experience, any personal experience with that sort of thing. Of course, I am sure he was aware of my having served during World War II and during the World War II drawdown when we went through the same traumatic experience that we were about to go through in the current modern volunteer Army. The general asked the question. He said, "Well, what do you think about that?" I filled him in on what we did after World War II. We RIF'ed the officer but gave the officer a master sergeant slot and permitted them to serve in that slot, not physically, but take up the slot, promotion wise. Then other lower ranking noncommissioned officers had to move in and do the duty and yet didn't get the pay and didn't get the rank. I cited Sergeant Major of the Army Silas Copeland as being one of those, the way I put it, victims. For four years I performed outstanding field duty as platoon sergeant; as first sergeant; as field first sergeant; as operations and intelligence; and I could not be promoted because there were no quotas; the RIF'ed officers had taken up those quotas. I said, "General, this sergeant's morale was demoralized, as were many, many other noncommissioned officers." "Well, what I'm hearing, sergeant major, is you think we shouldn't do that." I said, "Sir, if you're asking this sergeant major, I say we shouldn't do it." I think, perhaps, the general went along with it, because it appeared to me, as we moved along into this modern volunteer army, that I was not getting the frustration... I was most certainly getting a lot of frustration because we were going to RIF noncommissioned officers for the first time in the history of the United States Army, and we did. But we didn't do it because an officer took up his slot. Now I have a couple of letters here from General Abrams that I would like to just give to you and ask you, if you would, Butch, to include. Now that doesn't pertain to the subject that we're discussing right now at hand, but it does pertain to some things that we have discussed previously and I would like to leave these with you and ask you kindly to include them, if

you will.

INTERVIEWER: What we'll do, at the end I think I'll have one section we'll call "recognition" and at that time what I would like you to do is present, give me those letters and make a comment about each one, then we will gladly put them in the interview. We were talking about reflections. You came in with General Westmoreland, then you had General Abrams, which has a little different personality, and then of course, you had the carry over of making this great big change to a modern volunteer army. Tell me the difference in, perhaps, the personality of General Abrams and General Westmoreland and about your transition.

SMA COPELAND: Yes, I'd be happy to do that, Butch. Well let's go... Let's start with General Westmoreland, first of all, because he was the one that selected me to be Sergeant Major of the Army. Much difference, as you can well imagine, because you've seen both officers; both generals. General Westmoreland is an outgoing, move forward, a go-go-go type individual. Now I think that stems from the bare fact that, like he told me on that first day. He said, "You're Silas Copeland. That's why I selected you." He said, "Don't you try to change that." Now getting back to trying to compare the two chiefs, or three chiefs that I worked for. General Westmoreland was a dynamic, gungho, move it, move it, move it, in his appearance, in his mannerism, standing tall, erect. A showman. He is a showman. And that counts; that's a plus. I had no problem dealing with that sort of thing. I was able to walk, almost, on line with him; one step to the left and one step to the rear. But I admired his mannerism and his approach on dealing with people. He told me one day... I don't know why he told me; why he said that; but he just said--after a few months-- he said, "I like you." You know, just like that. Then I reflected back on the day he said... Day one. "You're Silas Copeland. I selected you because you're Copeland. Don't change

that." Then a month later he remarked... I guess me must have been discussing troops, and candidly and soldierly, I was talking to him. "You know, I like you." Well, promote me. Now let's move to General Abrams, if we will. Another dynamic, outstanding officer. If you were to read his book, and no doubt you have, going back when he first came in the military, you could better appreciate General Abrams. I think that many people around the "E" Ring, where the Army is located in the Pentagon--the command element of the Army--that many, especially the younger people, got the impression "Well, when General Abrams comes aboard, oh man, we don't know what to expect. We know there's going to be some changes." But you see, General Abrams' approach and his mannerism in dealing with people, and his more or less sort of laid back style, makes he and General Westmoreland a hundred and eighty degree different. But in the end, both attained Chief of Staff of the Army; both were MACV commanders in Vietnam; both were commanders all over the world. But in the end they both were just as different as daylight and dark.

INTERVIEWER: In their mannerism.

SMA COPELAND: In their mannerism; their approach to you; and their way of handling you; commanding you; and dealing with you. But in the end, both achieved favorable results.

INTERVIEWER: Being an old tanker in World War II, and of course General Abrams in World War II was a tank commander, he got tanks shot out from under him, did you ever reminisce about those days?

SMA COPELAND: Not really. Not really. We would reminisce and we would relate past experiences--going way back there--that we had gone through and we would talk about it. But as far as getting down to what he did back there as a young officer, I think he wanted to more or less draw upon what I did, because that was one purpose of having the

Sergeant Major of the Army come to his office and sit down and reminisce and talk about the current army. Then we would get back in, "Well tell me about how'd you all, how did you do this back after World War II, drawing down?" Or after Korea drawing down. We would reminisce in that respect.

INTERVIEWER: Earlier you were talking about one of the major things that, when you took over as Sergeant Major of the Army, that General Westmoreland cautioned you about was receiving gifts, etc., and I think probably the reason that he stressed that so much is because of what we called "The NCO Open Mess Scandal" that happened just previously to that. In a nutshell, how did that effect the Sergeant Major of the Army's position when you were there?

SMA COPELAND: Well, it had some detrimental effect upon that office, upon the Office of the Sergeant Major of the Army. There was much publicity ongoing within the Army and out of the Army that was going worldwide on a scandal concerning operation, assignment, and function of personnel pertaining to noncommissioned officer and EM clubs in general; enlisted members clubs. Some people were being charged. Some people were coming up for courts martial. Some people were coming up with civil charges. Some people were coming up with convicted charges as the results of some personnel mismanagement. I would have to say the Army was taking a catastrophic beating, beginning at the Office of the Sergeant Major of the Army, because, as I understand it... I never did delve into it at all, because that wasn't in my area of operation. But I could sense that there were a lot of people in the Army, maybe at Army level, who was trying to place the blame of this misfortune upon the Office of the Sergeant Major of the Army. Silas Copeland had every intention of endeavoring to do what ever he could to overcome that unfavorable image.

INTERVIEWER: Who were those people who were trying to undermine or destroy the...

SMA COPELAND: Well, Butch, I wish I could say, but it didn't concern me so much. That is, enough that I kept names and positions and telephone numbers; I just don't know. But it was very evident in that some personnel would tell me... This one particular time, "You know, you're going to be the person on which the determination is going to be made as to whether this Office of Sergeant Major of the Army is going to be continued or whether it's going to be discontinued. It's going to be predicated on your turn out; during your watch." That person who told me that was in the know. You ask me his name. I don't know. He may not of had a name tag on. Then as I moved around and as I began to tread water, lightly, I knew that I had to endeavor... Another mission that no one had given me, not even the Chief of Staff of the Army, was to overcome that image. And I proceeded...

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(Begin Tape OH 93.1-8, Side 2)

INTERVIEWER: Sergeant Major, your were talking about how you had to walk a little lightly because of the people that were kinda looking at the Sergeant Major of the Army position and it was said, based on what you do, will determine whether it continues or not. Go ahead continue your discussion of that.

SMA COPELAND: Well, Butch, you recall earlier, we were talking about the rating. The method in which, and who was going to be the Sergeant Major of Army's rater. But even though the determination was made early on that there would be no written rating, per se, on the Sergeant Major of the Army; that he would have no rater, in other words. But as I viewed the Office and as I progressed along over the months, I knew that the Sergeant Major of the Army was being rated. He was being rated by a lot of people. Not only by

the Army but by civilians as well. The Chief of Staff of the Army received rating sheets, if you will, from civilian dignitaries. That would happen after I had appeared at a function and socialized with them and/or was their guest speaker. In essence, the civilian population was rating the Sergeant Major of the Army. They'd send it to the chief of staff. The chief of staff was feeding it to his sergeant major. And the Army staff, the entire Army staff was mentally and visually rating the Sergeant Major of the Army, as were commanders in the field. I could see that happening. I was given those reports by the way of the vice chief, secretary of the General Staff, Colonel Long--my immediate supporter, officer wise--and the Chief of Staff of the Army. That was my rating in so far as I was concerned; and they were good ratings. I could see that I'm was going in a direction to where I am finally, ebb by ebb, overcoming and trying to, in my endeavor, to improve the image of this Office. I want to keep it, especially after this party had told me "that upon your movements, the decision is going to be made." I reflected back many, many times. "Well, when was that decision..." "At what point in time, Silas, did your movement influence that decision?" I would reflect back on the time when the chief of staff, General Westmoreland, was returning from visiting the troops in Europe. The general's aide-de-camp came and said, "The boss wants to talk with you." It was nothing unusual. He always did that. As he and I sat at his table, thirty-five thousand feet over the Atlantic Ocean, and I was filling him in on my observations, as a soldier among soldiers. He related to me that day on the way back, "You know, I wish I had you aboard longer." Now I think what he was saying--maybe that was the time he made the decision--that "you turned it around." Now this is no reflection on anybody, not even on my predecessor, not on his staff, because I'm operating with Dunaway's, what used to be Dunaway's staff. No reflection on anyone, but it was just the manner of approach and association and the dealings with people. Then the chief of staff

had probably thought it's time. I think, if you're going to ask me, I think perhaps that was the time. Or it may have been shortly thereafter that he said, when he turned to me--when we were discussing and reminiscing--"I like you." When I look back on it, "Well gee. Maybe that's the time that Westmoreland..." Or was it Abrams. I don't know which of the two, or whether it was both, who made the decision, "Well, yeah. The Office can be a contributing factor to the viability of the Army and enhance the Noncommissioned officer Corps. It can be an asset to the Chief of Staff of the Army. Not only to the chief, but the entire Army." When I first came aboard, commanders in the field, I think, viewed me as a squealer; as a tattletaler. But one day at a major commanders' meeting, early on, I'm told--I'm informed--that the Chief of Staff of the Army was discussing with the major field commanders the operation and function of the Sergeant Major of the Army. He told them, "Silas Copeland is not a politician. He doesn't get involved in politics. He's a first class professional soldier. I thought he was the best we have. I think he is. I know he is. He knows the Army, inside-and-out, when it comes to the field elements. He's still trying to learn his way around the Pentagon. But he's not a politician, and he's his own man doing his own thing. And it would behoove some of you, sometime, to pay attention what he has to say." So then they began to view me a little differently. They, meaning the field commanders. When I would go out, I'm not out there to delve, and dig, and tattletale, and what not. I'm there to assist in any way I possibly can.

INTERVIEWER: So actually, you were being evaluated, number one, as the Sergeant Major of the Army the person, and then the Office. So you had to defend both.

SMA COPELAND: That is correct. I had to defend on all fronts. Of course, I had been used to that because when you fight a war in Vietnam for eleven months, you defend on all fronts. When you fight in Korea for eleven months, you defend on all fronts.

INTERVIEWER: We were talking about that colonel who wanted rate you. Were there any other incidents that occurred that you really had to get out there and defend the integrity of that Office?

SMA COPELAND: Well, it was a continuous ongoing operation, Butch. Every move you made, you always kept that, that was always imbued in your mind that your movement, your action, your relationship, your mannerism, everything, your projection, everything you did, actually, was being looked at and was being rated. With a view of, "Well look, if we do decide to disband the Office or we decide to move this Office under another entity--DCSPER for example--we're going to have to have some justification. Therefore, we better observe, and look, and listen, and be prepared." So I sensed this sort of thing was happening. Therefore--shall we say--I guarded against it. I made that positive approach to it that "This thing is going to work. It has its place." Now, I will always go back and reflect on the day that I received a message from General Westmoreland when he was en route to Europe. A message through the secretary of the General Staff, General Bennett, to Silas Copeland here in Huntsville, who was en route back to Vietnam. That is, "As you go back to Vietnam, you take the remainder of the time in your tour of duty in Vietnam, and you visit with as many troops as you can." When I began to do that, I think the troops gave me the message as to what I should be doing, troop wise. And that is, being one of their soldiers. Being their soldier. Being their soldier and being their spokesman, wherever I may go. Whatever the endeavor, always keep in mind, Copeland, that you're representing the soldiers. That's what the General Order says. You're the representative of the Chief of Staff of the Army, and of the Army. You're their spokesman. Many a time I know that the Chief of Staff of the Army, in his addresses, has said, "The Sergeant Major of the Army is my spokesman in so far as enlisted personnel are concerned." With that in mind, something

else comes to mind. That is, this one time when I was asked to come around and address a panel of DOD. They wanted to talk about the all-volunteer army. I know that's what they wanted to talk about. Well, I had a chance to go and talk to the Chief of Staff of the Army--General Westmoreland at that time--and I said, "Sir, I received this invitation to come and address the DOD, Department of Defense panel concerning our all modern volunteer army." I said, "I think they have invited..." I said, "Sir, did they not mean the Chief of Staff of the Army and not the Sergeant Major of the Army?" He said, "No." I said, "Sir, I'm not sure that..." He said, "Now wait a minute. If they're talking about enlisted personnel of the Army, there is no better individual qualified to do that than Silas Copeland. You get your tail over there and you address the panel." You see, but what I'm saying, the soldiers told me this. You'd been dealing with soldiers so you're qualified to do that. So I reflected, I always reflected back on those sort of things. I went from the lowest echelon and got that message and I got that same message from the Chief of Staff of the Army. The lowest enlisted rank in Vietnam told me the same thing, and when I became Sergeant Major of the Army, the Chief of Staff of the Army told me the same thing. What they're telling me, "You're business is soldier business. You represent us. You represent the Army." Now I've got it from both ends. And man, I'm standing tall and pulling my shoulders back and I'm marching, but all the time I'm thinking about, "Ah, you've got to continue doing this. You've got to overcome that unfavorable image that has permeated throughout our ranks for the past few years. That's not your business. Don't dwell in that sort of thing. That's somebody else's. It's now in litigation. Stay out of it. Get away from it. Get on with your business." That's what I did.

INTERVIEWER: What was the hardest decision that you ever had to make as the Sergeant Major of the Army?

SMA COPELAND: Oh, my goodness. I may not have had to make that difficult decision, but the things that I had to deal with. Let me tell you one of the hardest things I had to deal with, and that concerned the RIF. We go back to that RIF business. One of the most difficult and demoralizing, and it wasn't my decision to make, even though I had already discussed the situation with the Chief of Staff of the Army, that is the RIF of the noncommissioned officers. But the hardest decision and the hardest element in my dealings with people was in the area of the reduction in force of the noncommissioned officer. When we began to drawdown from one point two or three million, down to eight hundred thousand personnel, many NCOs had to go; we didn't have slots for all of these NCOs. So the decision was made: the qualitative management came into being; the quantitative management came into being; and changes in various asunderous entities of personnel management was taking place. I wasn't making those decisions. Had I been the decision maker, that would have been the most difficult decision. But I did get involved in it, because I was picking up some slack, or the loose ends, if you will, as a result of the reduction of the noncommissioned officers. That is: wives were coming; wives were calling; parents were calling; they were coming; they were writing letters. It's hard, it's difficult for you to sit here and you look that wife or that parent, that mother, that father, and listen to them tell you that you fought their son, their husband, in Vietnam--one year, two years--and now you're telling him that he can't remain in the service. You're saying he's no good." "No ma'am, I'm not saying that." "No, sir." Should they have been talking to me. Yeah. Yeah, they're talking to me because I'm sergeant. I'm the Sergeant Major of the Army. Sergeants are my business. So they came to me. Someone pointed them in my direction. That's what happened. because they didn't know heretofore about the Sergeant Major of the Army; where he was located and this sort of thing. But in the end, they came to me. And,

Butch, that's difficult. That was a difficult thing.

INTERVIEWER: I guess that probably follows on to one of the questions. What did you find most frustrating? Those are the things you couldn't control.

SMA COPELAND: That was a frustrating situation that I was not able to satisfactorily resolve. Another real frustrating portion of this operation was when I would go out to the field and I would meet with senior officers. Now the reason I'm meeting with senior officers is, of course, it's protocol; it's courtesy. You're on their turf; you're in their field; you're abiding by their rules; you're respecting their thoughts, etc. Consequently, the first place you wound up would be in the general's office. Be it, corps commander, CONARC commander, division commander, post commander, or whatever. You check-in. They want to see you anyway. You had better not go unless you check-in. They want to see you and they want to talk with you. They want to know, "Now what's coming up?" "What are you doing about this?" We're talking about the ongoing modern volunteer army and "The Army Wants to Join You" period. I've had lieutenant generals push back from behind their desk and say, "You want to hear what I think about the modern volunteer army?" "Yes sir. I do." I sit and I listen and he tears me to pieces. He's not tearing me, really; he's tearing the Army to pieces. But he knows that the word is going to get back to General Westmoreland. Not by name, not by personality, but by the Army in general. "Now what are they talking about in the 6th Army?" "What are they doing in the 4th Army?" "How did they receive this directive?" "What do they think about this?" I said, "Well sir, they are beating me to no end." It was to the extent that sometimes it would be comical with the chief, you know. He would laugh about it, and so would Silas Copeland. But you see, that's why I'm out there. That's why he dispatched me. I'm his workhorse.

INTERVIEWER: They wouldn't have told him.

SMA COPELAND: Uah, uah. But they're getting the message to him. They're not going through their chain of command. The division commander is not going through the corps commander. The corps commander is not going through the army commander. The army commander is not going through CONARC. They're going directly to Westy, by way of the workhorse and the filly, Ann Copeland. You see, they'd bend her ear too, knowing full well that if it was in the spouse area, that this word was going to get Mrs. Westmoreland, and was going to get to General Westmoreland, and it was going to get to the General Staff, right quick, as soon as I completed my field trip. So I was used, you see, and I always got in mind, "Wait a minute, Silas. Regardless of what you thought about responding to the high ranking personnel, you'd better always keep one thing in mind; you have got to overcome the adversities, the adverse publicity, because the continuation of this Office may be predicated on how well, or how badly, you function as Sergeant Major of the Army; the spokesman for the enlisted personnel."

INTERVIEWER: In retrospect, is there anything that you may have done different as you look back?

SMA COPELAND: Yes. Yes, retrospectively, I would have to say, if I had it to do over again, and I had the knowledge that I now have, most certainly, Butch, I would take a different approach. I think I say that because I'm better educated. I'm more knowledgeable. I was a novice back in those days.

INTERVIEWER: But you also did more right than you did wrong.

SMA COPELAND: Oh, yes. Yes. I did more right than wrong, and that's attested to the fact, because of many of these letters from many of our field commanders, who were evaluating me at that time. They wouldn't hesitate to let Westy know, you know, if I did something out there. He was getting reports. Everybody was getting reports. All of the

General Staff of the Army were getting reports. But I know that I was able to make some progress in the area in so far as obtaining adequate personnel to makeup the all-volunteer army and so far as improving the image of that Office. That's attested to by virtue of my getting, and the Chief of Staff of the Army getting, many letters from field commanders, and it's in writing right here, with their signatures on it. Butch, I'd like for you to take this with you. (He was referring to a group of letters.) To the way the generals were putting it, "In so far as the Noncommissioned Officer Corps is concerned, you have turned it around."

INTERVIEWER: I guess another way at looking at that question, in retrospect, what would you have done differently? Was there a time when you did something that after you did it, you said, "Why did you do that?"

SMA COPELAND: I think I would have a little different approach, initially, in dealing directly with the senior noncommissioned officers. That goes back to having experience in that position. The more you read, the more you grow. The more you grow, the more you know. The more you know, the better soldier you become. Now not having had all that experience immediately up front--experience as the Sergeant Major of the Army--I reflect back years later and say, "Yes, I wish I had done it differently." You asked me what is one thing? Well, one thing is maybe my abrupt, blunt, if you will, approach to the senior noncommissioned officers. Maybe that's why, back at Fort Bliss, they came back at me. Maybe I didn't present the right approach. Maybe I didn't have enough experience to handle them at that time; I didn't say what they wanted to hear. When I reflect back, after having had the experience over the years, I say, "Ah, ah, okay." You see, had I had the experience I could have avoided that sort of thing. That didn't help the image of the Office, which was the very thing I was trying to do; improve the image. There out at Fort Bliss, before those highly articulate, well trained, motivated noncommissioned officers were

concerned, "Ah, you didn't do anything to improve the image, today." But that's what we're talking about. You asked the question: What would I do differently? I reflect back, and say, "Hey, wait a minute, you violated your own rule." You've got to do some things here to improve the image.

INTERVIEWER: While you were the Sergeant Major of the Army they came up with the concept of the Sergeants Major Academy. Correct?

SMA COPELAND: Well the concept, Butch, had been implanted years before. Well you know this, that things don't happen overnight, but over an evolutionary period of time. So we had been talking years before, even before, I think, the Sergeant Major of the Army position came into being, about having a sergeants major academy. At almost all posts you had a post academy, or you had a 4th Army academy; located at Fort Hood, a 4th Army academy. Located at Fort Polk, you had a little in-house academy. So we had been discussing this at first sergeants and sergeants major meetings, way back, way on. But then it was during my watch that we were able to establish the thing and get it approved at Biggs Army Airfield; what used to be Biggs Field, Army Air Corps, at El Paso, Texas. The site was chosen. The basic cadre was selected. Then the input for the first class was selected. We met and we talked about curriculum. What are we going to teach these senior noncommissioned officers as they go through? You're probably going to ask me what was one of the most gratifying accomplishments during my tenure. One of the most satisfying accomplishments during my tenure was that Sergeants Major Academy coming up on line. My going there and reminiscing with Bainbridge and the first commandant. The first sergeants coming in there. The first course. Then going back and attending the first graduating exercise. Now the only thing that I regret is that I wasn't the guest speaker. But the most satisfying thing is that I was able to see it go into action, come up on line, and

graduate the first class. And then I was offered the job, just in case... Now, you know, I was on that thirty-five year deal. I was already over my thirty years. At that time it was thirty years or fifty-five, whichever one comes first, so I was already over my thirty years. So, you know, when leaving the Office of Sergeant Major of the Army, by regulation, you need to go out into the world. But by way of desire, "Do you want the Sergeants Major Academy?" "No sir. I don't want the Sergeants Major Academy." That's where I started my military career. Right there in that very spot where that academy is. The first day of active duty was right there on that Sergeants Major Academy spot. And that's about where I culminated my tour of duty. Back at the Sergeants Major Academy. So that was gratifying. That was one of my most satisfying moments in my career to see that happen, enlisted wise. We're still talking about noncommissioned officers and their men.

INTERVIEWER: As you look back over the years, annually they bring the former Sergeants Major of the Army together for updates and various things of that sort, don't they?

SMA COPELAND: Yes. Yes they do.

INTERVIEWER: How has the Office changed over the years?

