

Wisconsin Public Television  
Korean War Stories Project

Transcript of an  
Oral History Interview with  
**RICHARD V. HEMLIN**  
Rifleman, Army, Korean War  
2004

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**Hemlin, Richard V.**, (1931- ). Oral History Interview, 2004.

Video Recording: 4 videorecordings (ca. 115 min.); ½ inch, color.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

Military Papers: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

**Abstract:**

Richard V. Hemlin, a New Milford, New Jersey native, discusses his Korean War experiences as a rifleman with the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and his time fighting on Pork Chop Hill. Hemlin recalls being drafted in the middle of night school, being in an experimental platoon during basic training at Fort Dix (New Jersey), and being a human stepping stool during a combat exercise. He recalls seeing a lot of caskets upon his arrival at Camp Drake (Japan). He discusses meeting with Major Hane, his uncle who was a chaplain, and getting a call from Charles Cook, an uncle-by-marriage whom Hemlin later discovered was a CIA agent. Sent to the Japanese Imperial Naval Academy (Miyajima, Japan) for five weeks of supply school, Hemlin states he didn't use his supply training until after the war. He talks about meeting another serviceman from his hometown and describes the terrible conditions in Pusan (Korea). Assigned as a replacement along to the George Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, he recalls being assigned to clean some stoves, being caught bathing in the creek afterwards, getting assigned digging detail for "goofing off," and hearing the artillery begin attacking Pork Chop Hill. He speaks of being told to unload a truck and discovering it was full of corpses for graves registration. Hemlin talks about being sent to fight at Pork Chop Hill in both the April and July attacks and the high casualty rates his unit suffered. He characterizes a West Point officer and states he now has the highest respect for West Pointers. He claims the best moments of being on the line were when he was able to shower, and he states the worst part was the stress of not being safe from attack even when he was in the company area miles away from the front. He portrays rotating on and off the Hill, taking his turn at combat patrols, dealing with nerves, and being constantly alert. Hemlin speaks of sprinting between checkpoints in trucks to avoid being hit with artillery. He touches on other United Nations units, including the "Princess Pat's" of the Canadian Army, Turkish troops, Ethiopian troops, and the Columbian unit in charge of Old Baldy (Hill 266). He recalls the North Koreans intercepting mail and using personal information in demoralizing propaganda broadcasts. He relates his experiences in the trenches, including rolling through some concertina wire to escape the area after someone accidentally lit a flare and revealed their position to enemy artillery. Hemlin reveals he was at a week-long leadership school when Pork Chop Hill was attacked in July and, when he got back, his company had been sent up already so he was assigned to a probational company and worked at a checkpoint. He portrays a sergeant coming to the checkpoint and asking for a cigarette, and he recalls seeing the smoke come out holes all over the man's body. Hemlin talks about moving wounded and dead, sending some of the wounded to a Norwegian MASH unit, accidentally taking cover from an incoming mortar behind an ammo dump, and witnessing a couple of young Marines get pulled out of their vehicle after they froze up during an attack and blocked the road. He tells of being assigned to go on the Hill and get Major Noble to fill out a plat, having a close call in the truck, finding that all the officers on the Hill were casualties, and getting sent back to George Company rather than the provisional company. Hemlin details having to walk over dead bodies he

recognized from his company, coming upon two Chinese soldiers, taking them prisoner with only his carbine, finding an opium needle and patch on one of them, and bringing them back down to the aid station. He emphasizes having feelings of chaos and unreality during this time. He tells of an officer from George Company who refused to ride in the half tracks and who got himself and his jeep driver killed. Hemlin talks about his unit being sent to Camp Casey (Korea) to calm down, feeling drained, and having frequent changes of officers. He recalls a conversation he had with a Japanese-American officer and turning down an offer to become a helicopter pilot. After the armistice, Hemlin details stealing sheets from the Norwegian MASH unit to use as Thanksgiving tablecloths. He speaks of having difficulty readjusting when he got home, dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder, and being impressed by Veterans Memorial Cemetery on the grounds of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King (Wisconsin). He recalls playing golf with a couple of young Korean-American men, being thanked for his service in the war, and feeling like he played in part in helping South Korea. Hemlin touches on his opinions about the Vietnam War and the Iraq War, and he states that when you send someone to war, “you’re giving them fifty years and maybe a lifetime of memories. You better have a good cause.” He reflects on the huge numbers of Chinese troops and talks about how they had the manpower to tunnel under the hills while sending wave after wave of attacks.