SMA COPELAND: Well it appears to me that, from the time that I was doing that sort of thing--bringing in the MACOM (Major Army Command) sergeants major--and updating them and briefing them and accepting their recommendations, that there hasn't been... Going back twenty years later as I did this July, 1993, when the current, the incumbent Sergeant Major of the Army Richard Kidd invited all the former Sergeants Major of the Army to come back, as I sat and I looked and I listened and observed the manner in which Sergeant Major Kidd is conducting his annual MACOM sergeants major meeting, I'd say there is some difference. There's not a great deal of difference. You know, you always go

back to that basic and then you're able to draw upon that experience. But I did note a difference. Somewhere along the line, and I don't know where this dropped off--from my exit from the Office to the current day--but when I was in Office, for example, prior to my inviting all the MACOM sergeants major to come in, they would have meetings with their sergeants major of what they would call their major commands' sergeants major; their corps, their divisions, their separate brigades, etc. They would come up with various asunderous recommendations as to how we in the Army could improve the enlisted corps. Now when that had the approval, they would hash it out and then when they had the approval of their commanders, then it went on to their next immediate commanders, all the way up the line. They would bring with them to the meeting numerous stacks of papers and recommendations. "We need to do this in mess, in supply, in administration. The Army needs to change regulation 615-20, paragraph such and such," and list the rationale for so doing; "This is how it would enhance or improve things out in the field." Now after the Secretary of the Army had come, and after the Chief of Staff of the Army had come, and after some outhers, and usually DCSPER. We always wanted DCSPER to come and address because, you know, we're personnel. That's what its all about, really; DCSPER. But after that, after the first day... This would take place my first day. Then the second day, we would get into discussing those items, those written items and recommendations that they had brought from their commands, keeping in mind that we're in the all-volunteer army. We're in a changing situation and we're inviting and we're soliciting; we want their ideas and we want their recommendations. So they would bring that with them as they arrived at the Pentagon. In the second day of a five day meeting--four or five day meeting--we would begin discussing, one at a time... Of course, they had already pre-submitted a copy to my office and I was somewhat vaguely aware of what we were going to talk about. Everyone

in there--all the MACOM sergeants major--they were aware, so we didn't have to spend a great deal of time. But in our discussions, the majority of the MACOM sergeants major decided, "Well look, this may not be a good idea right now. Why don't we table this one for the time being." Now when we go back. Can I see any difference between my operation, in that respect, and today's operation? A little bit. I noticed that today, Sergeant Major of the Army Kidd does not require the MACOM sergeants major to bring with them... They certainly bring verbal input, but now they don't bring the written input, as they did back in my tenure. I was able to take that written input and put it together; my staff put it together and I took it in to the General Staff, who are looking for input. Most of it was going to General Foresthye's area because he is the chairman--Lieutenant General Forsythe--chairman of the all-volunteer army committee. So it was through that means, again using the enlisted chain of command, if you will, that I was able to collect, evaluate, and inform. Now I would make my own evaluation, but the final evaluation and determination as to whether we should make a change, based on the MACOM sergeants major and their soldiers out in the field, that recommendation came from the engineer private down there, operating that bulldozer. That blade keeps coming off time and time again. "Can't we come up with a system that does such and such? We have a system in the Army. It can be fixed." Well, if we know about it could be, you know. But it might take a MACOM sergeant major meeting, before you get the message about that blasted blade. And whom ever the manufacturer of that D8, or whatever it is, doesn't know it unless they're informed. So I was able to do that and do it effectively. We had volumes and volumes of recommendations, and then it was going in all directions. It got to the extent that the action officers would come in and talk to my administrative NCO, Master Sergeant E8 Alexander. "Hey, when is the sergeant major going to the field again? I hope not." Because, you see, I wasn't having

another meeting. "I hope not." Because he's coming in, because that's what General Forsythe is looking for. He's wants all this information because anything: food, clothing, pay, allowances, equipment... And then we're asking, we're telling the people "We want to join you." You see, that's the rationale for all this type of on goings; "We want to join you." It isn't that you're here and here's the way we're going to do it. No, because you're not here. You're out at Houston, you're in Dallas/Fort Worth, San Antonio, Austin, El Paso. "We want to join you. Now what do you want from us."

INTERVIEWER: You know, taking a look back, we talked about the problems the NCOs have gone through concerning rank, over the years; the change in structure, etc. Back in '58, when the rank structure was revamped, the buck sergeant rank was reintroduced. It had been discontinued after World War II. When this happened it caused some shifting in the ranks. For example: prior to the change, promotion from corporal E4 to sergeant E5 meant going from two stripes to three stripes with a rocker. Then we had the problem with the E7. You had the E7 master sergeant and then he became a sergeant first class. It was very confusing during that period of time. Why don't you kinda comment on that. And then talk about the "wear-out" period.

SMA COPELAND: Well, of course it was frustrating, to say the least. We were moving through that transition period. You hit the nail on the head, Butch, you know, just looking at two noncommissioned officers standing out. You didn't know, many times who ranked who, just because of the makeup of that chevron. I think the regulation read that because you had a change in chevrons that... Well let me use my own self as an example. I was a master sergeant, first sergeant E7, with a diamond. Now when the changed grade structure took place you were given x-number of months as a wear-out, or enough time to what the Army thought that you should have been promoted by that time, therefore you

won't have to do a lot of changing in chevrons, etc. But I was a first sergeant E7, and wearing a diamond, of a cavalry troop and an infantry company, when the E8s were promoted. I continued to wear that same three-up, three down, with a diamond. However, prior to my being promoted, there were E8s in formation when the battalion, squadron sergeant major would have formation, that he could not tell whether we were E8s or E7s. This may have been frustrating to the E8, who has a great deal of prestige and pride in having been promoted to E8. The same thing applied to the sergeant first class and to the buck sergeant, etc. So there was some frustration ongoing during that transition period.

INTERVIEWER: We talked pretty extensively about the change to a all-volunteer army. Just to summarize it, how has the quality of the soldier changed today? What effect did our transition from a draft oriented army to an all-volunteer army? What was the effect of that transition?

SMA COPELAND: The effect is that we have a better trained, a more highly motivated, better equipped army, and a more willing army, today, all because of the actions of the modern volunteer army that took place during that three-year period; 1970 to 1973. It's all because of the all-volunteer army. If you'd permit me to go back a little bit. We were discussing my field trips. I'd go out and these high ranking officers would tell me, time and time again, "Sergeant major, it will not work. There is no way we can function with an all-volunteer army." They would qualify those comments by saying, "Look, you're getting people in here that you're having to hire teachers and teach them to read and to write." "Yes sir, we are." "And you're telling me that this modern volunteer army is going to work? Sergeant major, it will not work. We don't want it. Here's what you can go back and tell Westy. We don't want it." They're looking at this thing negatively. You talk to NCOs--sergeant major and the first sergeant and platoon sergeants--they're telling you the

same thing. My response is, "Well sir, sergeant, listen just a minute now. Let me just say again, that you and I have no alternative. We have a mission. We have an order. It behooves us to approach it in a more positive outlook. If that requires changing our method of dealing with soldiers, or dealing with equipment, or whatever, that's what we need to do. The sooner we do it, the better off you and I are going to be. The more easily we can move on down the road or up the road." Now this is what I heard in '70, '71, '72, '73. Then I go back in their area, years later by way of invitation; sergeants major send invites and general officers send invites. We're having a function here and we'd like to have you and Ann come be with us. You go back and sit and you listen to those officers. "Sir, how's the Army doing?" "It's doing great!" Now when I was Sergeant Major of the Army, they were young officers down in a company, platoon, battalion, but now they've got stars and eagles. "Don't you talk to us about a draft army. We don't want it. We don't want a draft army." Of course I know what their answer is going to be. I'm looking at the news media, and I'm watching the soldiers and I'm reading, and I'm still looking, and I'm listening, and I become so gratified, uplifted. I was downtrodden back in those days. I did have a great deal of faith in what we were doing. But you go back today and you ask some of those same officers, who have retired, when they reflect back, they'll tell you the same thing that Silas Copeland is telling you today. If General Bruce C. Clark was sitting here, bless his heart... He came into my office... You know, he retired as a four-star general, USAREUR commander, and General Westmoreland called him back. He said, "I need your expertise. I need your knowledge." And this sort of thing. He would come into my office a lot of times. He hired an active duty sergeant major. We called him "Butch." Butch could listen, he could read, he could write, and man, he could take shorthand and dictation. He was General Clark's personal enlisted aide. They'd come in my office and we would sit down

and we'd talk. If General Clark was here today, he would tell you, unequivocally, "The Nation made the right move." We have one of the highest, most articulate, most educated, most practical Army that our nation has ever witnessed. We have all we need, if we can hold it. If we can keep it.

INTERVIEWER: When we take a look at changes, we always have someone looking at demographics. We've got x-number of this racial group here, or our poverty level is here, and it seems like we're always keeping track of the demographic makeup of the United States. How is the changing demography of the United States affecting the Army, in your opinion?

SMA COPELAND: Well I'm not quite certain, Butch, how it has affected the Army. I keep reading articles--magazines, newspapers, etc.--that shifts are occurring and that we are gradually running out of certain age group personnel and there may come a time where it would become more difficult to obtain enough recruits, so to speak, to voluntarily makeup our ranks. Now I really haven't delved a great deal into this area, except that I'm vaguely aware that this is happening.

INTERVIEWER: You know also, you saw a great change in race relations in the military. I guess the best way to say this, you observed the change in the race relationship and the military has always been leading the way for society. Why don't you comment briefly on how things changed?

SMA COPELAND: The military has always been out front on race relations. And we go back to the beginning. Let's go back to World War II. It was very obvious. You know, during World War II, units were not integrated; black and white, etc. So it was very obvious that genuine, if you will, segregation of the races existed. It wasn't until after World War II, and I was stationed at Fort Hood early on in '46. and later General

Eisenhower became President of the United States. I believe he's the one that began the actual integration of the army and of all forces, as a matter of fact. So I have witnessed, firsthand, the days when we had complete segregation to the day, current day, when we had complete integration. Now during that period, from one extreme to the other, I have seen many conflicts appear. When you have dif...

(End Tape OH 93.1-8, Side 2)

(Begin Tape OH 93.1-9, Side 1)

INTERVIEWER: Sergeant Major, when the last tape ended you were making the remark that you saw both extremes, from no integration, etc. Do you want to continue with that thought?

SMA COPELAND: Well, going from one extreme to the other, that is, during the days that we had no integrated troops in the Army, going back to World War II, to the present day where we have complete integration. During that time, from one extreme to the other, I have witnessed many conflicts take place among the black and the white troops. It usually occurred because of differences of opinion, or "You're white and I'm black," or "You're from a different part of the world," or "I'm from a different part of the world." Just a general differences of consensus of opinion. That usually took place in an area whereby, perhaps, noncommissioned officers had not become fully involved in an endeavor to establish a more compatible troop relationship, one race to the other. Just what the causes were or what they are is a matter of opinion, I think.

INTERVIEWER: What about the change of the role of women in the Army. From the WAC Corps, doing away with the WAC Corps and now we're putting them in the mainstream of the Army.

SMA COPELAND: Now we have integration of male and female in units. Which, of

course, back... Let's go back to World War II when you had the Women's Army Corps, or the WAC Corps. They had specific units whereby they performed and they functioned mostly in an all-female environment. Then as the evolution period come about--World War II, Vietnam, and post-Vietnam--we saw fit to gradually assign female personnel to some of those slots that were heretofore or previously occupied by male personnel. Now I can not sit here and tell you, Butch, that I have seen a lot of conflict ongoing during my period in the Army as a result of integrating male and female. But from looking at the news and listening to the active duty personnel express themselves on this issue, it would appear that there is some conflict ongoing, even today.

INTERVIEWER: How much of that do you think is news media generated?

SMA COPELAND: It could very well be that the news media is not shooting squarely with the public. It may very well be that the news media wants to influence the manner in which we assign male versus female personnel. Now we, here in the civilian community, are not necessarily hearing the correct data from the in-house, that is, from the senior noncommissioned officers, from the colonels, from the captains, and from the generals. I think if the news media were to pitch their true story that it would be pitched a little differently. I think we're not getting the straight poop from the troops, so to speak, from the news media, through the news media. I think it's working better than what the news media would lead us to believe. Now that's a matter of opinion.

INTERVIEWER: You also saw the evolution of unit training and individual training throughout the years. How do you believe the individual and unit training has changed during the time you were in the military?

SMA COPELAND: It has changed. Unit training has changed.

INTERVIEWER: Is there more emphasis? Is it better now?

SMA COPELAND: The emphasis is better. The emphasis is better. More personnel are involved. Personnel at the lower level are involved in training the soldier on those things that he needs to know in order to function in this highly technical army. Now let me just give you an example. It was a couple of years ago, I guess it was, when Ann and I were out at Fort Hood visiting the 2d Armored Division. General Price, who was the division commander at that time, he said, "Now the sergeant major has an itinerary for you and he wants you to go and visit with troops." We were doing this by way of invitation. There was a ceremony coming up later dedicating a building. But as I maneuvered around throughout the area, we visited aviation, artillery, tanks, infantry. The general and the sergeant major had already told me, they said, "Nothing is canned. You're going to see it as it is, and I'm sure you're going to see a markedly difference in the way these soldiers act today as opposed to the ones you were recruiting in the all-volunteer army." So we very happily, very enthusiastically, and very anxiously moved out among the troops. Pretty soon the division sergeant major dropped off and went about his business, and the battalion sergeant major and the first sergeant picked it up and moved along from there. I want to cite two examples. One example was out at the airfield among the aviation troops. The noncommissioned officer was a staff sergeant, and he had with him a spec. four (specialist fourth class). The staff sergeant met us in the vicinity of the displayed helicopters. They were not displayed. They were just on the line as they normally would be. And we walked up to this Blackhawk helicopter. The staff sergeant began to brief Silas Copeland on the type aircraft, its function, how it operated, etc. I began to notice the little spec. four begin becoming fidgety; sort of dancing around, moving around a little bit. After a bit, he just broke in on his sergeant. He said, "Sergeant, let me tell him something. I want to talk about it. Let me tell him." The staff sergeant said, "Well specialist--I don't recall the

specialist's name--go ahead." But he was so enthused. He was so proud. He was so highly trained. He had been through the helicopter school, I guess at Fort Rucker, Alabama or wherever, and he knew that Blackhawk helicopter forward, backward, inwardly, outwardly. Then he proceeded to command me. "Sergeant major, get in the cockpit." He put me in the cockpit as if I were the pilot. Then he moved into the, I guess, the copilot's seat. He flipped a switch and a light came on, on the screen. "Tell me what you see, sergeant major?" "Well, I see a vehicle." "Do you know where it is?" "No. I see it moving." "If you look up you'll see highway 90, located a mile or a mile-and-a-half away." He said, "You see that. That's a target, for all practical purposes." Then he flipped another switch and said, "Tell me what you see." What I'm saying here, Butch, the enthusiasm, the esprit de corps, the training of the personnel in that aviation battalion. They couldn't wait to tell this old timer. Now that's what the general meant when he said, you're going to see a markedly difference in the way they do thing today as opposed to yesteryear." That general doesn't want to change it. You see, getting back to the modern volunteer army, when they said, "It's not going to work." Then we went from the aviation down to an artillery unit. In the motor pool, I walked up to a gun. Again, the sergeant met us; he reported. He proceeded to explain the gun and the operation of FDC, fire direction center. A big operation in the artillery. That's it. Again, a private first class eased his way in and said, "Wait. I'd like to say something. Let me talk to the sergeant major." I was in civilian uniform, but they knew ahead of time, even though it wasn't canned. But none the less, here you have privates, privates first class, specialists, who have been educated, trained, and motivated. They are ready and willing to do their thing, and they're proud. They want to tell you about it. I stood there and I listened to these young soldiers go through that drill and explain to me the manner in which they put their operation into action, using modern

technology; using computers etc. Then, one asked me, "Now sergeant major, how would you have done this?" When I began to explain to them the method which we used, during World War II, to operate that FDC, they laughed and they snickered. They said, "Do you mean to say that you picked up an aiming circle and you ran off a hundred yards out there and you said, "Aim it towards this instrument, and all the guns laid on you, and you were trying to lay the guns parallel before firing? Getting clearance and all that?" I said, "Yeah, that's the way we did it. That's all we had, you know." But they were so proud of their modern equipment, of their technology, of their training, of their schooling. This is why we say that the modern volunteer army has worked, and worked well. A tremendous change for the better.

INTERVIEWER: We were talking that, also, one of the biggest problems that faced us in training, in Vietnam, was to get enough squad leaders and fire team leaders trained and over to Vietnam, because of the quick turn-over of troops. Were there any other training problems, that you can recall, that we faced during the Vietnam War?

SMA COPELAND: If there was a major training problem, it was that we should have had more training. We should've had more indoctrination. More training, especially on the part of those young soldiers whom we thought would make outstanding noncommissioned officers. He's outstanding in that we are putting him in the jungle in Vietnam, and we're making him a sergeant. We are saying, "You're a fire team leader. You lead these guys in combat." That soldier should have had, I think, more training or a level higher echelon of training, not that he going to operate at a higher echelon. But, I think, the more knowledge you have, the better--mentally--you're prepared to go into combat and to execute your mission. But let me quote another example. I recall this one day when General Walker and I, in the 4th Division--Major General Glen Walker--we were flying to this AO. As a matter

of fact, he had gotten word on the radio that this attack had occurred and had since culminated. The squad leader and his... Well, he was a platoon sergeant, as a matter of fact. The general wanted to go out; he wanted to fly out and just set down. They had to hack a little landing zone, if you will. The pilot just set that chopper right down and we got out. A little, let me call him a "shake and bake"... By that I mean that back here in the States, he's the type individual that we had identified and had given some training and pinned sergeant chevrons on, and said, "You're a squad leader. You go to Vietnam and you lead a squad." Well apparently, the platoon sergeant... He had no platoon officer. He may have been wounded. I don't know what happened. But this young buck sergeant, who we refer to as "shake and bake," had overcome an attack by the North Vietnamese Army. He had done it in such a tremendous professional manner in maneuvering his elements--his fire teams--throughout that jungle, that General Walker thought he was deserving of an award for valor, and he gave him the award of a Silver Star. Of course, he didn't have one right there in his pocket, you know, but none the less. But you see, that exemplifies what young personnel can do. What they did do. However, if there ever was a lack, shall we say, it was a lack in proper training, i.e., not enough training, I think, on the part of the young noncommissioned officer on the draftee, on the recruit, if you will. He's the one we were looking to, to carry the fight to the North Vietnamese soldier.

INTERVIEWER: As a result of that Vietnam War, do you think that the Army changed its approach to training, drastically, once they sat down and evaluated the problems we had and how we were training, and said, "We can do better than this?"

SMA COPELAND: Well, yeah. Yes, there were some changes that came about as we approached and moved into this all-volunteer army, as results of Vietnam and the evaluation of our operation in Vietnam. Training was revised, for the better. I can't sit here and tell

you exactly what the changes were, because I did not become directly involved in the training, except that we began the Noncommissioned Officers Education System, for example, whereby noncommissioned officers, young noncommissioned officers and those identified to be noncommissioned officers moved out on an exerted, definite, training program; a different philosophy from yesteryear. We called that the NCOES program. Now that was a change for the better. We haven't spoke of the NCOES program, I don't believe.

INTERVIEWER: We're going to.

SMA COPELAND: But none the less, I could see right away that this was going to enhance, not only the morale, but the professionalism and the training of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps.

INTERVIEWER: Let's go ahead and talk about NCOES. Just assess the Army's NCOES, Noncommissioned Officers Education System, and what effect do you think this structured way of training NCOs has had on the Army?

SMA COPELAND: It has had a tremendous improvement, both in morale, in efficiency, and in every day dealings with personnel. It has lifted up the Noncommissioned Officer Corps, if you will. It has given them a viable channel, an education channel in which they can progress, progressively over the years. He can go to his advanced, his intermediate, and then eventually into the Sergeants Major Academy, and become more militarily articulate. He looks forward to that. Now if we go back. You asked me, earlier on, how did this Sergeants Major Academy emanate, and when did we get it off the ground and get it into being? Some one asked me, back during that time, "Is this going to become a society of 'Ring knockers'?" I said, "Well, you must be a West Point graduate, because that's what I've heard the Point referred to as "Ring knockers." I said, "Well, it could be, and that may be a good thing. But if it is, it's an objective, and it's morale; it's a booster.

But to tell you, yeah, its going to become a society of 'Ring knockers,' I don't know. But if that be the such, so be it." But we're talking about the Noncommissioned Officers Education System, and we're starting right back down at the young soldier level, progressing throughout his career until about his sixteenth or seventeenth year, then he going to become a student at the Sergeants Major Academy. During that time, he will have accumulated enough knowledge that, most likely, he's going to graduate with at least an associate degree, and many of them are going to graduate with a degree. From there they're not going to be satisfied. They're going to leave that Academy and they going to say, "Gee, I want more! I want more. Give me more. Challenge me." That's what the Noncommissioned Officers Education System has done to the Army, done for the Army.

INTERVIEWER: It took the Army a long time to develop levels and say to the soldier, "This is what you're going to be trained at this level. Now when you get to this level, this is how you're going to be trained." And the soldier had his training broken down by his grade, his duty. It's taken the Army so long to do that.

SMA COPELAND: It took us so long to do it. You go back to yesteryear, our methods "stunk," and we knew it, and there wasn't much we did, in those days, to correct the deficiency. Usually when you received a quota to send a soldier to school, you picked the soldier you could best do without. Consequently, that soldier went to school, with very little knowledge, and he returned the same way; with very little knowledge. Therefore, you were not enhancing the morale, the prestige, and the efficiency of the unit. We went on year, after year, after year, through that system until, finally, finally during the modern volunteer army era, did we decide that we were going to make this thing work. Now again, the ground foundation had been laid for this, back years ago. But none the less, it begun functioning during that modern volunteer army era, and you all continued to make it work;

you make it work. I sat up there at the Sergeants Major Academy during graduation, after graduation, and I witnessed and heard the Chief of Staff of the Army address the graduates and tell them, unequivocally, that, "This Academy is here to stay. That it has done wonders, not just this Academy, but all the other entities leading up to, and culminating, here at this Academy. It's here to stay." Because the Army has recognized, Butch, that this is the only way to go. If you're going to have a professional, highly articulate army, we're not talking about just getting an education. We could send them to the university and bring them back with doctorates, if we wanted to do that. But that's not what it takes to operate an army. You operate the Army with young officers and young soldiers. But they need military knowledge. Then associated with that military knowledge, it is good to have associate knowledge also. But today, when those sergeants are graduated from that Academy they know their stuff; they're highly educated; they're articulate. You yourself are a graduate of the Academy. I'm not. I don't have the education that you have, because you went through the Academy and Silas Copeland didn't. I missed it. But I was there for the first graduation. I could see that we were getting results.

INTERVIEWER: We were talking about the changes in training. The Army also did that down to the basic training level. The basic training in World War II, in Korea, and even in Vietnam versus the basic combat training today. Do you think that has also gone through an evolution?

SMA COPELAND: It's gone through an evolution. It has gone through a period of change, for the better. We can go back and use myself as an example. My basic training, the basic training that I received when I was conscripted into the Army, in 1942, was not adequate to be able to function in a sustained operation under combat conditions. I didn't have the knowledge. I didn't have the expertise. I didn't have the forethought and the

morale. I wasn't seasoned enough. So we have improved over the evolutionary period. We have gotten better, and today we are good. We're not only good, I'll put it in the superlative form, we're best. We're best.

INTERVIEWER: What about the change in the NCO academy training?

SMA COPELAND: The NCO academy, once again, improved. Improved. Improved over the years. Not just do this, barely, to show some improvement. But the Army has continuously worked upon this Noncommissioned Officers Education System, the NCOES, and the training; train, educate, train, educate, and execute, and execute, and execute. Now during Desert Storm, I've had soldiers that endeavored to contact me, because they couldn't get... Now they knew that I wasn't in the Army, an old retired, but they knew of me. Their parents knew of me. They wanted to go to Desert Storm. "Get me in it. I want to go. I can't get out." Many soldiers. Then the chief of staff, General Vuono during that time, recalled the former Sergeants Major of the Army. I'm sitting here at two o'clock one afternoon, in my residence in Huntsville, Texas, and I'm out of the Army some eighteen years, thereabout. The office of the Sergeant Major of the Army, a person in that office called and he says, "Sergeant major, what size jacket do you wear?" I said, "Well, I wear size forty-two." "Okay. What size trousers do you wear?" "Well, I wear a thirty-six, thirty-one. About the same I wore twenty years ago." I said, "If you're asking me if I need a new suit of clothes, the answer is, yes." He said, "I'm not going to ask you that. I'm going to tell you that we're getting you a set of BDUs." BDU, what does BDU (battle dress uniform) stand for? Battle dress uniform, if that's what it is. He said, "Yeah, we're getting you... And then he went on to relate, "The chief of staff says, 'What does your schedule look like on a certain date?'" I said, "Well, it looks open." "The chief of staff would like for you and the other former sergeants major to come up. He has a mission for you."

Good, Desert Storm here I come. Man, I want to go and take a look at that thing, providing Ann's physical conditions were okay. I'd take her up there and leave her with our daughter, Paula, and I would go to Desert Storm. So we got on an airplane and we go. We go in Gates' (Sergeant Major of the Army Julius Gates) office, the next morning, you know, we go in and he says, "Well, first off, the chief of staff is going to brief you." "Fine. Good." He said, "He's going to do it in the War Room." "Fine." So we go to the Pentagon War Room. The chief of staff briefed us on Desert Storm. Now Desert Storm was finished by that time, but when we got the word, we thought that we were going over. But the chief told us all about Desert Storm. He pointed out on the map and he briefed us for some thirty, forty minutes. Then he said, "Now Sergeant Major Gates is going to put you on an airplane and he's going to fly you out to the desert, at Bakersfield, California, and there we have the USAR (United States Army Reserve), we have the National Guard--the reserve forces--training in the desert and this is their annual training. Some of them were probably there in preparation for Desert Storm, and I would like you to go and take a look. Observe and just become acquainted with the terrain. The terrain is set-up out there, the concertina, the ditches, the barbed wire entanglements, etc. is the same as it was, what it used to be, in Kuwait until we overcame. Then you come back and you tell me what you saw." So we got on the chief's aircraft and the motored. Some six hours later we were in the desert. We spent the evening. Early the next morning, at four o'clock, we were uprooted and out of our bunks. We had on that BDU; I still had my jungle boots from Vietnam, and cap. We proceeded to mount up and we moved out on maneuvers. We went out and we spent the day with the National Guard and the Reserves, etc. We had a little time with some Regular Army troops, also. But at the close of business, the brigadier general--I wish I could remember his name at this time--who was commander that day, he came in and he sat down

and he talked to us. There were some seven thousand soldiers stationed at that location, and they had good facilities, good equipment, good support. It was a major training area. As we alluded to earlier, if you want to get things done, you go to a major training area. But anyway, the general went on to elude that during Desert Storm and prior to the actual conduct of the ground war, there were many, many of his soldiers that wanted to go, wanted to go, wanted to go, because they were trained; they were ready; and they were motivated. These are young volunteers who knew, when they came in the Army, that the likelihood of going into combat was very good. So here you have a young group of soldiers, and we go back and say, "How has it changed over the years?" They were highly trained; highly motivated; and highly militarily educated. Some of them had their degrees. Some of them had their associate degrees. Yet, they wanted to be in the Army; there was a challenge; there was a calling. So much changed over the years, Butch, and we're happy about it.

INTERVIEWER: You had the opportunity to go out to the National Training Center, there at Fort Irwin. One of the questions that I was going to ask you is, What impact do you think the realistic and very intense training that they receive at the National Training Center has effected combat readiness?

SMA COPELAND: It's a tremendous asset; a tremendous asset to combat readiness. If you can show a soldier and you can train a soldier on the ground, in an area that is somewhat similar to what he is expected to function in when he goes into battle, he's going to be in a better position to cope with the battlefield situation. Out in the Bakersfield area--out in the desert of California--we were looking at trenches, and they had one humongous machine out there that could dig a trench thirty feet deep, it looked to me like, and twenty feet wide, just by putting it in gear, getting off, and let that machine do its thing. That what Saddam Hussein did in Kuwait, and they were looking at it. The soldiers out there in the

training area were looking at that trench, and they were looking at all the entanglements and battlefield outlays. When he got into Kuwait, he knew what he was going into. So he was doing his preparatory training in the field training area of California, prior to his arrival in Kuwait. So I think it is a tremendous asset; a tremendous boost. Now if we didn't have those training areas, those major training areas, it would not have happened. We would be at a loss; at a great loss. This is an area in which a battalion can go and take all of his troops, all of his combat equipment. I believe they go in regimental size as well, to include signal, aviation, all of his supporting elements, his artillery, etc. He literally goes into battle. Not actually, but it's as near a battlefield condition as he can get. The troopers are tested; they want to be tested. "Check me out, sergeant. When I come out of this thing, how did I do?" He knows whether he did well or whether he did poorly.

INTERVIEWER: It's very important, now days, because the weapons are so sophisticated.

SMA COPELAND: That is correct. You need a major training area in order to be able to function your weapons, and exercise your weapons, and become thoroughly familiar with your weapons. Now I'm sure we have weaponry in our system that we haven't been able to adequately test yet, battlefield wise. Most likely we do have. But for those weapons that we used, and what we've been able to ascertain that they had in Kuwait, these major training areas gave us a tremendous opportunity, and we took advantage of it; the United States Army did.

INTERVIEWER: How do you assess the performance of the Army? We had Operation Urgent Fury, in that case it involved Grenada. Then we had Just Cause, where we went down to Panama and brought Noriega out. And then, finally, Operation Desert Storm. As you followed this, why don't you give me an assessment of how think the Army

performed?

SMA COPELAND: Well, we have progressed over the years to the extent that today, we are so efficient and so well prepared and so highly trained and motivated, that we're not going to have to wait around two, three, four, six months to get ourselves ready. Our current, today's army, is ready to go. We have Strike Command. We have forces at Fort Bragg. We have forces located at other places. We just have an army, in general, who are training continuously. They love to do this sort of thing, and they're ready to go. They're ready to go in and ready to extract or ready to attack, just about on a... I was going to say on a moment's notice, but that'd be a misnomer, but within a few hours they would be able to load up their combat gear, either on an airplane or a helicopter, and move out. Now if I can go back, retrospectively a little bit, back to my 2d Armored Division days. It was 1963, when we were going through all these various asunderous TO&E changes; an atomic this, and this, and so on, etc. Our division, the 2d Armored Division, went on "Operation Big Lift." Now what that entailed doing was moving all the troops--with all their personal combat gear--to Germany and becoming married-up, if you will, with pre-positioned stock in Germany. Now we did that within sixty-three hours. We moved the 2d Armored Division--with all personnel and personal combat equipment--to Germany. Now it took a lot of preparatory time, but the difference from those days as opposed to today, you're prepared. You're not going to have to do a lot of prep, because: you're trained; you're motivated; you're equipped; you have a mission; and you're ready to go. A tremendous difference. A tremendous improvement over the year. Now I don't know, could we get better? We've made some mistakes, according to the news media. We've made some mistakes, but can that be corrected? I suppose so. Could we have foreseen these problems and avoided such problems? Perhaps so. But you see, that where the leadership comes into being.

INTERVIEWER: As long as we don't make the mistake the second time.

SMA COPELAND: As long as we don't make it the second time. Absolutely. Learn from your mistakes and move forward and continue to improve. We have done that over the years. We're good. The Army is good.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that over a period of time... During World War II, I think that when we take a look at the junior NCOs--the corporal and the sergeant--they had a real definite role. Then over a period of time we sort have gotten away from that. Do you think that now, maybe we're starting to involve that junior NCO more, consequently, we have a better NCO Corps for that?

SMA COPELAND: Getting the younger NCO more involved on what is going on, on training, on taking care of his soldiers, looking after that soldier, and just soldiering, period. Getting him more involved, and the more involved, the more knowledge. The more knowledge, the more he wants. You keep getting him involved. You keep feeding him and let him be all he can be, until he gets enough of it, and the system is going to take care of it. If he has enough before he reaches a certain grade, he'll go out of the Army. The system will force him out. So, consequently, because of the good system ongoing, he's asking, "More. Give me more. Give me more, because I want to be Sergeant Major of the Army." Let me go back a little bit on the Sergeant Major of the Army's Office. This young soldier came in one day, just to visit. I thought he was coming to ask for a request; maybe he wanted an assignment to Fort Polk, or "Please send me to Alaska." I had no idea. But he came in, and I got up from behind my desk, went over and shook his hand. The secretary brought in two cups of coffee. The soldier was standing there and he was looking--I would say he was gazing--at the pictures, back of my desk, and all the colors, and my chair. I just let him gaze, and finally he turned to me and he said, "Sergeant major, one

of these days I'm going to occupy that chair." You see, here's a young soldier-- I think he was a corporal--who had a long range objective. I'd dare say that that young soldier, today, is a sergeant major who has been through the Noncommissioned Officers Education System and is a graduate of the Sergeants Major Academy, at Fort Bliss, and he's standing out there, working out there somewhere as a division sergeant major or a corps sergeant major. He may still have his eye on that chair, because he was young some twenty-odd years ago and he would have about twenty-two or twenty-three years in the military by this time.

INTERVIEWER: One of the questions we had here... There are a lot of times that we talk about various things when the tape recorder isn't on, during the break. One of them was talking about the junior NCO and how the roles of the junior NCOs--which are the corporals and the sergeants--changed during your career. This is one of them that we talked about when the recorder was off. You said probably two of the proudest noncommissioned officers in the Army is the corporal and the sergeant. You were relating some of your experiences concerning the pride the corporal and the sergeant had. I think that you made the remark that, really, it hasn't changed that much. They've still got the same responsibilities and, in the case you were just talking about--that corporal that was looking at your office and saying, "One of these days I'll be sitting there."

SMA COPELAND: Yeah. Yeah, the same determination and the same aspiration. Perhaps the determination has improved over the years. Going back to yesteryears, that corporal probably would not have walked in front of his first sergeant or his sergeant major and said, "One of these days I'm going to occupy that first sergeant slot," or, "I'm going to be sitting over at regimental headquarters in your chair." He wouldn't have come forth in those days, but he will today because you're dealing with a different type person. It's a different era, if you will.

INTERVIEWER: We've done a lot better in our family support within the Army. We were also talking about the advantage you have of periodically going back and all the former Sergeants Major of the Army getting together and getting briefed on what is going on. Let me ask you a couple of questions about the family policy, or the family support system. How do you assess the effectiveness of today's family policy and support system that we have in place?

SMA COPELAND: I would rate the system as excellent, needing improvement.

INTERVIEWER: What do we need to improve?

SMA COPELAND: Well, Ann gets a letter. When Ann attends these meetings--the wives have their own agenda--someone from DCSPER... What do we call those over at the Hoffman Building, or wherever that is? But anyway, they have a family unit organization setup in the Hoffman Building. Usually there's a full colonel and/or a sergeant major, or a general that would come in and brief them on what's taking place in the family area, which is funded, supported, which has been accepted after so many years of fighting. Then Ann gets these monthly letters from this organization and I'm reading these letters where the chairman--or the wife who has been appointed chairman, and then her associate, etc.,--have had their meetings and they're recommending that we do this, and thus, and thus. Now one recent article that I read, maybe it was in this month's newsletter that Ann has received, was that we need to improve in the area of taking care of families once the soldier has been deployed, and she cited the Desert Storm situation. You can imagine, suddenly all the soldiers in this unit, four or five hundred soldiers are deployed, but you're leaving behind two thousand dependents. When you do that, the prime supporter is gone, and there no one's shoulder for them to lean upon, or turn to, and look to. This was pointed out during Desert Storm, and this lady in the newsletter, we are picking up on that, we need to

improve--according to these "Flo Notes,"--in the area of taking care of families, especially after their spouses have been deployed. Now let me go back. We were at the Academy, what, in 1992? Yes. The summer of '92, and we had the incumbent Sergeant Major Kidd had the MACOMs... We were talking. Ann and I sponsored a dinner the first evening there. Two of your... One sergeant major, she was a graduate and she got her degree. She has children. She's married and her husband is a warrant officer, also stationed in the Fort Bliss area. Both of them were deployed to Kuwait. They had children.

(End Tape OH 93.1-9, Side 1)

(Begin Tape OH 93.1-9, Side 2)

INTERVIEWER: When the last tape ran out, you were saying that the husband and wife that both deployed, plus they had somebody to look out for their children. Go ahead and continue.

SMA COPELAND: Well of course, they had predetermined that should deployment take place that obviously someone was going to have to care for those children. I believe the Army requires them to go through the legal affairs department and get authorization for some party, should deployment take place, take over the children--legally--and provide for them and care for them; feed them, clothe them, send them to school, or whatever the case may be. When talking to this sergeant major--at Fort Bliss, a year and a half go--and her husband, I found that that system worked very well for both of them when they were deployed to Kuwait. However, over CNN, I know there's another case whereby a Reserve sergeant was called up; a lady sergeant. She had a six or seven-week old baby. Maybe they didn't know, whoever called her to active duty. None the less, she received her orders to report to a unit somewhere up in New York. It may have been around D.C., I don't remember correctly just now. But she said, "Yes," according to the news media, "I'm

reporting, but I'm also reporting with my baby." So, conversely, from the original couple who had made proper preparation, etc., to take care of their dependent children, apparently this other sergeant, who was being recalled from the Reserves to Active Duty, had not been fortunate enough. Maybe she didn't know that she was supposed to do this, or maybe she didn't realize that one day she would have this young baby and she would be called to Active Duty. But there is some improvement, as I understand it, that could be made in one of the areas. As I look at it and as I monitor--read and look and listen--the area in which we need to improve upon is that of looking after and looking out for our dependents once our soldiers are deployed. It can happen on a few hours notice, and does happen many times.

INTERVIEWER: Make sure they're prepared.

SMA COPELAND: Make sure they're prepared. That's where, getting back to noncommissioned officer business, that's where the noncommissioned officer comes in. You've got to talk to your people. You've got to tell them, "Corporal Jones, PFC Smith, or Sergeant Monarty, you have a family and you have children. Have you properly prepared your packet? Whereby they... Do they know..." Like when we used to take our families to Europe. All families had to be briefed on the NEO. That's the bug-out, and it scared the living daylights out of Ann, when I said, "Honey, you've got to get you a five-gallon can of gas. I'm going to draw some bedrolls and some blankets, and I'm going to get four cases of C-rations. This is going to be your "Bug-Out Pack" and you put it in the trunk compartment. When the Russians come across the border, you..." "Oh, stop right there. Stop! I'm going home. I didn't come here to fight." But you've got to instill upon our young soldiers today that this packet has got to be made up in order for their dependent to be properly cared for. The dependent wives and the children have got to know where to go

and to whom they turn to seek assistance and advice once he or she is gone. In many a case, the husband is left with children. You see, the husband is not military; he's a strap hanger out there some place and the wife is the sergeant, or the private, or the corporal, who's deployed to Saudi Arabia or Kuwait.

INTERVIEWER: But all in all, the Army is starting to wake up too, in that area.

SMA COPELAND: We're waking up. I'll tell you, we're so much better. We're so much better, but what I'm saying is that the dependents are saying, "We need to improve upon it." Now I can just visualize, in those cases, that someone has let it slip through the cracks; we'll always have that. How do you catch them? How do you catch them when they slip through, or how do you avoid that slippage? Take up the slack. One way of doing that is to continuously orientate them; keep them informed. Put it in bulletins. This is a nice one, (Sergeant Major Copeland held up a bulletin) the Flo Notes, that comes out of the Pentagon, or out of the Hoffman Building, or somewhere up there. It keeps Ann pretty well updated--She's an old soldier--on what's going on in the family affairs world. We can do that. Perhaps we do that at post level, but who's reading it? Put it out as a sergeant major, adjutant, or as a post commander, etc. But in some cases, some dependents are not reading it. That's an area in which, as I understand it, we need to improve upon.

INTERVIEWER: We're had some reflections and observations, etc. Now, what I'd like to do is get your opinions certain things involving the military and possibly some future actions, as far as the military is concerned. There is one question, sometime it may sound unusual, but is it important that an NCO have a sense of humor?

SMA COPELAND: Yes, it is. It is important. That's one thing an NCO must have. He must have a sense of humor in order to deal with today's soldiers; soldiers have a sense of humor. They had a sense of humor prior to coming into the military. It's just good that

you have a sense of humor. You can better deal with people by having a sense of humor. Sometime, over the years, no doubt Silas Copeland has been remiss by not having a sense of humor, by letting certain remarks and certain actions rub him the wrong way. But had he exercised his sense of humor, you see, and rolled with the punches, perhaps he could have negotiated some of those conflicting areas a little more professionally or smoothed out the areas. Should an NCO have a sense of humor? Absolutely. Everybody should have a sense of humor. Sure. Why be an old sourpuss, an old hung-up soldier that: doesn't want to communicate; doesn't want to laugh; and doesn't want to associate. A sense of humor has its place; a good place.

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

SMA COPELAND: He should have a good relationship. He should associate with those young officers. I wouldn't go so far as to say that he should seek their advice, but there may be times when he can learn from junior officers.

INTERVIEWER: Should he also let the junior officers know that, "Hey, I'm willing to help you..."

SMA COPELAND: Let him know.

INTERVIEWER: ...and give you advice.?"

SMA COPELAND: Let him know. Let him know that he is there and that he has, over the years, obtained a world of military knowledge, and it there's ever time, that he can help that junior officer. Let it be known that he stands ready. I've done that over the years as a first sergeant and as a sergeant major. I've had lieutenants come and just talk, and if for no other reason--I think--than to get the feel how this old soldier, of how this experienced soldier, how he views things.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that sometime the junior officers really want to go up and talk to that sergeant major, but then he says, "Well, you know I want to. He's busy," or "He's the meanest son of a gun in the battalion," etc., and sometimes they are reluctant to go up and ask for that advice?

SMA COPELAND: Some have that opinion. "Gee, there are thing I'd like to go and talk to that sergeant major about." But they're reluctant to do it, just like the young soldier, you know, back years ago. Now I would dare say that today's young soldier is more prone to come talk to that sergeant major than are the young lieutenants, because, I think the reason being is that he's sort of fearful... Well lieutenants are not fearful, but they don't want to create an unfavorable impression in the eyes of that sergeant major. How here at Sam Houston University, in Huntsville, Texas, we have a Senior ROTC Department, and there they commission somewhere about twenty, twenty-five, or thirty young officers each year. Well, when was it? About three years ago we had the Year of the NCO; The Year of the Noncommissioned Officer. So the sergeant major, who was stationed with the Senior ROTC detachment up there, called and he said, "Hey, look, you know this is 'The Year of the NCO'." "Yeah, it is," because I got a poop sheet from the Army. He said, "Guess what? We're having this officer graduation exercise and who better to come and address the young lieutenants than Sergeant Major Copeland. Will you do it?" "Yes I will." So they sent a liaison. I'd call it a liaison officer; they sent one of the new lieutenants. He had not yet been commissioned, but he was going to be commissioned. He came. Now I understand that he was reluctant to come to my quarters, but after talking to him on the telephone I assured him that everything would be fine. So he came and we sat here and we talked. He was taking notes; a little about my background because he wanted to put this in the paper. "The Year of the NCO." He wanted to publicize it; that's what he wanted to do.

He wanted to enhance the Noncommissioned Officer Corps. Especially since this was "The Year of the Noncommissioned Officer." So I went and I addressed the Corps. We had a nice time. I let them know, unequivocally, that they could call upon senior noncommissioned officers. They should, as young officers, call upon senior noncommissioned officers--first sergeants, sergeants major--because they could assist them, perhaps in some way, in overcoming some of their adversities in the Army. They didn't have to go and look for the general or look for the colonel. They probably couldn't get in the office anyway. But if you come to your senior noncommissioned officer, he will invite you, he encourages you to come and talk with him. This is what I related. Then I went on to explain the relationship between soldiers and the young officers, because that young officer is that platoon leader out in the platoon, that the young soldiers are going to encounter, in so far as their commander. So it's imperative that they become acquainted, early on, and just as importantly that the first sergeant and the sergeant major and the young officers become acquainted.

INTERVIEWER: Earlier we were talking about the news media, CNN, during Desert storm, etc. During Vietnam, do you think that the news media really reported things the way they were, or do you think it was kinda one-sided or biased, and what kind of effect did the news media have on the military, on the civilians, and I guess you could say, on the politicians?

SMA COPELAND: Well, you know and I know, Butch, that the news media is out there to make the news. If the news is not there, the news media is going to create some news. In this process of creation, they're going to blow things out of proportion. I think that many times this has a detrimental effect. It demoralizes; nationally, locally, and on the battlefield, all because the mission of that newscaster or that reporter. He isn't interested in what you and I are doing, in so far as mission wise is concerned. He is interested in one

thing, primarily, and that is getting a newscast on that six o'clock news; on that channel. That's his career; that's his bread and butter. Consequently, he gets caught up in the business of creating news; not necessarily reporting as it happened. But if nothing is happening, he is going to create--as a news media, as a reporter--he's going to have some news on that channel. Therefore, they get into this business of creating, or ballooning, news, if you will. It has a detrimental effect--many times--on the soldier in the field. It has a detrimental effect on the public; locally, nationally. Now I have seen, I have witnessed programs on our TV whereby high news media: the anchor people; and DOD people; and White House people; and congressmen; and senators, get involved in news reporting. This one time the president of NBC or CBS--I don't recall which it was--be that as it may, said, "Look..." They had publicized some highly top secret information; it had to do with Star Wars; it had been leaked to the media. They called him and said, "We need to talk." "We don't have anything to talk about." "Yeah. You have released some classified information; some highly classified information." He said, "That's your business. You have a problem. I don't have problem. That's your business." So what we're saying, that many times the news media can publicize things that, perhaps is true, but things that shouldn't go--necessarily--to the general public.

INTERVIEWER: It's not so much, censorship, it's just common sense.

SMA COPELAND: It's common sense. The battlefield commander is saying, "There's nothing secret about this battle. We're going into battle and we're going to fight. Here's what we're taking with us. But please wait. Don't tell Saddam--or Ho Chi Minh, or Hitler, or whomever--when we're coming, how we're coming, and with what are we coming. Lay off of us. Come with us, but, hey look, play it cool." The news media could stand a lesson. But getting back to the anchor people and the people who run the news

media. They're telling the nation; they're telling congress; they're telling DOD; and all concerned that, "We don't have a problem. You're the one that has a problem." It hurts us a lot of times.

INTERVIEWER: Let me ask you a question about, going back to the NCO. The Army came up with an "up or out" program. Over the years there has been a lot of senior NCOs and NCOs, in general, who have been pretty critical of the "up or out" program. What do you think of the program?

SMA COPELAND: I for one would be somewhat critical of the program. I go back, I reflect back. One time this one particular mess steward that was in my battalion, we were going to promote him to sergeant first class. Which meant, to do that, now he wasn't a company mess steward, but suddenly he becomes a mess steward of the entire battalion. Now he thought that he could handle a company or troop mess real fine. He could--he was outstanding and he was professional--or we wouldn't have considered promoting him to become the battalion mess steward. Not only is he going to be responsible for feeding one hundred and fifty men, now he's going to feed five or six hundred men. But he thought he was at a position whereby he was functioning at a level where he could do his thing and do it professionally. but anything beyond that, he thought that he couldn't handle it. Therefore, "Don't you promote me." Now, under our later system of "up or out," that professional, satisfied, highly motivated, highly qualified mess steward would have to leave the Army; not only he, but several others. I go back to some wire men and to some helicopter mechanics, and so on, etc. "I'm at the level where I'm satisfied. Don't you refer to me as a dud; I'm not a dud. I'm just as professional as that other guy. It's just, I don't want the rank;. I don't want the responsibility. Now you're telling me that if I don't advance in grade by the time I perform duties a certain number of years, that I'm going to be out of the service?"

"That's what I'm telling you."

INTERVIEWER: Just like when I first came in we had spec. five (specialist fifth class) crew chiefs, with twenty years service. They were outstanding crew chiefs. I could never understand the "up or out" program. The way they came up with the concept where every four years or so you'd retrain a guy. You'd get rid of him and retrain another. If you keep a guy for twenty years, if he's a good man, just think of how much money you're saving.

SMA COPELAND: Yeah. Well, it has its good side and it has its bad side. I would be prone to lean towards, don't make it a cut and dried thing. Leave that decision up to the local commander and his first sergeant and/or the sergeant major. If a corporal or young sergeant is "cutting the mustard," he's doing a good job for you, and he wants to remain at that level, if you pin him and promote him, he going to be lackadaisical, he going to be unmotivated, and he's not going to perform as well. I would say, give them some slack. Give them a little bit of slack.

INTERVIEWER: Another thing is, knowing your soldier. There's been quite a bit of discussion at the Sergeants Major Academy about, what they call, "the quitting time NCO." He's the one that can't wait to get in the car and leave the company area and go home, or go to the club, or wherever it may be. We used to have what we used to call, "the foot locker NCO." He'd get off work and he'd stop by and see how the troops were doing. He'd sit on the foot locker and talk to them. He'd come in for an hour or so on Sunday. They'd really get to know that NCO. Is it important that an NCO visit his troops and... I shouldn't say his, I should say his or her soldiers after duty hours and weekends to see just how things are going?