### **Biographical Sketch:**

Hemlin (b.1931) served in the Army from 1952-1954, and was assigned to the 13<sup>th</sup> Platoon, Company G, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. After his honorable discharge he worked in a bank before going into marketing and becoming a small business owner. He married, raised three daughters, and settled in Madison, Wisconsin.

### **Citation Note:**

Cite as: Richard V. Hemlin, Interview, conducted October 4, 2004 at Studio C, Wisconsin Public Television, Madison, Wisconsin by Mik Derks, Wisconsin Korean War Stories, for Wisconsin Public Television.

### **Context Note:**

Raw footage interview filmed by Wisconsin Public Television for its documentary series, “Wisconsin Korean War Stories.” Original WPT videocassette numbers were WCKOR061, WCKOR062, WCKOR063, and WCKOR064.

### **Related Materials Note:**

Photographs of this narrator’s military service can be found in Wisconsin Public Television. Wisconsin Korean War Stories records (VWM Mss 1389).

Interviewed by Mik Derks, October 4, 2004.

Transcribed by Wisconsin Public Television staff, n.d.

Transcript reformatted and edited by Wisconsin Veterans Museum staff, 2010.

Abstract written by Susan Krueger, 2010.

**Transcribed Interview:**

Mik: In fact, the tapes end up being archived at the Veterans Museum. The best way to do this is to start at the beginning, and talk our way through it—and I'll ask questions, but only as they come up in my mind based on what you have to say.

Rich: Okay.

Mik: And if I ever ask a question you don't want to answer say, "I don't want to talk about that." And that's fine. We'll go onto something else.

Rich: Okay.

Mik: Let's go to where you were and how you got involved in the military.

Rich: Well, I was drafted and ah-- I remember that and all. I think that was the first time I ever swore and I said, when I opened up that letter and I said, SOB. And I, yeah, and that really hit, ya know. And ah--hell that was it. I remember going down and ah-- gotta sign up and. There wasn't any thought of, ya know, not going. I wish else that ah--ya know--I wasn't prepared for it. I was trying, I was going to night school and I got caught between semesters and, ya know, I'd been working in the bank and I just didn't have, I couldn't go on to more permanent basis so I just got caught in the middle and that was it. And so, report for duty was the, the next call up and the whole bit.

Mik: Were you pretty aware of what was happening in Korea?

Rich: Ah--I wasn't following it that much. I knew a lot of people didn't know. You had a little would be on there when you'd, ya know, ride a bus or a train, you'd see them talking about it, some battles, but ah-- this was in coming up on close to fifty-two when everybody was hoping, utilizing, and come in and--so, hoping it was gonna be over. So kinda, wasn't figuring on ah-- I thought maybe I'd sail right through, didn't happen. So that was it, ya know. But I remember going and ah-- had to go over to the post office and sit down, and maybe you sat around a big table and ah-- I came around, one, two, three Marine or something like that you know. That was, that was interesting. I think that's the first time the Marines drafted, ya know. So, they needed a lot of help anyway [laughs].

Mik: And they did it that way, you could tell when it was coming couldn't you?