SMA COPELAND: It's very important, and the young soldiers, the soldiers living in

the billets, they want to see their noncommissioned officers. When the whistle blows--when five o'clock or six o'clock comes--many senior NCOs have a tendency to jump in their cars and take off and go home, or wherever. But the young unmarried soldier, living in the barracks, he loses sight of his leadership, and this creates problems. I can quote some examples. This one particular time, in one unit that I was visiting and I remained there over a weekend, and come quitting time--five, five-thirty--the platoon sergeants, the first sergeant, the sergeants major, were in their cars and gone. Many of them were going to a second job; they were drawing more money on their second job than they were in the Army, most likely. Then you go, that evening, into the mess hall and you have mess with the troops and you look around and the highest ranking noncommissioned officer you see is a buck sergeant. Then the next morning, for breakfast, you go in, no noncommissioned officers. You go in to the dining facility and there's no noncommissioned officers. Then a fight breaks out. I don't know for what reason; just disenchanted. Perhaps it was because they were located in a freezing cold climate. You know, they'd have seven months of darkness and maybe four of five months of light. But none the less, there were no noncommissioned officers around, among them, if for no other reason just to make a showing and be there. Then after breakfast in the dining facility, you go to the chapel. You go in a nice, beautiful, warm chapel and there's very few soldiers, and they were not noncommissioned officers. If they were going to church they were going, I guess, off base. But the point is, there were no noncommissioned officers around to look after and mingle with and associate with that young soldier whom we require to live in the billets; in the barracks. The noncommissioned officers are downtown working or they're at home living it up. So it's very important that, occasionally, noncommissioned officers show up on the scene; be there for a breakfast; be there for the evening meal; and be there in chapel with them. If they're not in chapel, why

isn't he there? He's not there because his morale is low.

INTERVIEWER: What do you feel about that NCO who's selected to go to the Sergeants Major Academy and he declines, or the senior NCO who gets out of an assignment he doesn't like, or the NCO refuses to become that first sergeant because he doesn't want to be a first sergeant. They always find some way to get out of assignments. Give me your comments.

SMA COPELAND: Well, here again, this has its good and bad side. I can see it both ways. I don't think, if I had to lean in a direction, having been in the most demanding assignments that we can possibly have in the Army--so far as noncommissioned officers are concerned--I would lean towards senior noncommissioned officers taking their turn in performing those more challenging duties. That is, platoon sergeant, first sergeant, and sergeant major. Not there are some positions--E8 and E9--where senior noncommissioned officers doesn't have very much troop responsibility, therefore, he could not possibly get a good feel of what trooping is like; what it's like to lead the troops and care for the troops. Because all he or she is caring for is himself or herself. In that respect, I would say give all senior noncommissioned officers an opportunity. Give them an opportunity to be that platoon sergeant; to be that first sergeant to be that sergeant major.

INTERVIEWER: What if he says, "I don't want it."

SMA COPELAND: Well, if he says, "I don't want it," then you're going to have to look again. You're going to have to look at him again. There comes a time whereby we have to reduce our forces, and if that be the case, if you have to choose between that sergeant and one who is knocking on your door trying to accept that challenge, I would have to make that decision as to which of the two go. I'd probably lean towards that one that's knocking on my door as opposed to the one that's shutting that door. It's not a very good

analogy, but it has its good and bad. But if we want to continue that right on up, that up or out system, which isn't always good either, I would say in order to keep the continuity, and the motivation, and the education, and the knowledge, and the training, keep it moving. Keep it moving. Keep reaching for the top. It's necessary to have a system in affect, but there's times when you're going to have to lay off on it, somewhat.

INTERVIEWER: How do you think that the down sizing of the Army that we're seeing going on now, how do you think it's going to effect the Army, as far as its recruiting, retention, ability to perform, what we are now seeing as a world-wide mission?

SMA COPELAND: I think the word is out, in the civilian world, to the affect, "Hey look, you know, I've talked to recruiters and I've watched television. As far as career is concerned, I'm having second thoughts," they're saying, "about obtaining a position or job with the Army, because there's no future." You go in and you talk to the recruiter and you ask him about these quickie programs. "You come in for a year or two years or three years, perhaps, and we can give you so much money and then you go back out and you can go to school and you can plan a career and you can do this and this, etc." Then today, as I'm reading it, it is not having so much as a plus effect that overcomes the adverse effect that the down-sizing of the Army is going to have. They're saying, "Wait a minute. I can be up there for two years or three years, and then I'm gone." They see it every day. Young soldiers are coming back home that the Army is releasing today, and the word is out. The word is going around that they had better take a second look. What I'm saying it may adversely impact upon our ability to recruit quality soldiers.

INTERVIEWER: Also, when we take a look, one of them is, we say that the Cold War is over; I like to say it is apparently over. What changes do you see in our global role? We see what is going on today, but compare what they're going to expect the military to do

and then you take a look at down-sizing. How is this going to work?

SMA COPELAND: I see a change in our mission. I see that our mission has changed from that of primarily defending these great United States. Back after World War II and after Korea, the national political hierarchy was saying that we're not going to become a world police force. Now today, we're getting involved in becoming worldly committed. That is, protecting the world, if you will, as opposed to primarily a combat fighting force to defend this nation. We're now caught-up in a situation, in some parts of the world, whereby it could tie us down for a good many years.

INTERVIEWER: What is known as the "world policemen," right?

SMA COPELAND: What is known as the world policemen. And we have begun to move in a direction whereby the world is looking to the United States to continue policing. What I think is hurting the Nation right now is that we have no clear-cut policy on where we're going and for what reason are we going. As I see it and hear it, Congress is pressing the President, "What is your policy? What is going to be your policy so that we can act accordingly, or react accordingly. Are we going to support you on your policy? Are we going to continue to permit you to put troops into Bosnia, into Africa, and get troops killed, maimed, wounded, and send them back in body bags? What is your policy, Mr. President?" We don't have a clear-cut policy today--the Nation doesn't-- as to what the policy is; there is none.

INTERVIEWER: We were talking about down-sizing. You also run into an issue, I call it the "Gay in the Military Issue." We're cutting down the size of forces and now we have come up with the gay in the military issue. You and I will probably admit that we've always had gays in the military. A lot of them have done a good job and you and I probably knew them by name.

SMA COPELAND: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: But they didn't come out and have the right to be forceful.

SMA COPELAND: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Give me your analogy. What do you think going to...

SMA COPELAND: Well I can address that, in so far as I'm concerned, very candidly, having served that thirty-one years on just about continuous active duty, and having been raised in the trenches and having served at every level, whereby you, by the very nature of your duty assignment, you had to be closely associated with soldiers. You had to perform various asunderous military assignments, and whereby everyone, if he didn't do his job, the unit suffered. I knew that we had gay personnel. Now it wasn't obvious. You know, they don't stand out like a neon light, or like a sore thumb, but they're there in your midst. Then you advance from squad leader, fire team leader, tank commander, all the way through company, platoon sergeant, first sergeant, and you're continuously in contact--day-to-day--with soldiers doing their thing. You knew the gays were there and we had a policy. The gays knew what the policy was; everyone else knew what the policy was. They knew what would happen if they made a move in a direction that would tend to degrade or disgrace or defame the Army; they knew what the consequences would be. Therefore, they went about their business, nonchalantly. They went to town and they went to their bars. Other people went to their bars. We all socialized, they'd socialize together. Who knows if Sam is a gay, or whether Jane was a gay. We don't know, and furthermore, we don't care, you see. We had a good manageable system, until fairly recently.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think by letting it be known that they're gay that its going to be like some of the other problems we've had in the military in the past?" The only reason you're doing that is because I'm gay and you're not." And, if it gets to the point

where we almost find commanders and NCOs treating people with kid gloves because they don't want them to say, "You're discriminating against me because I'm a gay."

SMA COPELAND: The open gay policy will have a detrimental effect on the military, because of what you just said. You have to treat it differently. The policy is different when you begin admitting a lot of things. "I'm gay, and there's nothing you can do about it." "There isn't anything I want to do about, you know. Continue to march. Do your thing, whatever your thing may be. But continue to do your duty professionally." "But now, in addition to doing my duty professionally, I'm going to stand up here and tell you that I'm gay and I'm going to peave that soldier over there because he or she is not gay," you know, "and you're going to have to deal with me, regardless, because the President of the United States said you will." You see, you will. So it becomes sort of, almost, unmanageable for a while, and it could very well be in the future. I'm not sure. But I can see to where when this... Well, let's say, when they move out of the woodwork, that there may be some other problems.

INTERVIEWER: Sergeant major, I've gone through my questionnaires that were put together here. The last ones were on your observations and opinions, etc. What I'd like you to do now, you have a number of papers in front of you that you would like to make a portion of, make it a part of this particular interview. Why don't you briefly, give me the number of the paper, what it is, make a comment, and we'll try to get all the information on here before this particular tape runs out. xyz

SMA COPELAND: Okay, very good, Butch, thank you. I would like to go back in time a little bit, although we've already discussed those times that I was assigned as division sergeant major and brigade sergeant major. But then, during the time that I was Sergeant Major of the Army, you always look back and you wonder, "Well how has the Army

viewed me during my tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army? How well or how badly did I do?" So at this time I would like to present to you some letters--from some officers--that I received just prior to my retirement and subsequent to my retirement. I go back at this time to the 4th Armored Division, in Europe. We talked about my assignment with the 4th Armored Division and about General Sutherland, how he viewed my brigade. At this time I would like to give you Item Number 11, a response that I received, not necessarily a response, but I received a letter from General Sutherland. This will attest to some of the duties that I performed in his unit as division sergeant major, also while Sergeant Major of the Army.

INTERVIEWER: Item Number II, is dated 18 June 1973, and it is a letter to Sergeant Major Copeland, from James W. Sutherland, Jr., Lieutenant General, Chief of Staff. Okay, your next one.

SMA COPELAND: Well, still with the 4th Armored Division, I have received a letter from a Major General E.C.D. Scherrer, after he departed the division and while I was Sergeant Major of the Army. It's Item Number 5. I'd like to give that one to you.

INTERVIEWER: Item Number 5, is a letter to Sergeant Major Copeland, from E.C.D. Scherrer, Major General, Chief, APO New York 09254, dated 25 August 1970, and this is Item Number 5. Okay sergeant major.

SMA COPELAND: Now also along that line, I would like to present to you a letter from Major General D.P. McAuliffe, a fine outstanding general that I served with in the 1st Infantry Division, in Vietnam.

INTERVIEWER: This is Exhibit 11A, dated 19 June 1973, to Sergeant Major Copeland, from D.P. McAuliffe, Major General, United States Army. That's 11A. Okay, your next one.

SMA COPELAND: Another document, a letter, that I would like to present, marked as Exhibit 4, from a former division commander, 2d Armored Division, Major General Kelly.

INTERVIEWER: Exhibit Number 4, this is to Sergeant Major Silas L. Copeland, 21 July 1966, the letter is written by John E. Kelly, Major General, Commanding, and this is from the Commanding General, 2d Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas. That is Number 4.

SMA COPELAND: Another letter is from Lieutenant General Dodge, whom I knew during World War II, as a lieutenant colonel while serving with the 2d Armored Division, in Europe. I would like to present that one.

INTERVIEWER: Exhibit Number 7, dated 29 June 1973, to Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland, U.S. Army, retired, by C.G. Dodge, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army, retired. This is Number 7.

SMA COPELAND: Document Number 2, is a letter from General Haines. I would also like to present that one to you.

INTERVIEWER: Number 2, is dated 3 December 1966, through the Commanding General of the 2d Armored Division, to Sergeant Major Silas L. Copeland, Division Sergeant Major. This is signed by Ralph E. Haines, Jr., Lieutenant General, U.S. Army, Commanding. This is from Headquarters, III Corps, and Fort Hood. This is Number 2.

SMA COPELAND: Another letter is from Colonel Karl R. Morton, who was the first commandant of our Sergeants Major Academy, at Fort Bliss. He was kind enough, just prior to my retirement, to send me this letter. I would like for you to accept that one, please.

INTERVIEWER: This is Exhibit Number 1, dated 28 June 1973, Headquarters, United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, to Sergeant Major Copeland, signed by Karl R. Morton, Colonel, Infantry, Commandant, United States Army Sergeants Major Academy. That is Number 1.

SMA COPELAND: The next document is from General Westmoreland, who was currently chief of staff at that time.

INTERVIEWER: This is Number 13, dated 24 December 1970, to Sergeant Major Copeland, signed by W.C. Westmoreland, General, United States Army, Chief of Staff. Number 13.

SMA COPELAND: Another letter from General Westmoreland, after he retired.

INTERVIEWER: This is Number 14, dated 19 June 1973, to Sergeant Major Copeland, from W.C. Westmoreland, General, U.S. Army, retired. Number 14.

SMA COPELAND: The next letter is from the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Abrams.

INTERVIEWER: This is Number 9, dated 12 March 1973, to Sergeant Major Copeland, signed by Creighton W. Abrams, General, United States Army, Chief of Staff. Number 9.

SMA COPELAND: (Sergeant Major Copeland presented the letter without making a comment.)

INTERVIEWER: This is another letter. Number 8, dated 5 January 1973, to Sergeant Major Copeland, from Creighton U. Abrams, General, United States Army, Chief of Staff. This is Number 8.

SMA COPELAND: (Sergeant Major Copeland presented the letter without making a comment.)

INTERVIEWER: Number 10, is dated 13 June 1973, to Sergeant Major Copeland, from Melvin Zais, Lieutenant General, United States Army. Number 10.

SMA COPELAND: (Sergeant Major Copeland presented the letter without making a comment.)

INTERVIEWER: Number 12, from the Secretary of Defense, dated December 12, 1972, to Sergeant Major Silas L. Copeland, Sergeant Major of the Army, and its signed by Melvin R. Laird. Number 12.

SMA COPELAND: (Sergeant Major Copeland presented the letter without making a comment.)

INTERVIEWER: Number 14 Charlie, or 14C, dated 20 June 1973, and this is to Silas, Warm regards, Bruce Palmer, Jr, General, United States Army, Commander in Chief. This is 14C.

SMA COPELAND: (Sergeant Major Copeland presented the letter without making a comment.)

INTERVIEWER: Number 13, dated 30 March 1980, from General E.C. Meyer, Army Chief of Staff, to Sergeant Major Copeland. This is Number 13.

SMA COPELAND: (Sergeant Major Copeland presented the letter without making a comment.)

INTERVIEWER: Number 6. This is from Creighton Abrams, and also signed by Howard H. Galloway, Secretary of the Army. This is Number 6.

SMA COPELAND: (Sergeant Major Copeland presented the letter without making a comment.)

INTERVIEWER: Number 13A, dated 19 June 1991, to Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland, retired, by Carl E. Vuono, General, United States Army, Chief of Staff. This is Number 13A.

SMA COPELAND: (Sergeant Major Copeland presented the letter without making a comment.)

INTERVIEWER: Number 14B, dated 11 June 1973, to Sergeant Major of the Army

Copeland, from Warren K. Bennett, Major General, United States Army. This is letter....

(End Tape OH 93.1-9, Side 2)

(Begin Tape Oh 93.1-10, Side 1)

INTERVIEWER: This is a continuation of identification of letters provided by Sergeant Major Copeland.

INTERVIEWER: Item Number 14A, 20 June 1973, to Sergeant Major Copeland, from U.S. Long, Jr, Brigadier General, United States Army. Does that conclude all your letters here, Sergeant Major?

SMA COPELAND: That concludes it.

INTERVIEWER: Well, I'll tell you what. First of all I want to thank you for the cordial hospitality extended by you and Ann during the last three days here. It's been extremely enjoyable. Also, on behalf of the NCO Corps, I'd like to thank you for more than thirty years of dedicated service and for the many, many valuable contributions that you made during your tenure as Sergeant Major of the Army. And also, on behalf of all the people at the Center of Military History, I would like to thank you for participating in this very important program. Also for Larry Arms, who's the museum Curator down at the NCO Museum, at Fort Bliss, we want to thank you very much for your participation, and as I said, this has been very, very enjoyable.

SMA COPELAND: Well Butch, let me just say, it's been enjoyable for Silas Copeland, also, to have you here and putting up with me for, what, three days.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, almost three days.

SMA COPELAND: I've enjoyed it. It was a little bit rough in the beginning, but it right away smoothed out, all because of your behavior, your mannerism, your approach to the thing, because you're easy to get to know. And all through this interview I've been

referring to you as, Butch. Well, you're Butch, but you're also, Erwin H. Koehler.

INTERVIEWER: That's correct.

SMA COPELAND: United States Army, retired, Sergeant Major.

INTERVIEWER: That's right.

SMA COPELAND: With a long distinguished Army career. And I admire your long service, and I congratulate you upon a successful career. I appreciate what you are continuing to do for the Army, and that is, work for and on behalf of the Noncommissioned Officers Corps, and the Army as a whole. Sergeant Major Koehler, let me just again thank you for being here with Ann and I for this past three days. I know the job is demanding and it has just begun. As a matter of fact, you've been here three days, but in your future duties of editing and rewriting and correcting all the Texas language that I've been using, and slang, over the past few days, now you have your job cut out for you. And you're to be commended. I would also like to commend Larry Arms, of our NCO Museum, the Academy Museum, at Biggs Field, El Paso, Texas, Fort Bliss. Also commend Richard Kidd, the incumbent Sergeant Major of the Army, for becoming involved in such demanding project and to get this thing off the ground and get it going. I can just foresee that eventually it's going to be culminated. I also thank General Gordon Sullivan, the Chief of Staff of the Army, for having given this a boost and endorsed, given us his endorsement to carry through with this mission of capturing the history of soldiers who have a long distinguished career in the military and who have something to hang out. That is, let it all hang out. And you've been so gracious and willing to let me do that for the past three days. I appreciate it. Sometimes I became a little bit emotional as we reflect back over the years, but you withstood that. You sat and you listened to what this soldier had to say, because I think that's what you came here for. You wanted to know what I would like to say about

our Army, our all-volunteer army today. And you permitted me to do that. I would also like to commend Ronnie Strahan. He gets involved in these sort of things. Sergeant Major of the Sergeants Major Academy, and his boss, Colonel Van Horn, he gets involved. He and I have talked on the horn, early on, and he just very briefly, in the absence of his sergeant major, Ronnie Strahan, who was on TDY at the time. He said, "Sergeant major, let me just give you a quick overview of what we hope to do." And he did. So you did not come unexpectedly. I knew you were coming and you had been in contact with me previously. But let me just thank all of these outstanding people, and also General Nelson, who heads up the Center of Military History, as I understand it, in the Pentagon. And Major Kelly and his associates in the Pentagon. I have been in contact, verbally, early on, and also have received correspondence from the office. And I appreciate their interest in what they are endeavoring to do to capture the thoughts and the experience of old soldiers who are not always going to be around, and you did it timely, because tomorrow I'm going on sick call. Thank you Butch. Thank you one and all.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you Sergeant Major.

(End of interview)

ANNEX A

- Exhibit 11 - Letter from Lieutenant General Sunderland, Chief of Staff, Headquarters, United States European Command, APO New York 09128, dated 18 June 1973. A-1
- Exhibit 5 - Letter from Major General E.C.D. Scherrer, Chief, Headquarters, Joint United States Military Mission for Aid to Turkey, APO New York 09254, dated 25 August 1970. A-2
- Exhibit 11A - Letter form Major General D.P. McAuliffe, United States Army, dated 19 June 1973 A-3
- Exhibit 4 - Letter from Major General John E. Kelly, Commanding, Headquarters, 2d Armored Division, Forty Hood Texas, 76545, dated 21 July 1966 A-4
- Exhibit 7 - Letter from Lieutenant General C.G. Dodge, U.S. Army Retired, Executive Vice President, Association of the United States Army, dated 29 June 1973. A-5
- Exhibit 2 - Letter from Lieutenant General Ralph E. Haines, Jr., Commanding, Headquarters, III Corps and Fort Hood, Fort Hood, Texas 74544, dated 3 December 1966 A-6
- Exhibit 1 - Letter from Colonel Karl R. Morton, Commandant, Headquarters, U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, dated 28 June 1973 A-7
- Exhibit 13 - Letter from General W.C. Westmoreland, Chief of Staff, United States Army, dated 24 December 1970 . . A-8
- Exhibit 14 - Letter from General W.C. Westmoreland, Chief of Staff, United States Army, dated 19 June 1973 A-9
- Exhibit 9 - Letter from General Creighton W. Abrams, Chief of Staff, United States Army, dated 12 March 1973. . . . A-10
- Exhibit 8 - Letter from General Creighton W. Abrams, Chief of Staff, United States Army, dated 5 January 1973 . . . A-11
- Exhibit 10 - Letter from Lieutenant General Melvin Zais, United States Army, dated 13 June 1973 A-12
- Exhibit 12 - Letter from Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of the Army, dated 12 December 1972. A-13
- Exhibit 14C - Letter from General Bruce Palmer, Jr., Commander in Chief, United States Readiness Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida 33608, dated 20 June 1973 A-14
- Exhibit 13 - Letter from General E.C. Meyer, Chief of Staff, United States Army, dated 30 March 1982 A-15
- Exhibit 13A - Letter from General Creighton W. Abrams, Chief of Staff, United States Army, and Howard H. Galloway, Secretary of the Army A-16
- Exhibit 13A - Letter form General Carl E. Vuono, Chief of Staff, United States Army, dated June 19, 1991 A-17

- Exhibit 14B - Letter from Major General Warren K. Bennett, United
States Army, dated 11 June 1973 A-18
- Exhibit 14A - Letter from Brigadier General H.S. Long, Jr., United
States Army, dated 20 June 1973 A-19



HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND
APO NEW YORK 09128

18 June 1973

Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland
Office C/S, U.S. Army
Washington, D. C. 20310

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

The Chief of Staff's invitation to attend your retirement ceremony arrived and I very much regret that I will be unable to attend. To be present to assist in honoring you on the date which culminates such a distinguished career would have been a great pleasure for me and Mrs. Sutherland.

Serving with you in the 4th Armored Division, even though it was a short time, was an inspiration for me and visits with you always gave me a lift. I particularly admire your professional performance as the third Sergeant Major of the Army. During your tenure the dignity and prestige of that office have been enhanced. You can depart with a completely justified feeling of satisfaction that you have turned in a superb performance. Your place is assured as an outstanding soldier of the U.S. Army.

Mrs. Sutherland joins me in sending our warmest personal regards and best wishes for health and success to you and your family in any future endeavors.

Sincerely,

JAMES W. SUTHERLAND, JR.
Lieutenant General, USA
Chief of Staff

ENCLOSURE 1

5

HEADQUARTERS
JOINT UNITED STATES MILITARY MISSION FOR AID TO TURKEY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

APO New York 09254
25 August 1970

CSM Silas L. Copeland
CSM, 4th Infantry Division
APO San Francisco 96262

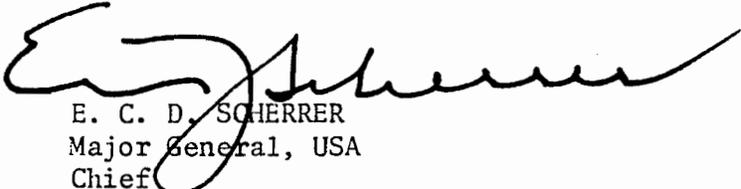
Dear Sgt. Major:

Our congratulations on your selection to be the new SMA. This is a most deserved honor. We are all proud of you, and proud to have had occasions to serve with you.

As you know, you were close to getting this assignment when we were in the 4th Armored Division together. Since then you have been CSM of two Infantry Divisions; and, of course before that the CSM of 2d Armored Division. Quite a record!

Mrs. Scherrer joins me in sending our very best wishes to Mrs. Copeland and yourself, and our fondest hopes for your continued success.

Most sincerely,



E. C. D. SCHERRER
Major General, USA
Chief

P.S. We expect to move from Turkey back to USA around 1 April 1971. Ted is still attending college in Munich. Dave is just now entering North Country Community College at Saranac Lake, NY.

ENCLOSURE 2



11 A

19 June 1973

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

It is with personal regret that I find that I am unable to attend the review and reception at Fort Myer on 28 June honoring your retirement. I would certainly like to be able to congratulate you in person for the distinguished record of service you have compiled and to wish you and Mrs. Copeland all the best in the years ahead.

As you leave active service with the United States Army, I know that you do so with a sense of real accomplishment for you have provided a steady hand and true leadership to countless officers and men. I consider it a privilege to have served with you, even for a relatively short period of time, in Vietnam.

With all best wishes and warm personal regards,

Sincerely,

D. P. McAULIFFE
Major General, US Army

Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland
Office of the Chief of Staff, US Army
Washington, D. C. 20310

ENCLOSURE 3

A-3



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 2D ARMORED DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76546

4

AKDSA-CG

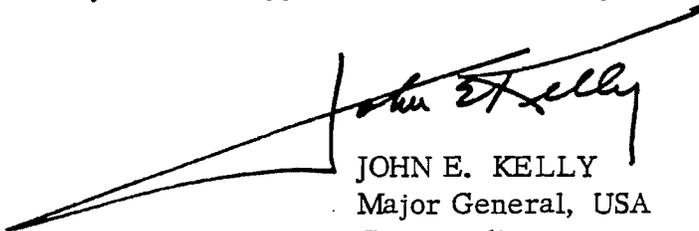
21 July 1966

SUBJECT: 2d Armored Division Anniversary Ceremony

TO: Sergeant Major Silas L. Copeland, RA 38 244 595
Division Sergeant Major
2d Armored Division
Fort Hood, Texas

1. The fine ceremony which the noncommissioned officers and enlisted men of the division conducted on the evening of Friday, 15 July, is testimony to your capable leadership as the Sergeant Major of the 2d Armored Division. I was extremely proud of the military bearing and personal appearance of all of those who participated in the formation, and I know that this high standard was only achieved through your efforts and the support of the senior noncommissioned officers of the Division.

2. You have my sincere congratulations on a job "Well Done" and my deep appreciation for your fine support of "Prelude to Taps".


JOHN E. KELLY
Major General, USA
Commanding

ENCLOSURE 4

A-4



ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

1529 EIGHTEENTH STREET, NORTHWEST, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036

29 June 1973

SMA Silas L. Copeland, USA Ret.
Box 1449
Huntsville, Texas 77340

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

I certainly appreciated the invitation to Betty and me to attend your retirement review and reception yesterday. They were both delightful affairs.

I do indeed hate to see you leave the Army. You have done a wonderful job. I hear this from all levels, not just in the Pentagon but from commanders and their sergeants major in the field. I am sure that the Army is grateful to you for your distinguished service.

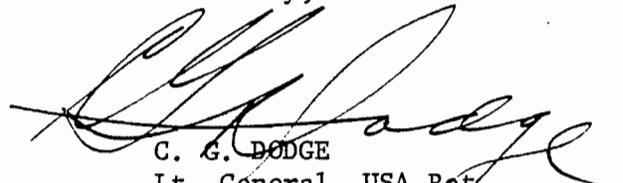
General Abrams paid you a wonderful tribute at your retirement review, one that I am sure was completely deserved. It was especially impressive, coming from him, because I know that he doesn't treat such matters lightly or say things that he doesn't really mean. So you should leave the Army with a great feeling of satisfaction, knowing that your service has been outstanding and that you have made a substantial contribution to the Army's welfare.

I really meant it when I said please keep in touch with us. I don't want to lose track of you just because you are not on active duty. I shall always be interested in your whereabouts and what you are doing.

Heartiest congratulations on receiving the Distinguished Service Medal, and congratulations as well to Mrs. Copeland for the part she played in your earning it.

Betty joins me in warm good wishes to you both.

Sincerely,



C. G. DODGE
Lt. General, USA Ret.
Executive Vice President

ENCLOSURE 5



IN REPLY REFER TO
AKCHO-CG

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544

3 December 1966

SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

THRU: Commanding General
2d Armored Division
Fort Hood, Texas 76546

TO: Sergeant Major Silas L. Copeland
Division Sergeant Major
2d Armored Division
Fort Hood, Texas 76546

1. On the occasion of your departure from this area, I would like to express my appreciation for the loyal and unswerving support you have given this command.

2. Your soldierly qualities have marked you as a true representative of the enlisted men within Hell on Wheels, and your devotion to duty has reflected the professionalism which epitomizes the Noncommissioned Officer Corps.

3. You have provided immeasurable assistance to me through my Corps Sergeant Major in such areas as the effective utilization of non-commissioned officers, the welfare of the enlisted men, morale and discipline in the command, and the like. You also played a major part in planning and execution of the Armed Forces Day Review, for which the command received warm appreciation from Governor Connally. Your support of the Association of the United States Army has been singularly outstanding and manifests your faith in the principles on which our Army stands.

ENCLOSURE 6

A-6

AKCHO-CG

3 December 1966

SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

4. Your loyalty and dedication to Hell on Wheels and to the Army as a whole have earned you the confidence and respect of officers and enlisted men alike; and have enabled you to make a significant contribution to this command in the accomplishment of its mission.

5. The best wishes of this command go with you, your gracious lady, and fine family as you depart for your new assignment. You will be sorely missed here at Fort Hood and in Central Texas. The 4th Armored Division's gain is our loss.

6. Mrs. Haines joins me in warm personal regards. Best wishes for a safe journey and for continued success in all future endeavors.



RALPH E. HAINES, Jr.
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

ENCLOSURE 6 2

A-6A



#

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS US ARMY SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY
FORT BLISS, TEXAS 79918

ATSSM-CO

28 June 1973

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland,

I write this letter in behalf of all Academy hands in saying we view your retirement with a good deal of sadness and the feeling that the Army will lose a great deal the day you shed the Army Green for mufti.

Your service as Sergeant Major of the Army has been superb. You have contributed a great deal to the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers, the Army's backbone, and in my personal view, its very heart and soul, as well. Most impressive to me about your service as the Army's top enlisted soldier, was the deep concern you consistently held for troop welfare. Though on most field visits you were inundated in brass, you always managed to slip away to talk to and express your interest in our soldiers. You were assuredly a Soldier's Sergeant Major of the Army!

Your assistance to and support of this Academy has been nothing short of magnificent. Without your many faceted efforts in our behalf our job would have been much more difficult. You as much as anyone here has materially helped in building this Academy. I think all of us will draw great satisfaction from our part in this important Army effort for years to come.

I have always had a peculiar idiosyncrasy in that I consider the title "soldier" to be very special. In my twenty-eight years in the Army I have encountered very few officers or enlisted men who I felt were worthy of this title. You are certainly one who, in my view, is fully due the honor of being called a soldier. Probably my own greatest ambition in life is to earn that title. In my view, I have not as yet measured up, as I feel you have.

ENCLOSURE 7

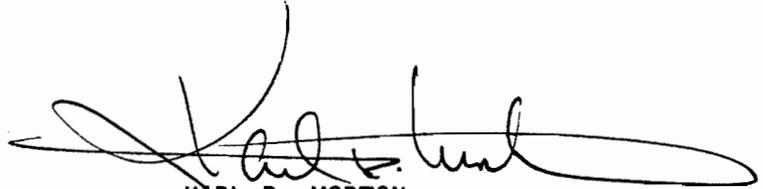
A-7

ATSSM-CO
Sergeant Major Copeland

28 June 1973

In closing, permit me to say that we of the "ULTIMA" will sorely miss you. I refuse to say goodbye, preferring instead to offer a heartfelt farewell and our wish we will see you soon again. Until then all join me in extending to you a very warm and sincere good luck and Godspeed. You have certainly worked diligently for the Army and thus deserve all the very best in your retirement.

Warmest regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl R. Morton', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

KARL R. MORTON
Colonel, Infantry
Commandant

SMA Silas L. Copeland
P. O. Box 1449
Huntsville, Texas 77340



24 December 1970

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

As we enter the holiday season, I would like to take the opportunity it presents to express my appreciation for the support which you have rendered to me since you assumed the duties of Army Sergeant Major this past October.

It has been good to have you on board, and the faithful and professional service you have provided has meant much to the Army in general and to me personally during these difficult days. As we enter a new year, it is a source of comfort to me to have you on my staff and to know that you are standing with me as we prepare to face the challenges that the future will bring.

Mrs. Westmoreland joins me in wishing you and Mrs. Copeland a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

W. C. WESTMORELAND
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland
Washington, D. C. 20310



14

19 June 1973

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

I have received an invitation to attend your retirement review and reception on Thursday, the 28th of June, at Fort Myer. I deeply regret that other commitments on that date will not permit me to be present. However, I take this opportunity to again tell you of the great admiration that I have for you as a soldier and of my appreciation of the job that you did while I was Chief of Staff of the Army in your capacity as Sergeant Major of the Army. You carried out your duties with dignity, competence, and professionalism. I could not have been served more effectively and loyally by my enlisted advisor and the senior noncommissioned officer of the Army than by you. I congratulate you on your years of effective service to the United States Army.

Mrs. Westmoreland joins me with warmest best wishes to Mrs. Copeland and you.

Sincerely,


W. C. WESTMORELAND
General, U. S. Army (Ret.)

Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland

ENCLOSURE 9

A-9



12 March 1973

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

I want to thank you for the thorough and detailed job you did as a member of the board established to recommend nominees for the position of Sergeant Major of the Army. The experience and judgment you brought to this important task reflect most favorably on your professional ability. The Army is grateful for your efforts.

Sincerely,

CREIGHTON W. ABRAMS
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland



8

5 January 1973

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

I feel that it is in the best interest of the Army that you remain in your position as Sergeant Major of the Army through 30 June 1973, and I ask that you give full consideration to doing so.

Should you find that delaying your retirement until 1 July 1973 imposes no undue hardship on you or your family, appropriate action will be taken to defer ongoing plans related to your retirement.

Sincerely,

CREIGHTON W. ABRAMS
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland

ENCLOSURE 11

A-11



10

13 June 1973

Melvin Zais

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

Today I received the invitation to your retirement review and reception. Unfortunately, I cannot be present but I couldn't let the occasion pass without expressing my thoughts to you.

You should be very proud and, although you are not a vain man, tremendously pleased with your performance of duty as Sergeant Major of the United States Army. It was your brilliant record which caused you to be selected for the position and all were aware of that. I believe more important, however, is the fact that you carried the position with such grace, wisdom and dignity. A smaller man would have soon become full of himself but you were too big a man for that.

I want you to know that you leave the Army with the greatest respect of your superiors, your contemporaries and all of the wonderful young soldiers who ever had the chance to come in contact with you.

May you find the pleasure and satisfaction in retirement which you so richly deserve.

Sincerely,

MELVIN ZAIS

Lieutenant General, USA

Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland
Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army
Washington, D. C. 20310

ENCLOSURE 12

12

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

December 12, 1972

Sergeant Major Silas L. Copeland, USA
Sergeant Major of the Army
Office, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army
Rm. 3E677, The Pentagon

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

One of the highlights of my four years as Secretary of Defense has been the opportunity to observe the outstanding performance and dedication of the enlisted men and women of the Military Services. In your position as the ranking enlisted man of the Army, you have played an important leadership role in maintaining this high level of performance.

I would like for you to drop by my office with your counterparts from the other Services at 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, December 13, so that I may express to you all my sincere appreciation for the role the senior enlisted men in the Services have played in keeping America's military forces operating at a high level of professionalism and dedication.

Sincerely,



ENCLOSURE 13

A-13

14 C



UNITED STATES RESERVE COMMAND
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
ARMOY AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA 33608

20 June 1973

Dear Silas:

Although my schedule will not permit me to attend your retirement ceremony, I would not want you to leave the Army without having received my personal, heartfelt thanks for a job well done. I, for one, as well as many other senior officers, will long remember your wise counsel and your outstanding leadership of the noncommissioned officers corps during some of the Army's most difficult days.

Kay joins me in sending our best to you and your lady. Whether you plan a post-retirement career or a well earned rest, you have our best wishes for the future.

Warm regards,

BRUCE PALMER, Jr.
General, USA
Commander in Chief

Sergeant Major Silas L. Copeland
Sergeant Major of the Army
(DACS-SM)
Washington, D. C. 20310

ENCLOSURE 14



WASHINGTON

30 MAR 1982

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

Upon completion of your tenure as the chairman of my enlisted retiree council, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for all of the assistance that you have given me.

Although you and your counterparts are no longer a part of the active Army, you are very much a part of the total Army. You have shown me that you stand ready and willing to help the Army accomplish its mission. Of particular note is the tremendous help that you have given the Army in recruiting. As members of local communities, you and your counterparts have opened doors to many high schools that were previously closed to Army recruiters. You have also reached other audiences where support is essential in order to obtain the soldiers needed now and in the future.

I sincerely appreciate the outstanding work that you have done and solicit your continued support of the retiree council program, the retired community, and the active Army. Thanks for a job well done and may you have success in all of your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

E. C. MEYER
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

SMA Silas L. Copeland, USA Retired
PO Box 1867
Huntsville, Texas 77340

ENCLOSURE 15

6

In recognition of your long and devoted service to the Nation, we take pleasure in presenting to you this testimonial of the high regard in which you are held by the members of the Army.

Your outstanding career, spanning more than thirty years of dedicated duty, has been characterized by professionalism of the highest order. During World War II, our country was fortunate to have a man of your ability to serve with the 2d Armored Division in Europe. Following the war, the Army continued to utilize your proven skills in positions of increasing responsibility, both in the United States and in Korea during the Korean War. Your demonstrated experience, judgment, and professional knowledge marked as well your performance as a Senior ROTC instructor at Texas A&M University and, later in your career, at Centenary College of Louisiana.

A series of troop assignments preceded your selection as Sergeant Major of the 2d Armored Division and as Command Sergeant Major of, consecutively, the 4th Armored Division in Germany and the 1st and 4th Infantry Divisions in Vietnam. Your outstanding performance in each of those key assignments led to your appointment as Sergeant Major of the Army--the position in which your long and distinguished service was culminated. Throughout your military career, you have exemplified the highest traditions of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps and made significant contributions to the Army's efforts to preserve our national security.

We join in wishing you continued success and richly deserved happiness.

Secretary of the Army

HOWARD H. GALLOWAY

Chief of Staff

CRIGHTON W. ABRAMS

131



WASHINGTON
June 19, 1991

Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland, Retired
P.O. Box 1867
Huntsville, Texas 77340

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland:

It was a great pleasure to be able to spend some time with you during my final week as Chief of Staff. I enjoyed our session very much, and I deeply appreciate the lovely Waterford crystal bowl that you presented to me at the conclusion of our discussion. The bowl is a very attractive and thoughtful gift, and it will long serve to remind me of each of you -- and all that you have done for the soldiers of our Trained and Ready Army.

As I'm sure each of you understands, it has been a great honor to wear our country's uniform and lead soldiers for the past 34 years. Needless to say, the past decade has been particularly enjoyable, as during that period our Army has developed into what certainly must rank with the finest fighting forces our nation has fielded. Perhaps the most important element in that process was the rebuilding of our NCO Corps -- an accomplishment in which each of you played a part.

The overall result of our efforts, of course, was the Army of JUST CAUSE and DESERT STORM, a force of officers, soldiers, and above all NCOs of unparalleled competence, dedication, and commitment. America's Army has clearly established itself as the best in the world today, and each of you -- and indeed, all Americans -- should take great pride in what our soldiers have achieved.

Pat and I thank you again for a wonderful gift and for your many contributions to our Army over the years. With admiration and appreciation,

Sincerely,

Carl E. Vuono
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

ENCLOSURE 17

A-17

14 B



11 June 1973

Dear SMA Copeland:

I note that you are retiring (finally!) at the end of June, and wish to send this note expressing my pleasure in knowing and working with you, my admiration for the splendid manner in which you carried out your demanding responsibilities as Sergeant Major of the Army, and my personal best wishes to you and your family for continued success and happiness in your retirement.

You have done a great deal to improve the image of our senior non-commissioned officers, and to reflect the proper levels of dedication and professionalism to personnel of all stations, both within and outside the Army.

I'm sorry that I will not be present at the ceremony in your honor later this month, but want you to know that the Army will miss you, indeed; however, we know that you will maintain a continuing and positive interest in making ours a better Army. Good luck!

Sincerely,
Warren K. Bennett
WARREN K. BENNETT
Major General, USA

SMA Silas L. Copeland
Office, Chief of Staff, US Army
Department of the Army
Washington, DC 20310

ENCLOSURE 18



14
A

20 June 1973

Dear Sergeant Major Copeland,

You were indeed kind to include me as a guest for your retirement ceremony on 28 June. Please know that I greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Unfortunately, we are just now getting the 1973 ROTC Basic Camp into full gear, and I really don't feel I can leave, even for one day.

But I will be thinking of you that day, and at four o'clock that afternoon, I will throw you a salute all the way from Fort Knox.

Sergeant Major, you have been great - absolutely great. I enjoyed working with you, but I enjoyed even more observing the fine work you did for the Army. (May the CSM's forever keep their green tabs!)

You have my admiration, respect, and sincerest best wishes for success and happiness in your coming years. May the Lord watch over you and yours.

With warmest regards,

Sincerely,

H. S. LONG, JR.
Brigadier General, USA

Sergeant Major of the Army Silas L. Copeland
Office of the Chief of Staff
United States Army
Washington, D. C. 20310

ENCLOSURE 19

A-19

ANNEX B

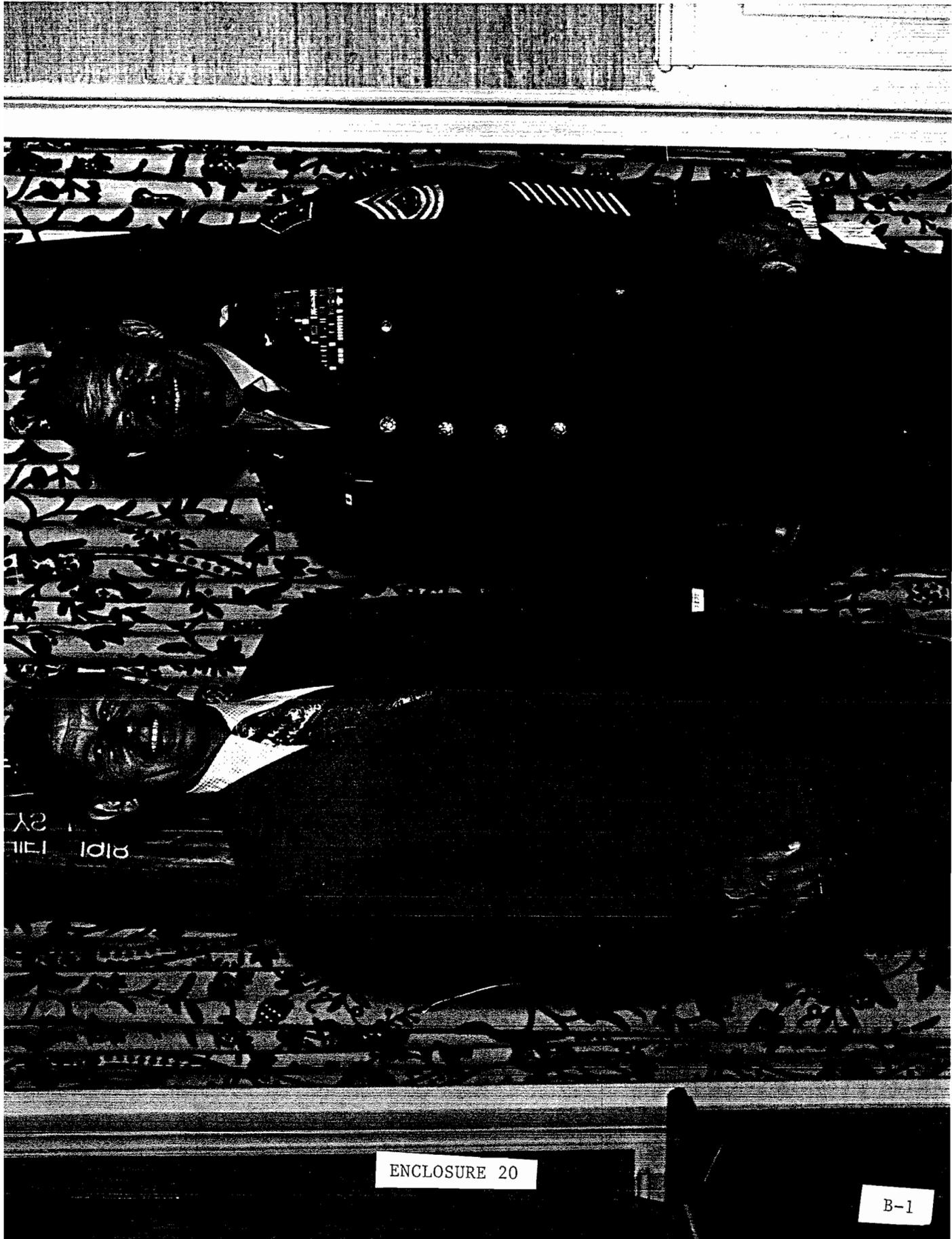
NOTE: The photo copies in this annex were made from photographs provided by SMA Silas L. Copeland. The photographs have been turned over to the NCO Museum for reproduction. The photo copies contained herein are provided for information as to the photos that are available, courtesy of SMA Copeland. All photographs are official photographs, taken by Army photographers.