Rich: Yeah, right. So that was it and ah--but ah--I knew a lot of guys, it wasn't much of a Navy war. And some people were saying, "Well, gee I'll hurry up and join the Navy," ya know. And I gave that a thought; I was born on Navy day. Oh the heck with that, I'll just see what happens. That was it and I got drafted and I went to ah--let's see, Camp Kilmer, went to Camp Kilmer. That was it. I remember the first time, ya know things you remember, the ah--they fill this out and they and we had to

fatigues went through the, ya know, got the full unit fatigues, the full unit. We had to wear that all the insignia. They lined us up and this old master sergeant calls out, he said, "Strip the field and pick up butts." And he said, "How many people here at the college education?" People raise their hands and "Ok, how many have high school degree, high school diploma?" More people raise their hands and then and he said, "Ok, you guys have a college education, you pick up those butts, take the paper off, strike them, and the other one." And he says, "You high school guys, why don't you take these," ah-- "There any filters and get those out and pick up the matches, ok? Now the rest of you guys, I want you to stand over here and see if you can't learn something," [laughs]. I thought that was probably a standard thing, but that was ah--that was it. And then ah--and then it was ah--Fort Dix and sixteen weeks of infantry basic. And ah--that was it, that was a, that was interesting. They put us in, I remember being, they put ah-- put me in this experimental platoon. And supposedly it was people that did well in the IKFQT, ya know. They had above average--they had the ones who were on the bottom and they wanted to see, see how it effected--ya know, whether we helped them come up or if they learn anything. That was pretty interesting, I got some interesting comments on that. Think back on that.

Mik: Did they ever decide if it worked?

Rich: I don't know. But I know one instance they had that--they had the ah-- they still had all the stuff down there for their, like their French towns, ya know, World War II stuff. And everybody had this one guy, Archer, he must've weighed, ya know, maybe, he was a big heavy guy like that. And he never wanted to take a shower. You'd have to dig him out under the barracks and get 'em cleaned up. But this was one thing we had to run up to a wall, ya know and take the M1 and throw it against the wall and it was a big wall. Fly, get over the thing, when you get over it and you ran up to this house, ya know. This is supposed to be like a French house, a window. And the whole thing was, ya know, you'd run up and ah-- and then you'd get along the house like that, ya know, and you lean back, you take a couple of grenades and you throw them through the window and then you, you get down on all fours see, and so the next guy behind you is supposed to come along and step on your back and go flying through the window. Well, they guy behind me was this fellow Archer. See, so I threw the grenade in and ah-- got down like that and he came along, but he had the rifle up empty, stepped on my back and got caught in the window frame. And I thought my back was broken. And my language was [laughs] not good. Said, "Get off my back!" I was finished, but ah--so I didn't learn much that. I don't know what it was. But that was, that was, that was interesting. So sixteen weeks of that and then ah-- and then we-- And I remember my absentee ballot vote for the election that time, that was '52 and Eisenhower was running. And then it was go to the West Coast and ship out on the USS Marine Serpent and whatever. And then I think I had nineteen days on board.

Mik: To Japan, or straight to Korea?

Rich: Japan. No, no we went to Japan. We went to Japan and ah-- that was interesting because we came up on deck, ya know, the ah--he said, geez, we're on the-- we're close to Japan, but, we had a stay offshore because they had opened the submarine nets, ya know, brought back ya know, World War II submarine nets going into Tokyo bay, Yokohama and ah--we slid in there. And I remember lookin' over and seeing all these caskets. It was a rude awakening. Ya know, all these caskets were coming back from Korea. So you'd be loading them, loading them on, ya know. And ah--so that was it. And then ah--I went to Camp Drake. And ah---the repo-depot--and that was ah-- that was interesting. Yup.

Mik: Camp Drake is still in Japan?

Rich: Yeah, Camp Drake was, yeah, it was outside of Tokyo. And ah-- my dad had written a note, I had ah-- I had an uncle who was a chaplain. And he was with Patton in the Third Army. And ah--he never adjusted well after the Second World War. So his parishioners gave him a Chevy on commission from the bishop, ya know, to go back in the Army and they gave him a, they gave him a new Chevy. He loved kids, so he got over there and I guess when, our early part of Korea, he had a mission that he was looking after and ah--near Seoul, or maybe north of Seoul. Couple hundred kids, ya know, and they ah--they--when the war started, they just overran his mission. And he was wounded pretty well. He held it to them back to Camp Zama, Japan. But ah--when I came over, he was there and, and Drake, ya know. But he ah--it was interesting. I remember I was in the latrine when I got this call. I said, "There's a Major Hane to see you." And that was him, ya know. And then it dawned on me, "Well, what do I say to him? Do I go in salute or what?" Ya know, was pretty interesting because I went in this sergeant, he says, "Major Hane to see you." Ya know, so I walk in and I go to give him a salute and he said, "Sit down!" I [laughs]--and ah--I hadn't seen him in years ya know. So ah--he said, "You got any money?" And I said, "Well, you know, well, I got a few dollars, ya know. Why?" He said, "You play any cards on the way over?" I said, "Yeah, I--" "What'd you play?" he said. "Well, Black Jack." And he said, "You play that game," he said, "You keep your eyes on the deck and your, and your butt against the bulk head." And I thought about that and he said, "C'mon, let's get outta here." And he had this little English four and he handed me a bottle of scotch and we went over the officer's club and I, I kept thinking this would be wonderful. Maybe I'll get a, I'll be here. So he started telling me about all these guys who wanna go home because their fathers need help walking the dog and all this stuff and he says--we had a nice steak dinner and talked. And he said, "Ok, you go over there," and he said, "Keep your head down, keep moving, get a few stripes and get outta here. Say hello to your father" [laughs]. My chaplain's assistant roll was shot down. And I was so upset. I was ready to be a Buddhist. [laughs]

Mik: What was your job when you got there?

Rich: Well, I was a rifleman, but then--so I was ready to ship out and the, and the ah--- then I got a call from another ah--it was my aunt's uncle, not uncle, husband. And I

didn't care for this guy, I remember that. And he ah--he was a major in the Daishi Building. The Fifth Air Force. And ah--kind of a genius guy. Never very, ya know, had ah--used to play the piano, wrote these books, ya know, and ah--I called him up and he said, "Well, we'll have to have lunch, ya know." I said, "Well, I think I'm gonna ship out, but I think they need some people or what have you." "Well, we'll have to get together." And ah--that was it, never saw him again. But I did find out years later and I took a course here at the U, that ah--he was a big-time CIA guy. He and William Pauly, was his job to work with the--trying to get Chiang Kai-shek to commit national Chinese there. And then, the fifth day major in the fifth Air Force was his cover. And I remember opening the book and there it was. Charles Cook and I slammed the book [laughs]. I never did like this guy. [Laughs]. So that was it, but fifty years later, I found that, he had long since, I think he divorced my aunt. That was it, but nobody remembered, he was a weird person. Anyway, so that was it and ah--but then the next day, I got called in again and I said, "We'll go to--" "You're going to a school and ah--down in Miyajima" And we went on to small Japanese train and it was the Japanese Imperial Naval Academy. Beautiful place, ya know. So I took the five weeks I was there and they studied supply. So I had worked, you know, the bank. And then after that, ya know, that was the end of it. And ah--I went to ship out, but I never used the supply when I got later on attached to the infantry company. There were five unit specialists, you gotta wait until I think--I never did get into supply until after the war was over. And that was interesting. But I know the--that the five weeks in that Miyajima area was beautiful. It was in the Shrine Islands, ya know, it was a really nice part of Japan--got to know the Japanese a little bit. And then the mayor, he went to Pusan. That's where we went out, outta Sasebo. Then at Sasebo I ran into a guy who was ah--drafted with me who I hadn't seen--came from the same local town. And ah--he was on the, on the bunk, ya know, and I said I had, I wasn't sure when he went in, but I guess I caught up because he had just arrived and was getting ready to ship out and we got together because I was detoured for the five weeks and then came back. So we went to Pusan together.

Mik: What was the small town you were from?