- Enclosure 20 - SMA Silas Copeland and Secretary of the Army Robert Frolkey in the Secretary's office B-1
- Enclosure 21 - SMA Silas Copeland being sworn in by MG Kenneth G. Wickham, the Adjutant General of the Army, during a ceremony at the Pentagon (October 1970). B-2
- Enclosure 22 - SMA Silas Copeland being sworn in by MG Kenneth G. Wickham, the Adjutant General of the Army, during a ceremony at the Pentagon. Mrs. Ann Copeland looks on. (October 1970) B-3
- Enclosure 23 - Presentation of the Oath of Office by Secretary of the Army Stanley R. Reasor B-4
- Enclosure 24 - SMA Silas Copeland is shown being re-enlisted for three more years by Gen William C. Westmoreland in a ceremony held in the Pentagon (November 1970) . B-5
- Enclosure 25 - SMA Silas Copeland's reception for the CSM's of the Major Commands within CONUS. The reception was held at the Fort Myer NCO Club (December 1972) . B-6
- Enclosure 26 - SMA Silas Copeland and Ann Copeland look at a photo album of their visit to Fort Riley, KS, presented to them by SP4 Patrick Byrne, correspondent, PIO, Fort Riley (September 1971). . . B-7
- Enclosure 27 - 1st Infantry Division CSM Copeland and visiting USARPAC CSM Bainbridge walking in the 1st Infantry Division area in Vietnam (March 1970) B-8
- Enclosure 28 - Top Photo - BG Roy L. Atteberry, ADC (Support) welcomes SMA Silas L. Copeland to the Americal Division. In the background is CSM Fred E. Darling, Americal Division Sergeant Major. (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - Happiness is meeting old friends in the American Division. SMA Copeland and SFC Bevo Brooks. (September 1970). B-9
- Enclosure 29 - Top Photo - Briefing - (L - R) CSM Fred E. Darling, Americal Division, SMA Copeland, CSM Edward Wilson, XXIV Corps, CSM Leroy A. Arceneaux, Danang Support Command, and CSM Charles Hall, USARV. The group was visiting the Chu Lai Defense Command (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - The group - CSM DArling, CSM Edward Wilson, CSM Charles Hall, and SMA Copeland. In the background is SGM John R. Edwards, MSG Oliver Wade, and SGM J. E. Rowlett. (September 1970). B-10

- Enclosure 30 - Top Photo - SMA Copeland shakes hands with an unidentified Americal soldier. Escorting the incoming SMA was CSM Chester Mielniczuk, 3d Bn, 21st Inf (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - At LZ Center, SMA Silas L. Copeland greets and chats with Americal Division soldiers. (September 1970) B-11
- Enclosure 31 - SMA Copeland greets an unidentified Americal soldier at LZ Center. (September 1970) B-12
- Enclosure 32 - Guests SMA Copeland and MSG Alexander are shown with (1) US Army Forces Southern Command CSM O. Valent and USARSO commander MG G.L. Mabry at Fort Amador. (May 1972) B-13
- Enclosure 33 - MG George L. Mabry, Jr., United States Army Forces Southern Command commander, welcomes SMA Copeland to Fort Amador, At left is USARSO CSM O. Valent. (May 1972) B-14
- Enclosure 34 - SMA Copeland enjoys an informal chat with MG G.L. Mabry, U.S. Army Forces Southern Command commander, and USARSO CSM O. Valent at Fort Amador. (May 1972). B-15
- Enclosure 35 - SMA Copeland addresses candidates at USARSO's NCO Academy, Fort Sherman, Canal Zone. (May 1972). . . . B-16
- Enclosure 36 - SMA Copeland addresses troops of the 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 20th Infantry, Fort Clayton, during a training break. (May 1972) B-17
- Enclosure 37 - CSM Clarence Steele presents a French rail stand on behalf of the enlisted men of the US Army Logistical Support Command, Corozal. (May 1972) B-18
- Enclosure 38 - Mrs. James Anderson, wife of SGM Anderson of USASTRATCOM Sig Gp (S), an Army Community Service volunteer, shows SMA Copeland the ACS Loan Closet at Fort Clayton. (May 1972). B-19
- Enclosure 39 - US Army Forces Southern Command Soldier of the Month for April, SP4 Carl House of Logistical Support Command, welcomes SMA Copeland to Corozal. (May 1972) B-20
- Enclosure 40 - SMA Copeland enters the USARSO Bakery at Corozal with SSG E. Rosa, NCOIC there; Logistical Support Command (LSC) CSM C. Steele, USARSO CSM O. Valent, and MSG D. Hill, LSC Services Division NCOIC. (May 1972). B-21
- Enclosure 41 - NCOIC SSG E. Rosa explains the workings of a loaf shaping machine at the USARSO Bakery to SMA Copeland. From left: SFC D. Hill, LSC NCOIC, Admin Svc; USARSO CSM O. Valent and LSC CSM C. Steele. (May 1972). . . B-22
- Enclosure 42 - SMA Copeland slices a cake prepared in his honor at the Jungle Operations Training Center, Ft. Sherman. From left are SP4 L. Dunn, SFC W. Hastings, SP4 T. Jones and SFC G. Shepherd. (May 1972) B-23

- Enclosure 43 - At the 193d Infantry Brigade Headquarters at Fort Kobbe, SMA Copeland meets with SGM W. Thomas of the Battalion's Operations Section. (May 1972) B-24
- Enclosure 44 - SSG G. Leatherwood, NCOIC at Kobbe Beach, escorts SMA Copeland, accompanied by 193d Infantry Brigade CSM W. Tapp and USARSO CSM O. Valent. (May 1972) . . B-25
- Enclosure 45 - SMA Copeland tours the Headquarters Company, 193d Infantry Brigade dining facility at Fort Kobbe, escorted by SFC C. Knoche, mess steward. (May 1972). B-26
- Enclosure 46 - SFC William Hastings watches as SMA Copeland washes down a jungle survival meal with fresh coconut milk at the Jungle Operations Training Center, Fort Sherman. (May 1972). B-27
- Enclosure 47 - PFC Kint Gardner and troops of Co. C, 3d Bn, 5th Inf, Fort Kobbe meet SMA Copeland. From left are SFC J. Propst, acting 1SG, PFC R. Harley, PFC R. Lehmkuhl, and SP4 Wallace Dean. (May 1972) B-28
- Enclosure 48 - Live fire at Empire Range is observed as 1SG D. McCarley, Co. B, 3d Bn, 5th Inf, explains the action. From left are USARSO CSM O. Valent, CPT R. Drushal, S-3, and CSM Jose Salas. (May 1972). B-29
- Enclosure 49 - SMA Copeland fields a question from a soldier assigned to Company C, 3d Battalion, 5th Infantry at Camp Bayonet. (May 1972). B-30
- Enclosure 50 - A visit with NCOs in USAREUR (October 1970). B-31
- Enclosure 51 - A visit with NCOs in USAREUR (October 1970). B-32
- Enclosure 52 - Top Photo - Arrival at the 79th Maint Bn salvage yard. Saigon Support Command. (January 1972).
Bottom Photo - Welcome to Newport Army Terminal by CSM Levesque. Saigon Support Command. (January 1972). B-33
- Enclosure 53 - Top Photo - Rapping with the top enlisted men at HQ, 71st Trans Bn. Saigon Support Command. (January 1972)
Bottom Photo - Touring on one of the 71st's tug boats. Saigon Support Command. (January 1972) B-34
- Enclosure 54 - Top Photo - Early arrival at Headquarters, Saigon Support Command. (January 1972)
Bottom Photo - A visit to 29th General Support Group Class I yard. Saigon Support Command. (January 1972). B-35
- Enclosure 55 - Parts Area. US Army Depot, Long Binh. (January 1972). B-36
- Enclosure 56 - A walk through the Class I yard. Saigon Support Command. (January 1972). B-37
- Enclosure 57 - Top Photo - Review of Memorial Board. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - Engineer Repair Shop. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970) B-38

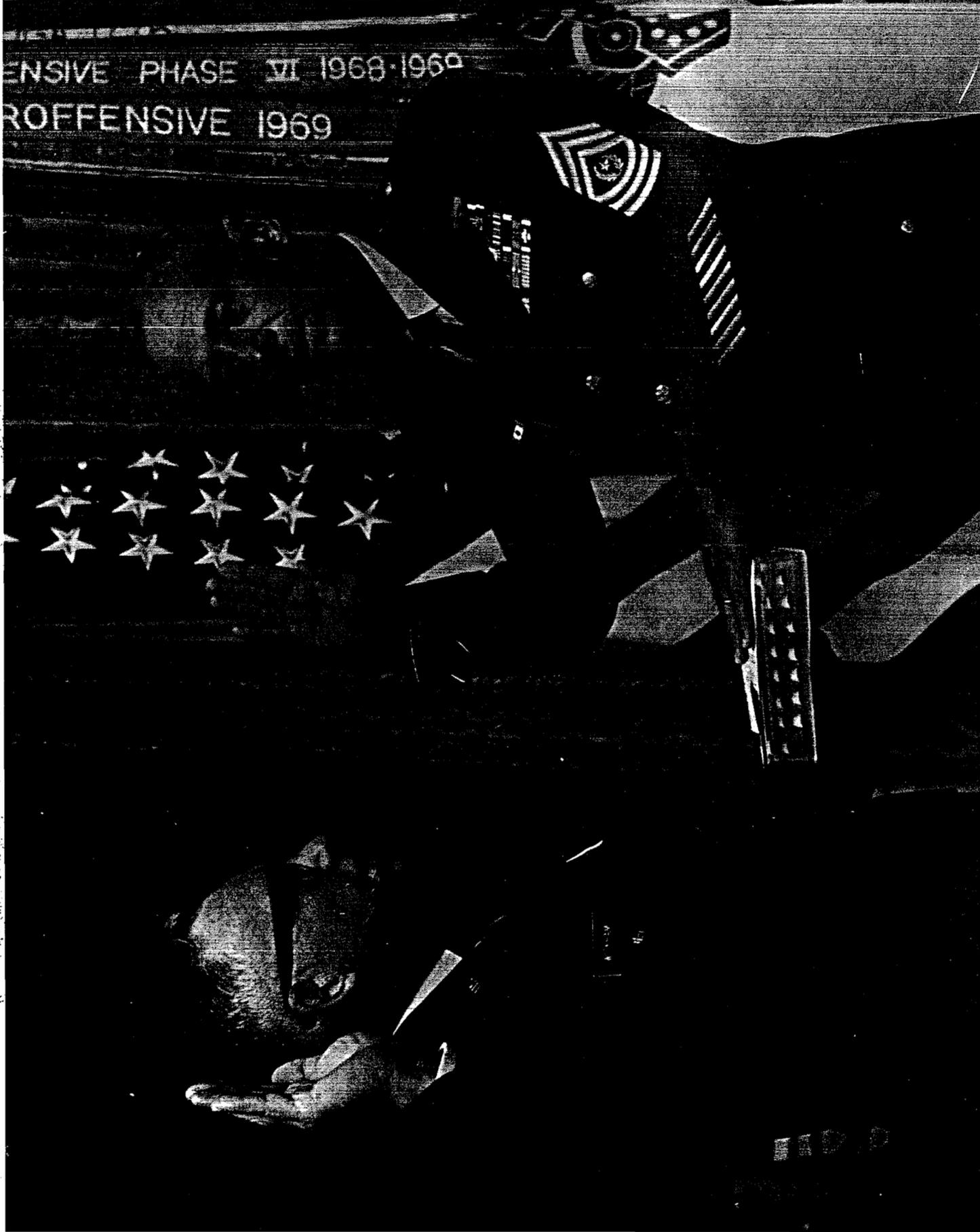
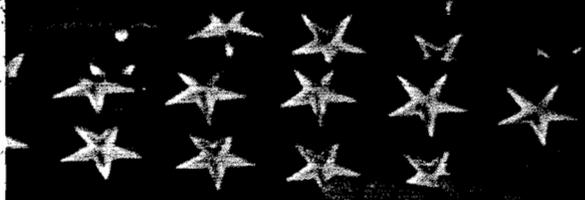
- Enclosure 58 - Top Photo - Recon Briefing. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - Introduction to Group DCO, LTC Paul Lawrence. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970) B-39
- Enclosure 59 - Top Photo - I really don't want that many calories! Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - Ah! To be back in sunny Vietnam, Again! Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970). B-40
- Enclosure 60 - Top Photo - En route to the Group museum. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - A few words to our troops. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970). B-41
- Enclosure 61 - Top Photo - Introduction to staff NCO's. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - Indigenous food sampling. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970). B-42
- Enclosure 62 - Top Photo - Medical Supply. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - SMA Copelands arrival at Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group, Republic of Vietnam (September 1970). B-43
- Enclosure 63 - Top Photo - Logistical Support Center briefing. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970)
Bottom Photo - Rigging Section. Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group. (September 1970) B-44
- Enclosure 64 - The Chief of Staff, Creighton W. Abrams awarded the Distinguished Service Medal to Sergeant Major of the Army, Silas L. Copeland in a Retirement Review held at Ft. Myer, Virginia. (June 1973) B-45
- Enclosure 65 - SMA Copeland's retirement reception. (June 1973). B-46
- Enclosure 66 - SMA Silas Copeland holding his grandson, Stephen Kubiak, IV, during retirement reception. In the background is his wife, Ann Copeland, and far right is Mrs. Dean W. Myerson, wife of BG Myerson. (June 1973). B-47
Copeland



ENCLOSURE 20

B-1

ENSIVE PHASE VI 1968-1969
ROFFENSIVE 1969



FFENSIVE 1969



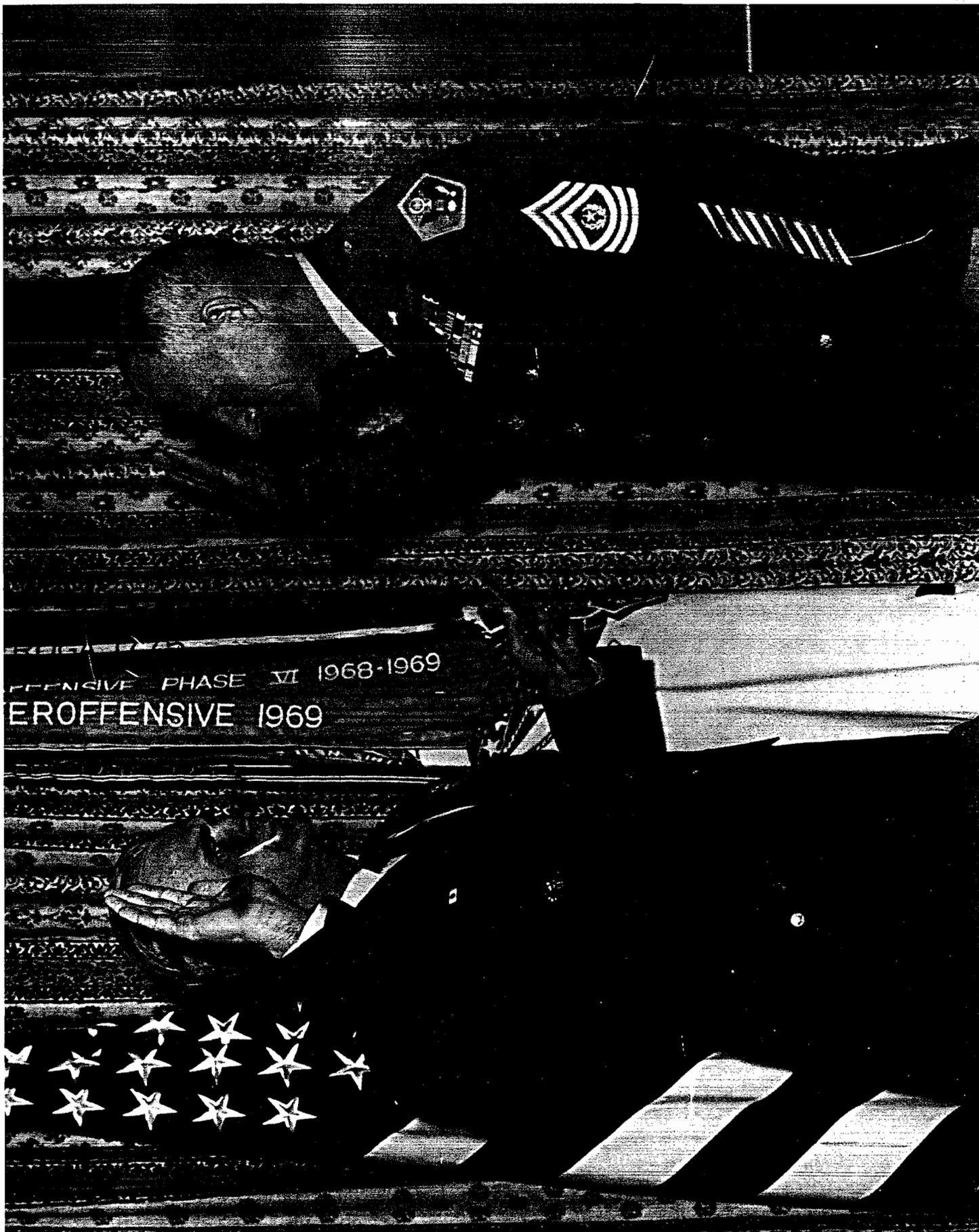
ENCLOSURE 22

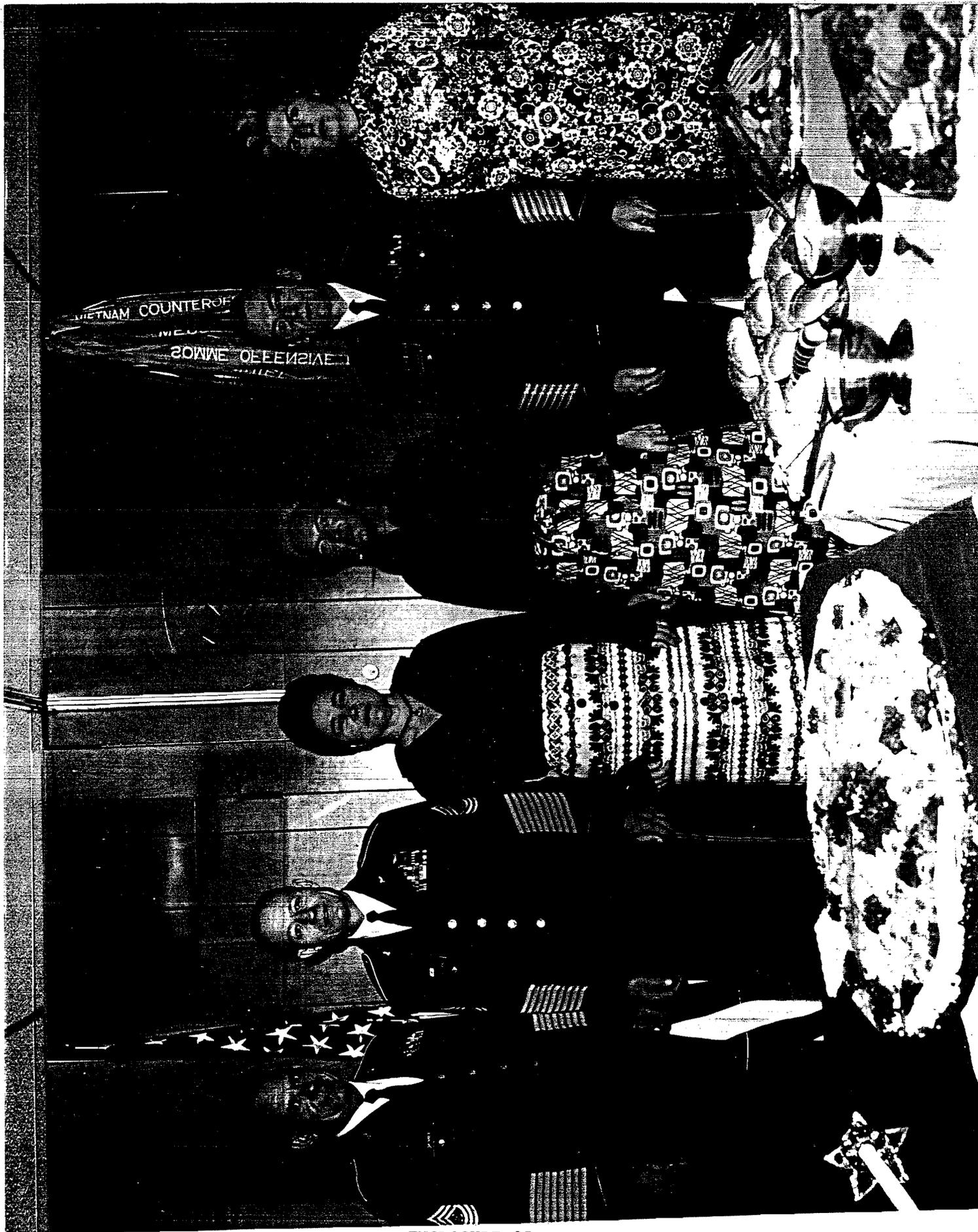
B-3



ENCLOSURE 23

B-4







ENCLOSURE 26

B-7



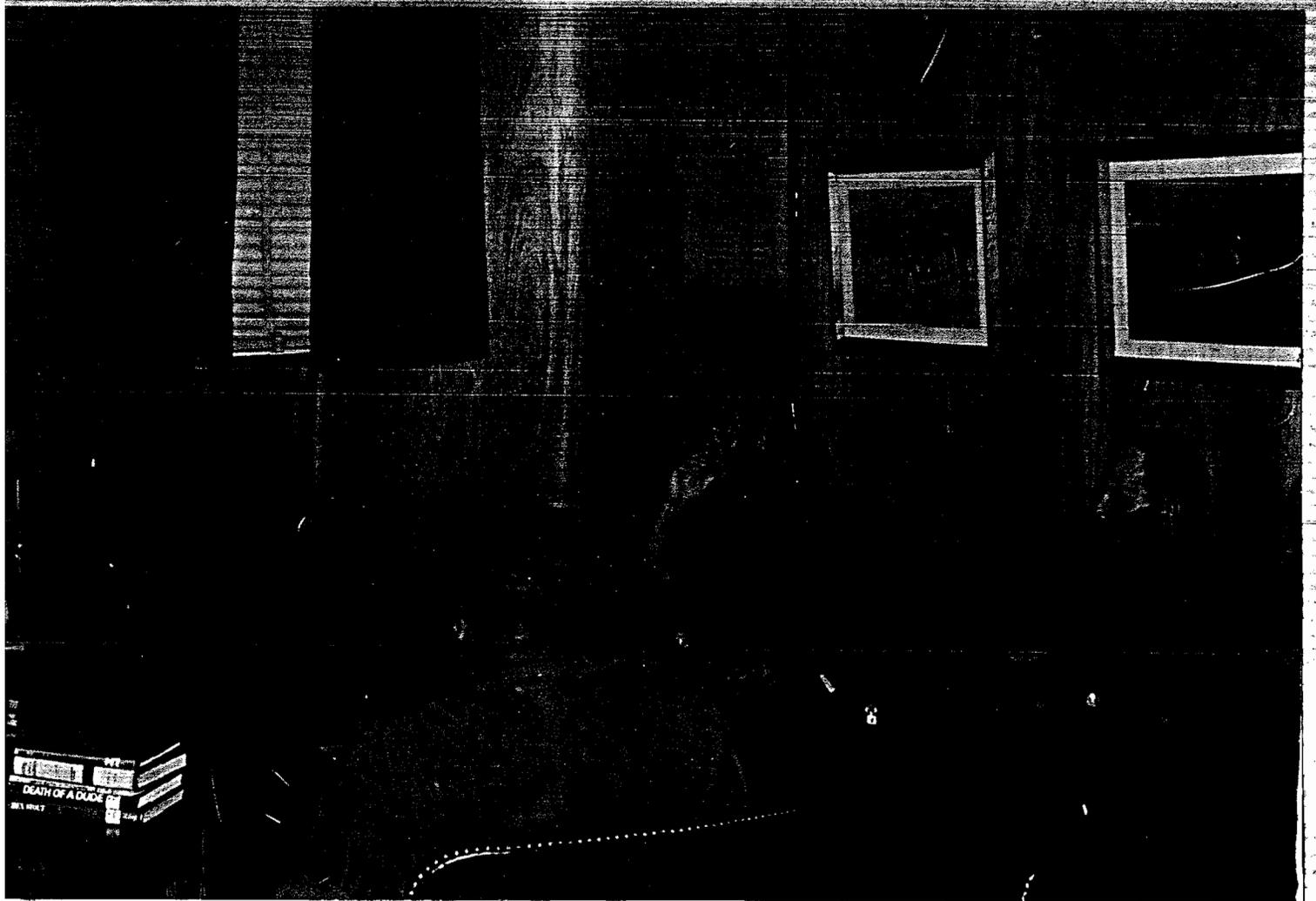
ENCLOSURE 27



WELCOME TO THE AMERICAL - BG ROY L. ATTEBERRY, ADC(SUPPORT) WELCOMES SMA SILAS L. COPELAND TO THE AMERICAL DIVISION. IN THE BACKGROUND IS CSM FRED E. DARLING, AMERICAL DIVISION SERGEANT MAJOR.



HAPPINESS IS MEETING OLD FRIENDS IN THE AMERICAL DIVISION
SMA COPELAND AND SFC BEVO BROOKS



BRIEFING - (L - R) CSM FRED E. DARLING, AMERICAL DIVISION, SMA COPELAND, CSM EDWARD WILSON, XXIV CORPS, CSM LEROY A. ARCENEUX, DANANG SUPPORT COMMAND AND CSM CHARLES HALL, USARV. THE GROUP WAS VISITING THE CHU LAI DEFENSE COMMAND.



THE GROUP - CSM DARLING, CSM EDWARD WILSON, CSM CHARLES HALL AND SMA COPELAND IN THE BACKGROUND IS SGM JOHN R, EDWARDS, MSG OLIVER WADE AND SGM J. E. ROWLETT.