Rich: New Milford, New Jersey. And ah--well, that's it. So the two of us, in fact we were the only two drafted in that whole year. 1952, it was a little town. But anyway, that was ah--that was it and we, ya know, we started to catch up on what was happening and we went to Pusan. And ah--that was, that was interesting, we got into Pusan, it was all barbwired, ya know, we're in this compound. And I remember the first night, ya know, it was a thirty caliber opened up, was up on a slope and just raked the whole thing and the tents. We just rolled out and go behind a duffle bag. And they had stolen some of the North Korean's--you know, you can't tell the difference. And they had broken in and they were, they grabbed us and they set it up outside the compound. But that time, it was depressing. I mean it was, I mean Pusan was, it was awful, it's just, the whole place, dump, it was terrible. They, you walk up to the kids ya know, buy something, they'd blind you. You know, mirror in the eye, grab your watch. But I don't think anybody really minded. They felt, they felt really bad,

especially, ya know, Japan was clean, it was really nice. That's what hurt in the early troops, I think. Ya know, coming from Japan, they had a pretty, ya know, pretty fat and easy. But they here and they fallen into something like that and they could see the difference in just the five weeks in Japan saying that. So I don't know how long we stayed there. I think a couple weeks. And then they put us in what they call a red ball express. And we went up to the front. Very much like World War I, ya know, you look up to at that time. You go up to the front lines. And that's what we did.

Mik: What did you see when you got there?

Rich: Well, we cut off and ah--ya know, you'd see like rows of tents over here, trucks there, this and then we were picked up by this deuce and a half. He told us to load on our stuff and we got on this deuce and a half and ah--and we went to the service company. And it was, I remember the seventeenth, it was 17th Infantry Regiment Service Company. And ah--And that was it. And there were number, that's where a lot of the, ya know, the new guys, replacements were coming in and we were there and ah--and then ah--I remember this, this one time--we had a, this guy was in the same town, we didn't go to the same high school, but he, he lived in the same town. Ah--we were given a detail to clean these field stoves. Ya know, they're full of grease and we took 'em down--and just a crick and we ah--we started cleaning and it was hot. And we cleaning them with ya know, with sand and rub the sand. I still go camping cleaning the same way, with the sand and get the thing clean. And geez it was hot. And we got 'em done and we were just full of grease. So we stripped everything off and jumped in and clean up. We did that and this old, he was kinda crippled up. He was an old master sergeant, he's Second Airborne. He came hobbling down with his cane, ya know, when he grabbed our dog tags and ya know, report 1800 hours of CP, something, ya know, that was it because he figured we're goofing off and we're just trying to clean up, but that was it. That was our detail, he gave us a detail and we had to dig a six by. And I remember that we're digging this six by and ah-- the ah-- you could hear this artillery started to take off and I didn't know what it was. It turned out later that this was, it was the first big attack in April on Pork Chop. Anyway, our backs were pretty, I mean we would, all that land over there is, felt like volcanic soil. And we dig and we dig and we dig and dig and all of a sudden he came out and he said, "Alright, drop those shovels, come over here." Get out, we dug, got jumped up out of it and it was a break to stand up. On the way out, in the back of where the tents were, oh I'd say about maybe 4, 500 yards, way out there, I saw these two tents. And some other things there and I thought it was like a--we didn't know what it was. But there were two tents and there, look like they're oil drums or what it was. Maybe that's where the trucks gassed up, we didn't know. But these two deuce and a halves we saw they had coming in the road, ya know, he stopped there and he said, "Ok," he says, "Drop that, go over there and unload. Check in with those drivers, unload those deuce and a halves." Oh, that's fine, we stretched out and the both of us went over and ah--I can, jumped up on the back of that ah--he said ok, a canvas. So he roll a canvas down the back, ya know, I jump up and start to pull the canvas up so we could see and I damn near fell



backwards. And I never saw a sight like that. The whole deuce and a half was just dead wood. It was all, it was graves registration and they were stacked all the way up and that took us about three, four hours. We didn't even talk to each other. We were just taking these. It was just like picking up timbers. And then you'd get a missing leg or an arm and I said, ya know. We didn't even talk. We just--So that's what we did. And we just unloaded that. And that was, those were the first casualties coming in from the--and we had heard the night before. That's what they did, bring 'em down behind the checkpoint and then saw them taking em back to graves registration. So that was our first introduction to what, outside of the insurgent fire in the 30/30. That was like, ya know, boy this is the real thing.