SMA COPELAND SHAKES HAND WITH AN UNIDENTIFIED AMERICAN SOLDIER
ESCORTING THE INCOMING SMA WAS CSM CHESTER MIELNICZUK, 3D BN, 21ST INF



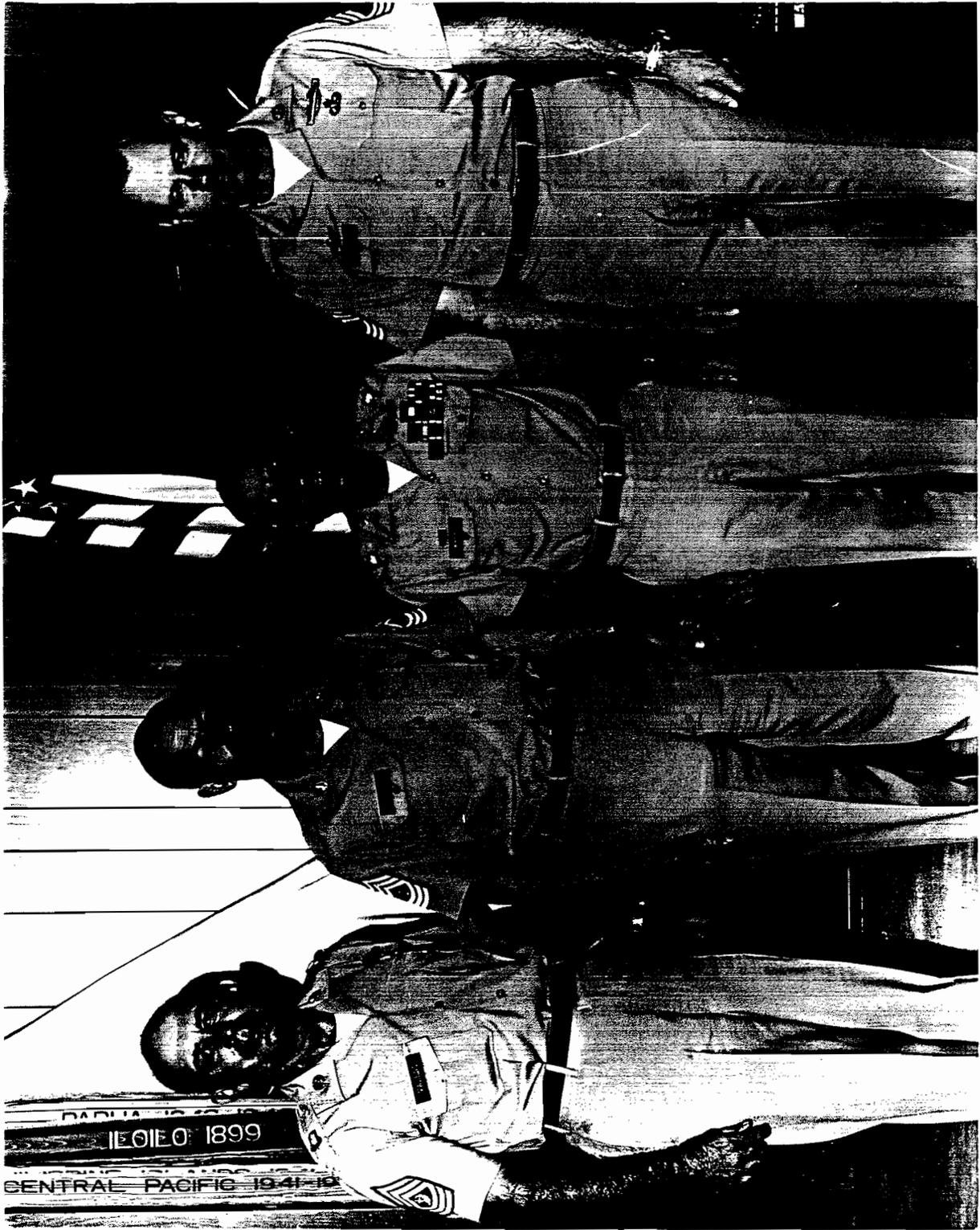
ENCLOSURE 30

B-11

AT LZ CENTER SMA SILAS L. COPELAND GREETES AND CHAT WITH AMERICAN DIVISION SOLDIERS

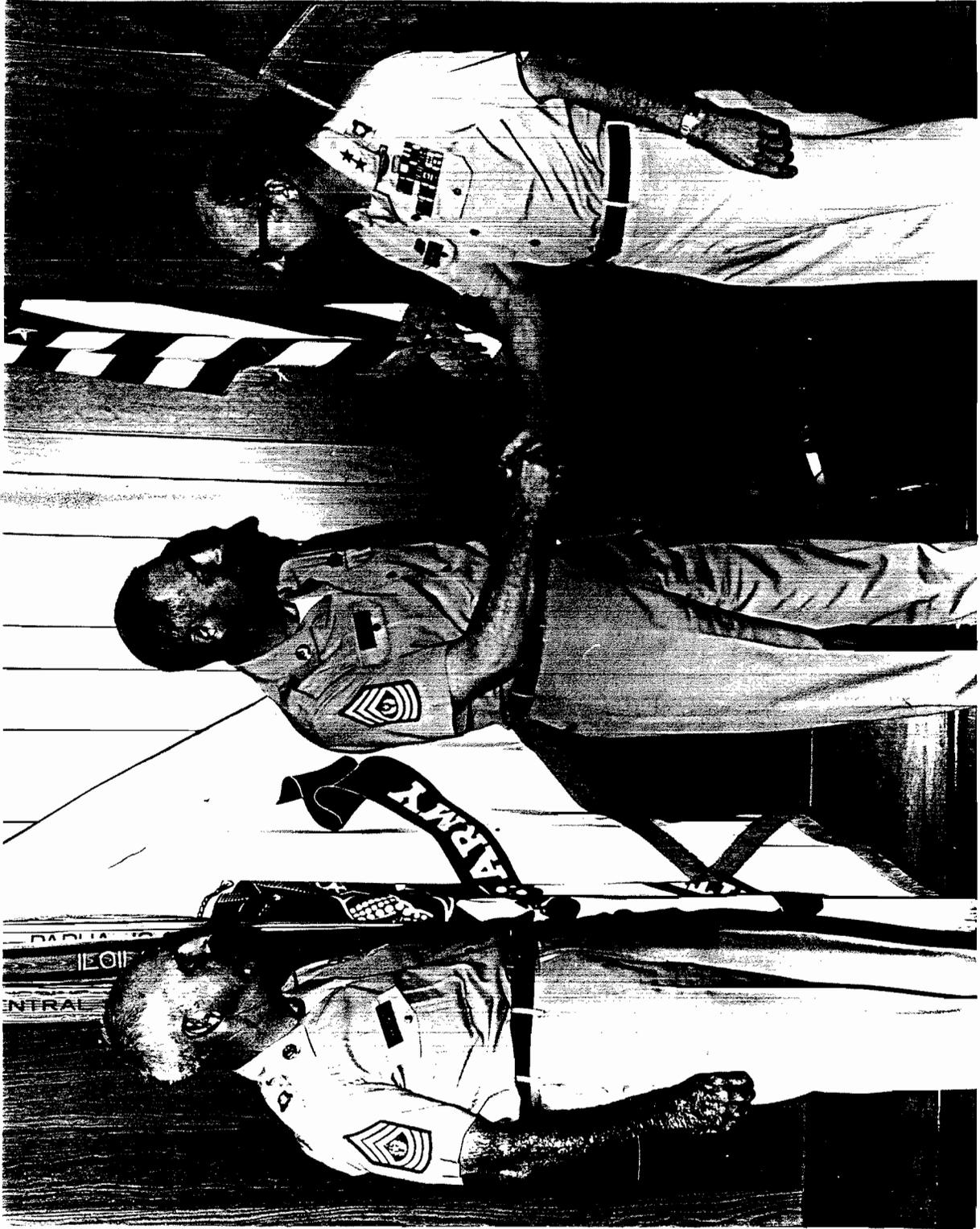


SMA COPELAND GREETES AN UNIDENTIFIED AMERICAN SOLDIER AT LZ CENTER



Guests SMA Copeland and MSG Alexander are shown with (1) US Army Forces Southern Command CSM O. Valent and USARSO commander MG G. L. Mabry at Ft. Amador.

ENCLOSURE 32



MG George L. Mabry, Jr., United States Army Forces Southern Command commander, welcomes SMA Copeland to Fort Anador. At left is USARSO CSM O. Valent.

ENCLOSURE 33

B-14



SMA Copeland enjoys an informal chat with MG G. L. Mabry, U. S. Army Forces Southern Command commander, and USARSO CSM O. Valent at Fort Amador.

ENCLOSURE 34

B-15



SMA Copeland addresses candidates at
USARSO's NCO Academy, Fort Sherman,
Canal Zone.

ENCLOSURE 35

B-16



SMA Copeland addresses troops of the 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 20th Infantry, Fort Clayton, during a training break.

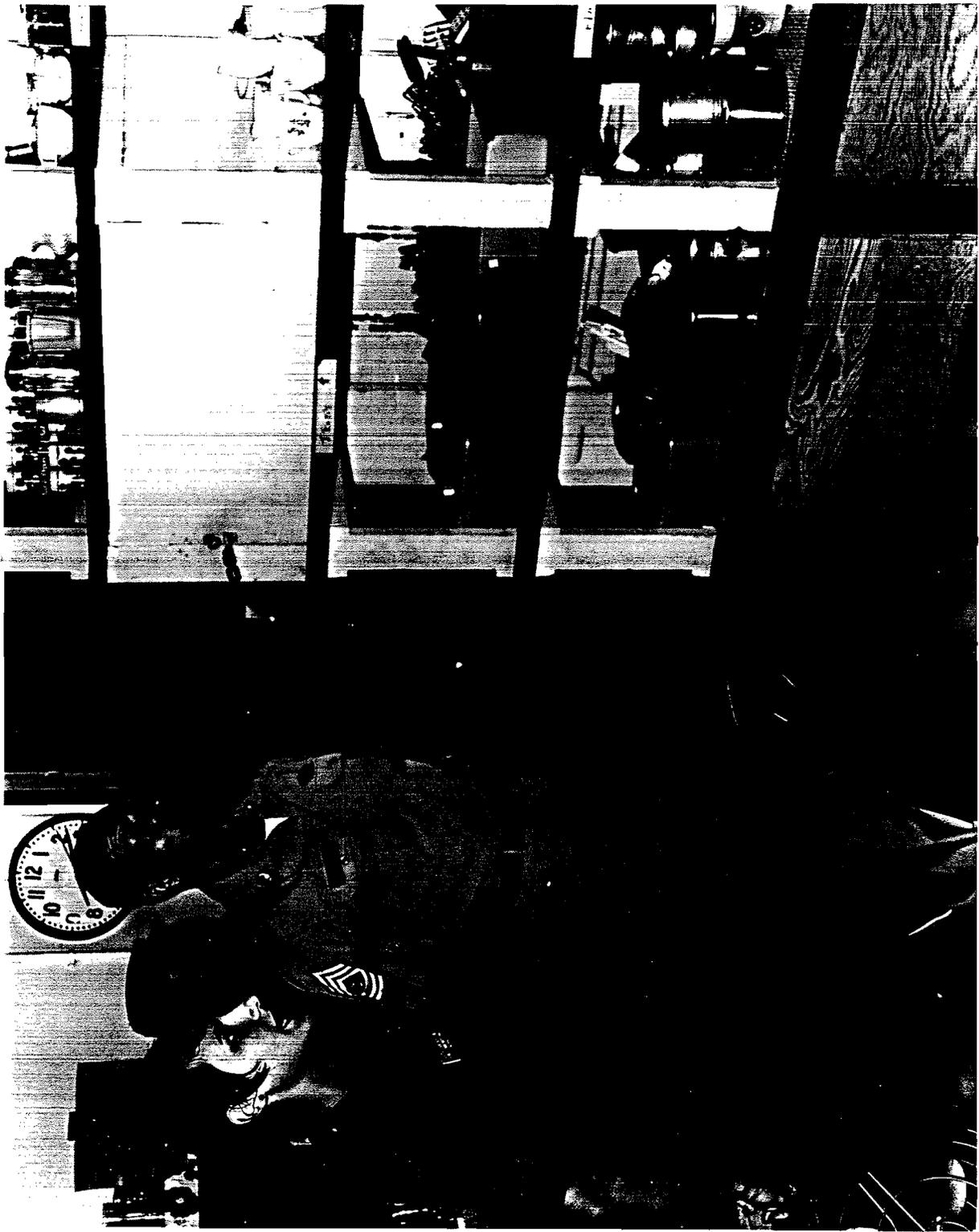
ENCLOSURE 36

B-17



CSM Clarence Steele presents a French rail stand on behalf of the enlisted men of the US Army Logistical Support Command, Corozaal.

ENCLOSURE 37



Mrs. James Anderson, wife of SGM Anderson of USASTRAFCOM Sig Gp (S), an Army Community Service volunteer, shows SMA Copeland the ACS Loan Closet at Ft.

ENCLOSURE 38

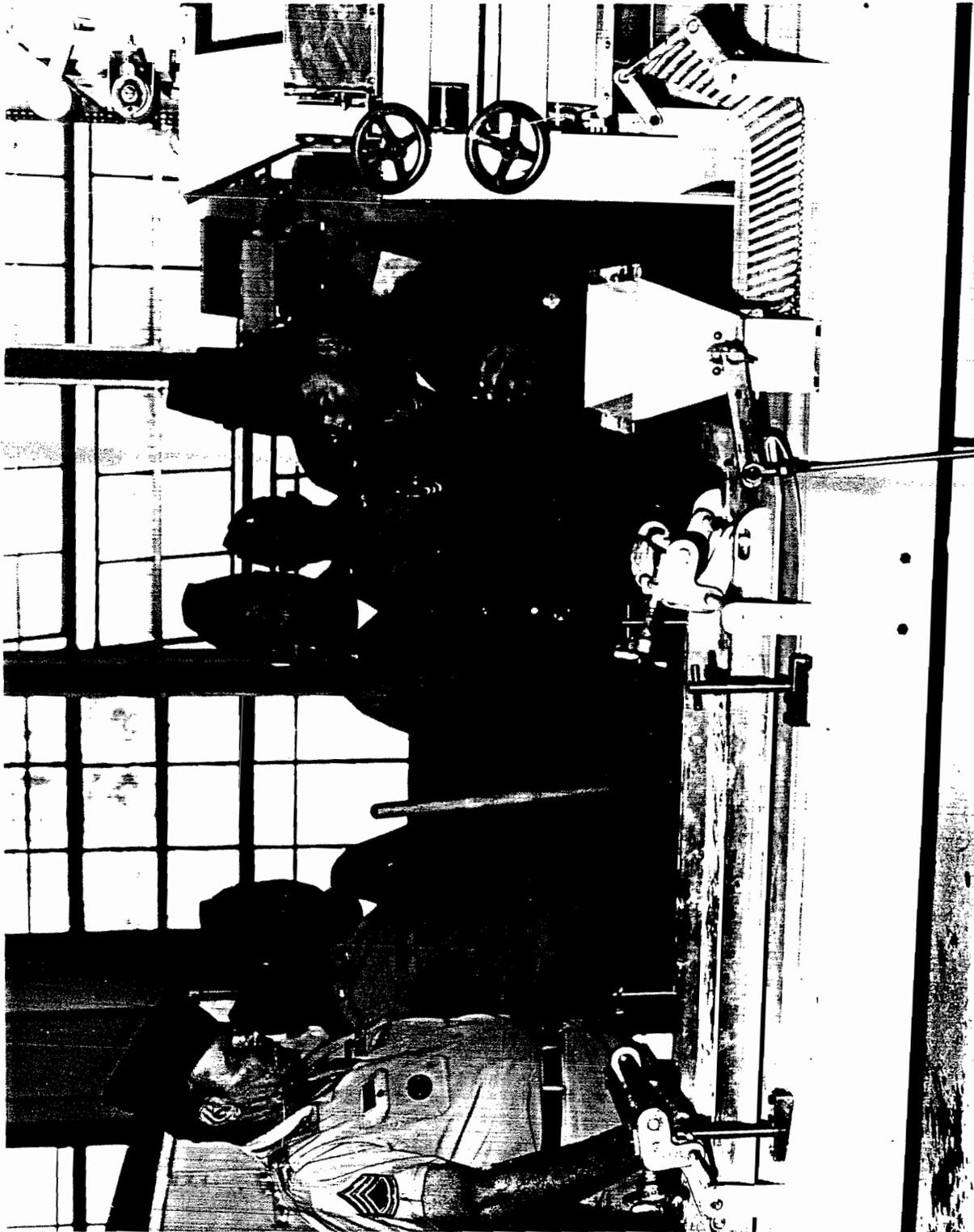


US Army Forces Southern Command Soldier of the Month for April, SP4 Carl House of Logistical Support Command, welcomes SMA Copeland to Coroal.



SMA Copeland enters the USARSO Bakery at Corozal with SSG E. Rosa, NCOIC there; Logistical Support Command (LSC) CSM C. Steele, USARSO CSM O. Valent, and MSG D. Hill, LSC Services Division NCOIC.

ENCLOSURE 48



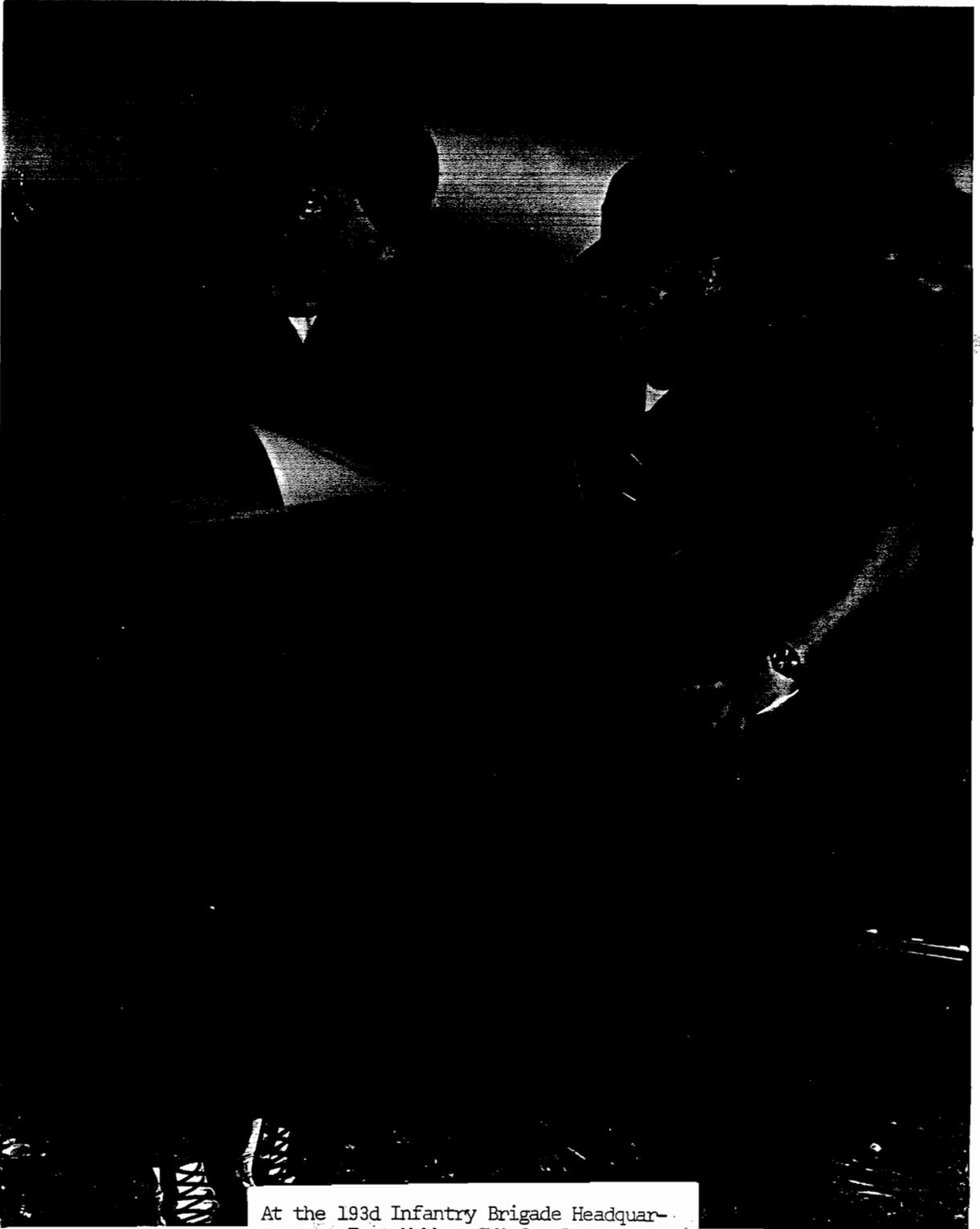
NCOIC SSG E. Rosa explains the workings of a loaf shaping machine at the USARSO Bakery to SMA Copeland. From left: SFC D. Hill, JSC NCOIC, Admin Svc; USARSO

ENCLOSURE 44



SMA Copeland slices a cake prepared in his honor at the Jungle Operations Training Center, Ft. Sherman. From left are SP4 L. Dunn, SFC W. Hastings, SP4 T. Jones and SP5 G. Sheehaw.

ENCLOSURE 42



At the 193d Infantry Brigade Headquarters at Fort Kobbe, SMA Copeland meets



SSG G. Leatherwood, NCOIC at Kobbé Beach, escorts SMA Copeland accompanied by 193d Infantry Brigade CSM W. Tapp and USARSO CSM O. Valent.

ENCLOSURE 44

B-25



SMA Copeland tours the Headquarters Company, 193d Infantry Brigade dining facility at Fort Kobbe escorted by SFC C. Knoche, mess steward.



SFC William Hastings watches as SMA Copeland washes down a jungle survival meal with fresh coconut milk at the Jungle Operations Training Center, Fort Sherman.

ENCLOSURE 446



PFC Kint Gardner and troops of Co. C, 3d Bn, 5th Inf, Ft. Kobbe meet SMA Copeland. From left are SFC J. Propst, acting 1SG, PFC R. Harley, PFC R. Lehmann and SP4 Wallace Dean.

ENCLOSURE 457



Live fire at Empire Range is observed as
1SG D. McCarley, Co. B, 3d Bn, 5th Inf,
explains the action. From left are
USARSO CSM O. Valent, CPT R. Drushal,
S-3, and CSM Jose Salas.

ENCLOSURE 48



SMA Copeland fields a question from a soldier assigned to Company C, 3d Battalion, 5th Infantry at Camp Bayonet.

ENCLOSURE 49

B-30



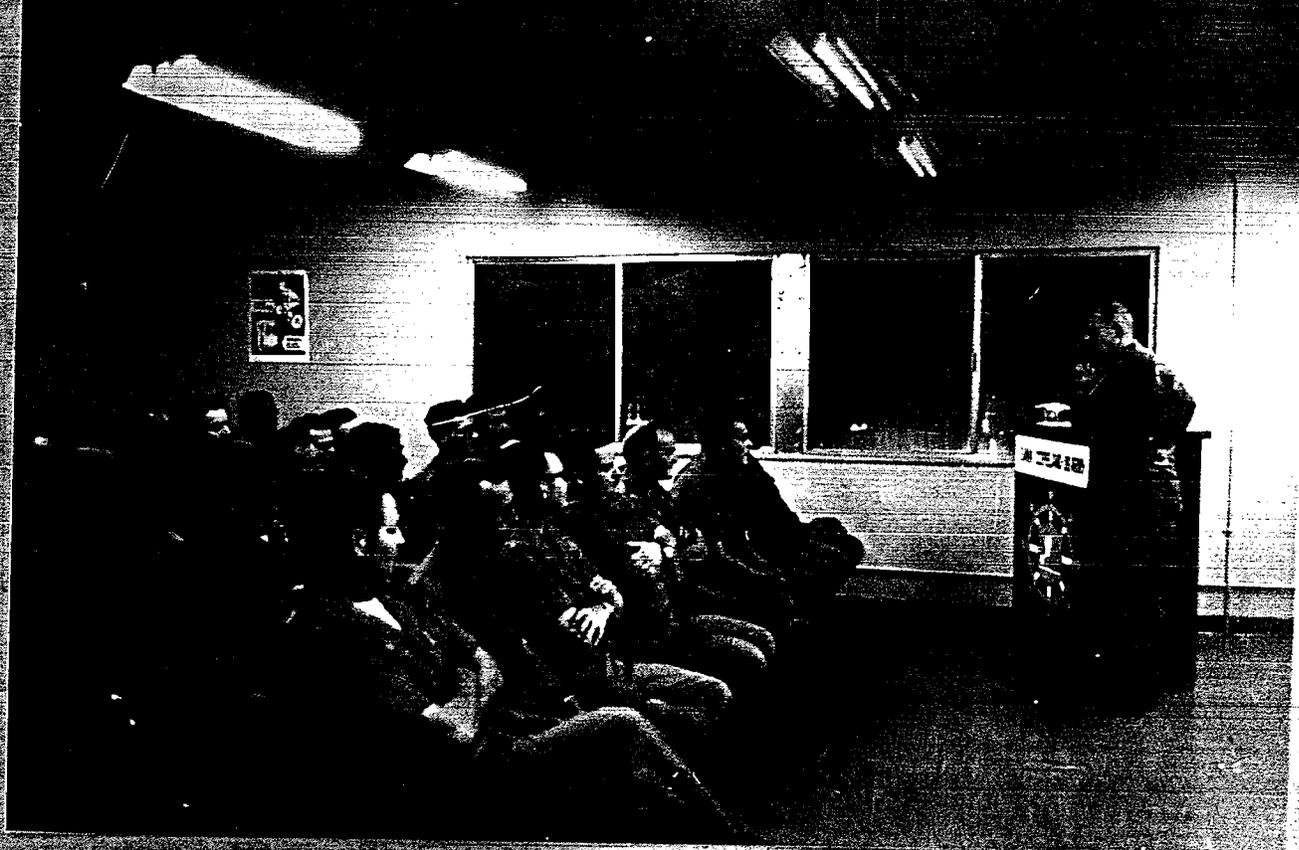




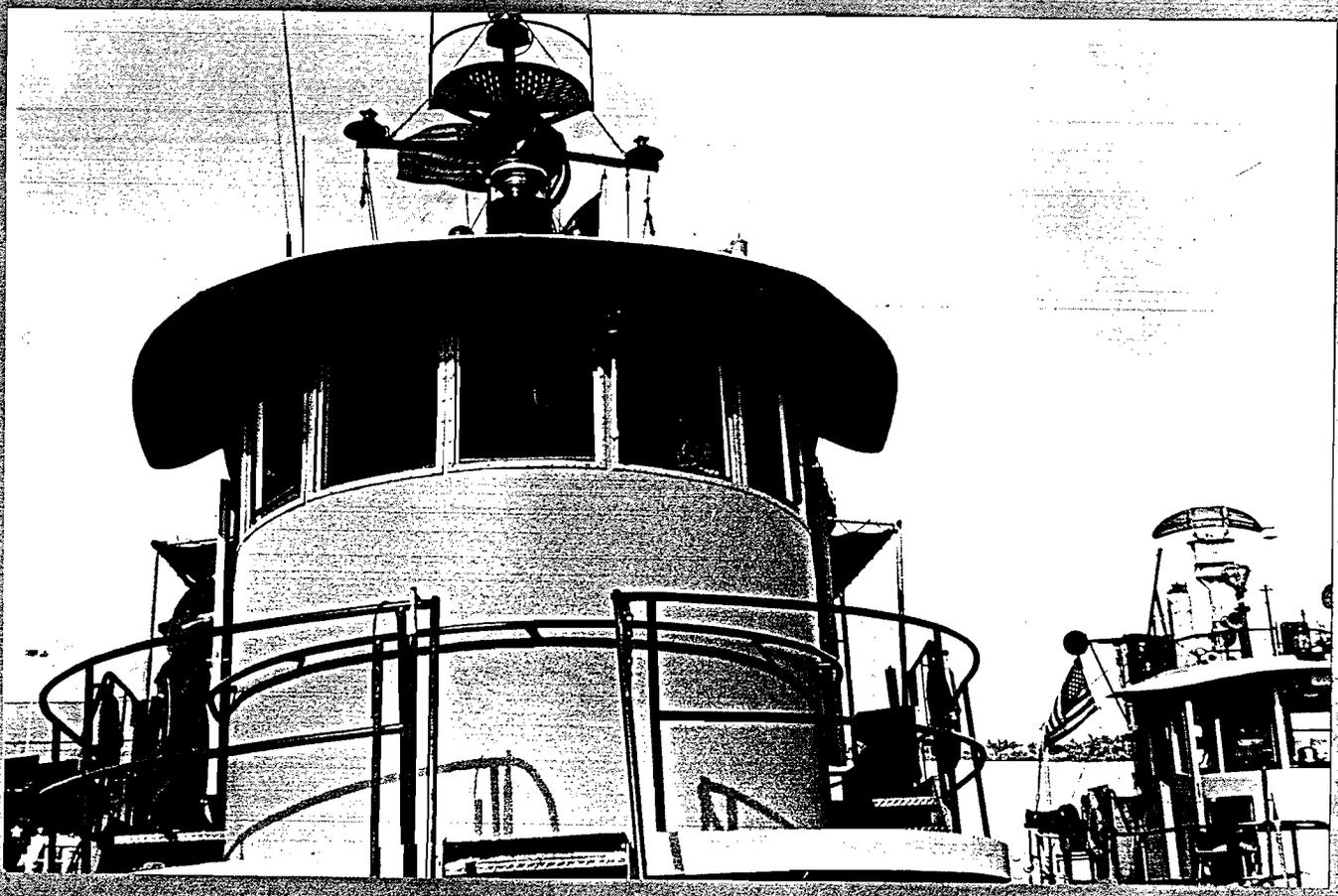
ARRIVAL AT THE 79TH MAINTENANCE BATTALION SALVAGE YARD



WELCOME TO NEWPORT ARMY TERMINAL BY CSM LEVESQUE



RAPPING WITH THE TOP ENLISTED MEN AT HQ, 71ST TRANS BN



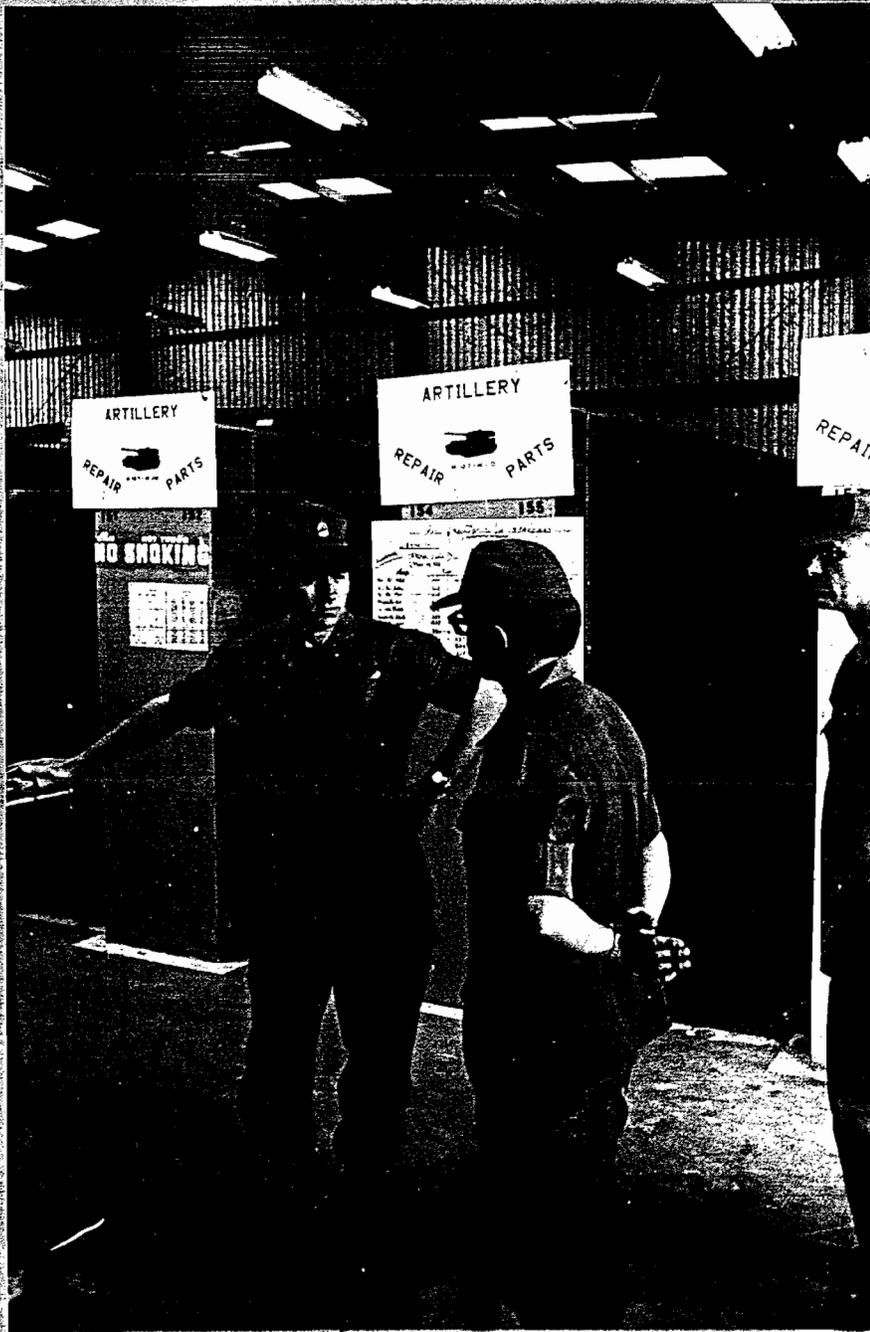
TOURING ON OF THE 71ST'S TUG BOATS



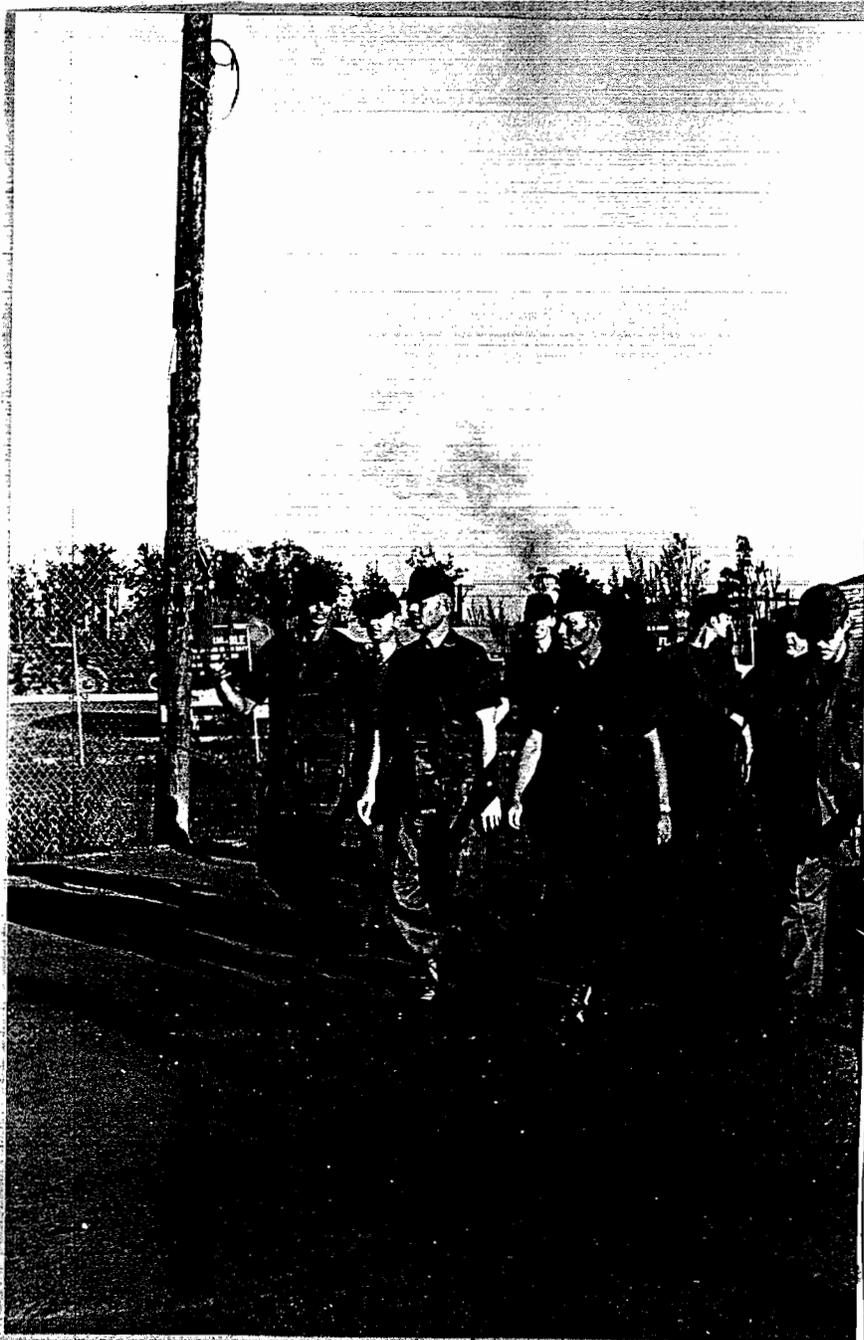
EARLY ARRIVAL AT HEADQUARTERS, SAIGON SUPPORT COMMAND



A VISIT TO 29TH GENERAL SUPPORT GROUP CLASS I YARD



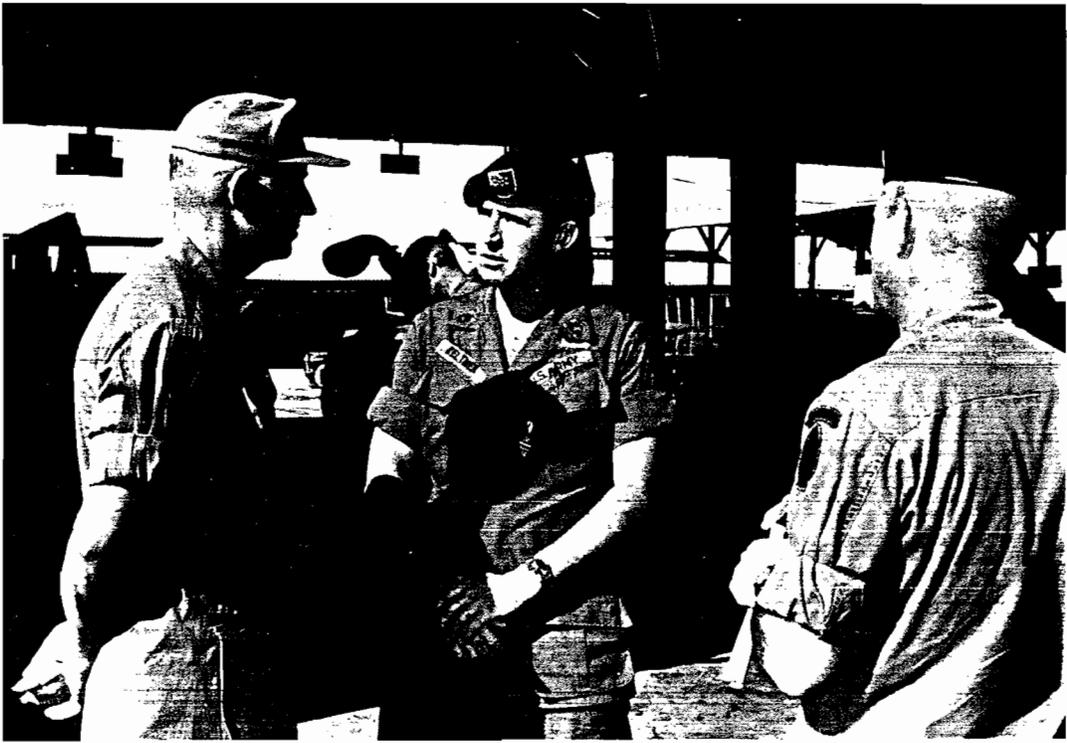
PARTS AREA - - US ARMY DEPOT, LONG BINH



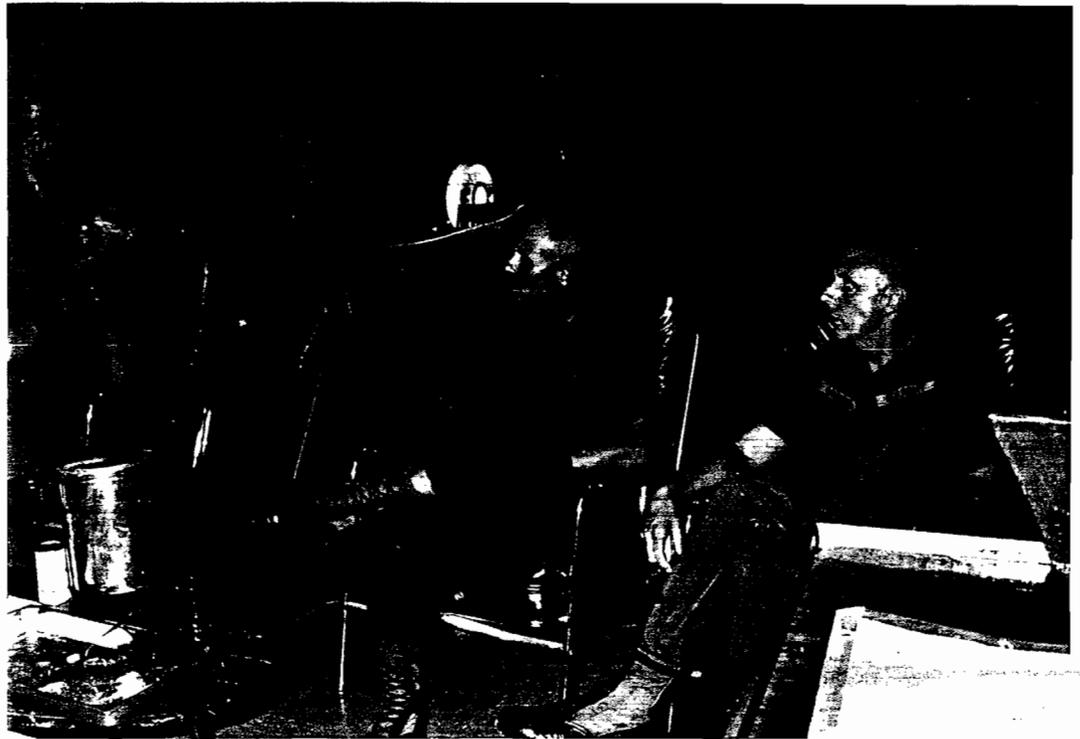
A WALK THROUGH THE CLASS I YARD



REVIEW OF MEMORIAL BOARD



ENGINEER REPAIR SHOP



RECONDO BRIEFING



INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DCO, LTC PAUL LAWRENCE



I REALLY DON'T WANT THAT MANY CALORIES!



AH! TO BE BACK IN SUNNY VIETNAM, AGAIN!



ENROUTE TO GROUP MUSEUM



A FEW WORDS TO OUR TROOPS



INTRODUCTION TO STAFF NCO'S

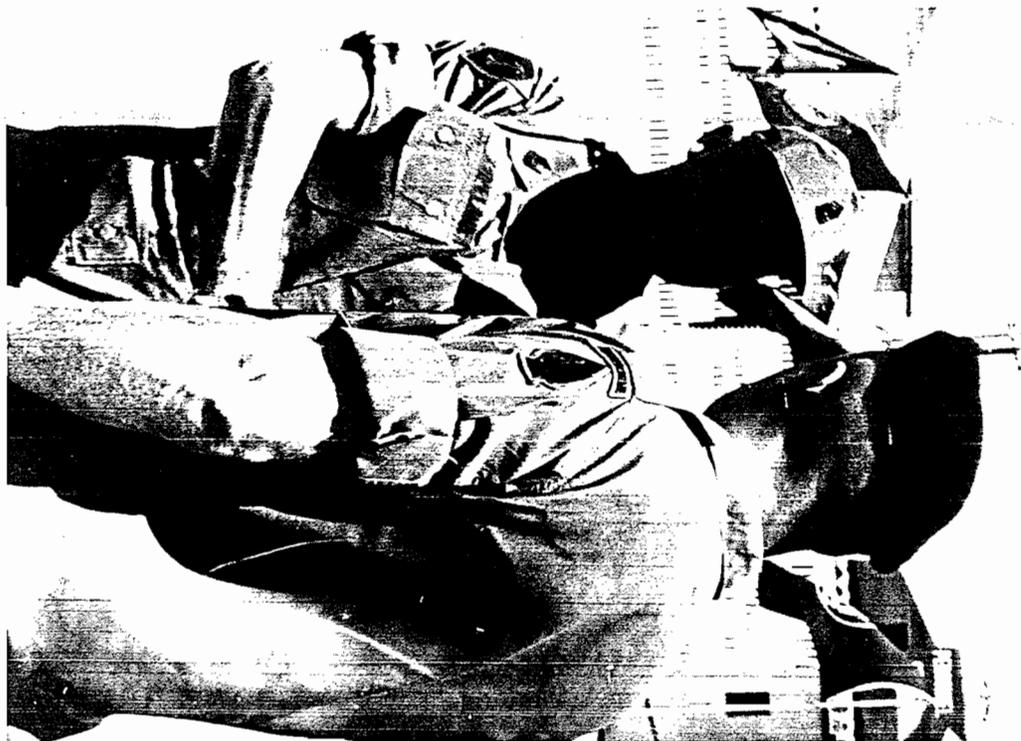


INDIGENOUS FOOD SAMPLING



MEDICAL SUPPLY

YOUR ARRIVAL AT HEADQUARTERS, 5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (ABN), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

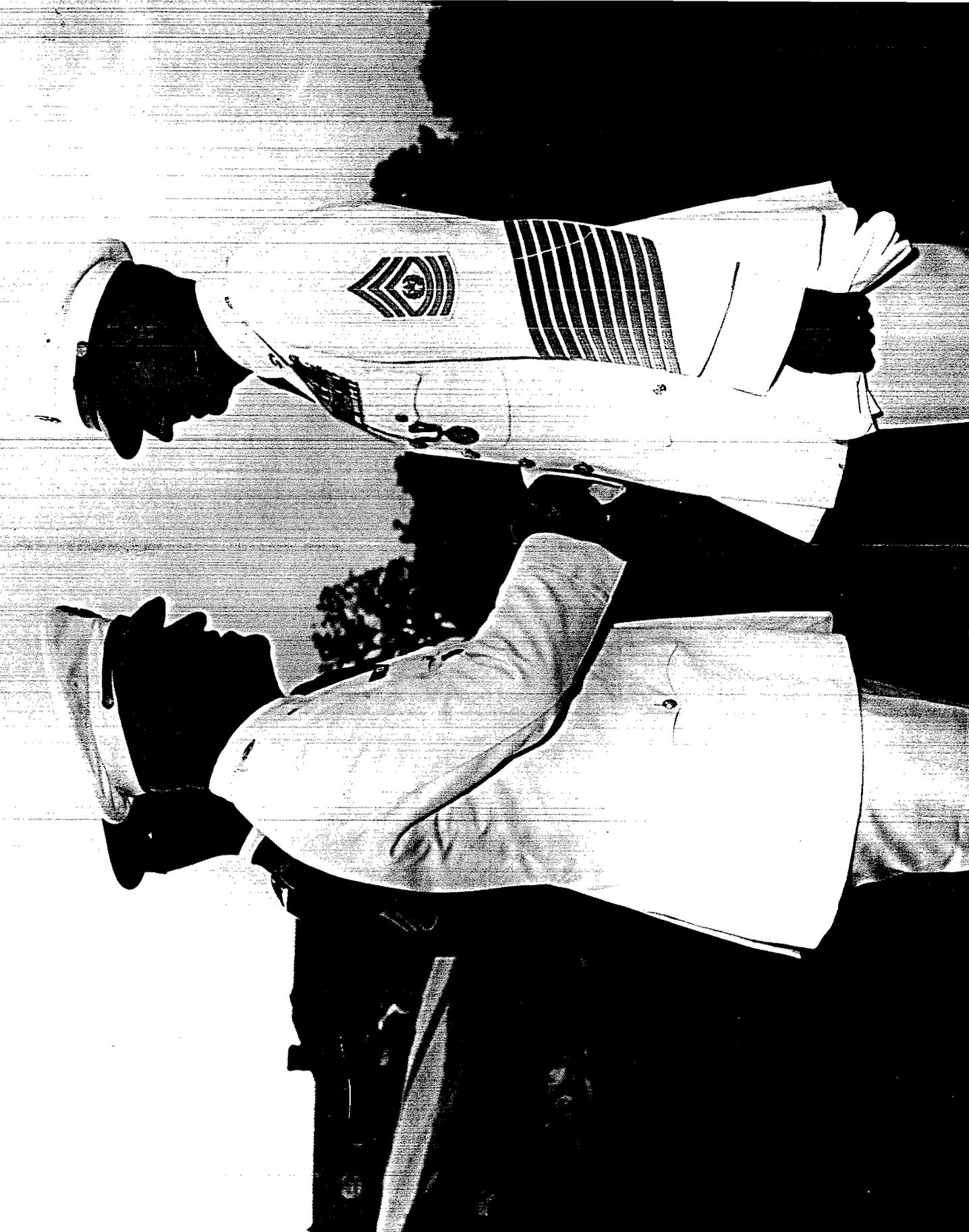




LOGISTICAL SUPPORT CENTER BRIEFING



RIGGING SECTION



ENCLOSURE 684



ENCLOSURE 63

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ENCLOSURE 6/6

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