And ah--and then next thing you know, we no sooner got back, and bang, we're told ready to go and trucks were coming in and, and they started taking us up on line. And ah--I can remember it was in the middle of the night. Go up and ah--and I think I had a list and his name was Duhame, mine was Hemlin. So D and H were close enough and they went right down the line, Abel Baker, Charlie, ya know, whatever. Well all the different regiments. We were in the second. So we wound up together then in George Company Second Defense. And ah--I think I just made it, ya know, by name. He said, otherwise I may have never seen him again. And that was it. And bang, they got us in. Ya know, flak vest, the whole bit, ammo, and bandoliers and then ah--you dropped your duffle bag and the next thing you know, you're on the trucks and we're going up. And that's, so they brought us up and ah--and put us in the ah--the wounded up on the third platoon and ah--the first two wound up, going on the chop; we wound up on the blocking position--which probably saved our lives because we were on the right side of the access road blocking. They found out later anybody coming between one hill, two hundred and ah--and Pork Chop. The sector that the regiment had was Pork Chop Hill and Hill 200 and 347. And it was a very vital sector because it was the main route that the North Koreans had used when they had started war. When they ran right down to Seoul. And that's why all the attention was in April and also in July. And ah--so most of the artillery that came in, well, I remember when we got back, ah--it was like five Jeeps and a couple of deuce and a halves. I think the actual count was like fifty-two or fifty-seven. I think it was like fifty-seven came back. So that was a baptism of fire. That was it.

Mik: Fifty-seven out of how many?

Rich: Well, I think the numbers, they were ah--214, but they had, you know, the cooks and administrative. They probably, they probably went up there with, I would say, maybe hundred and sixty, hundred and seventy. Something like that. And fifty-seven came back.

Mik: So one out of three came back?

Rich: Yeah, yeah. And then ah--then some of the pictures I, you know, I had showed after that, couple days later. Ah--we had a beer party. And ah--the CO came over, ya know, and he was Wallaby Russell, a West Pointer--and I never forgot that because

he, he did his homework. You know, some of the, the ninety-day wonders, or the ROTC guys, I mean they--West Pointers would, you know, if I ever have to have any grandson of mine go, I would hope they have a West Pointer. Because he came over and he had met Duhamel. He said, he says, "Oh," he says, introduce them, ya know, and he thank, thanked us. He said, "I see we got another one of those Yankee truck farmers. Well, they're built for it." Well, I was impressed. Ah--I still am. I mean he had checked down and knew and memorized everything. He made you feel, ya know, welcome and, geez, you really felt good because otherwise you're floating around like where am I, and what's going on? And ah--He had generated so much, I mean, we, I told him, I don't think there was anybody wouldn't have gone through a stone wall.

So that was it and then we spent time from there on in ah—you--up on line, you know, it rotated. You'd go up on Pork Chop--pictures I have ah--you go up there and that would be it, you'd do your seven days and that was enough stress. And then, if nothing, go up and take you off and ah--it's funny. The best thing that ever happened on line was the shower point. That was absolutely the best. I mean, you couldn't wait for that. I mean, cuz it was the monsoon seasons, rain, you come back and it was just. And getting into that shower point, you could just rip everything off, except your boots, ya know, and just, ya know. Stand there and, and boy that was wonderful. On the other hand, some of the worse you come back and, ya know, and geez you felt good, you had new fatigues, ya know, they fit, and you look good, and you felt good. You didn't care how you look, but I mean you're clean. But then, ah--some of that time ah--Syngman Rhee had opened up the ah-- they were appalled at what he did, but he ah--I can't—Koje-do yeah, the Islands of Koje-do. He opened up and let twenty-five thousand North Korean prisoners free. He opened up and they just, ya know, that was the end of it. They were gone. So we had them all over the place. And they would give different coordinates and they knew we were spying on it and you would sit down, relax, the next thing you know, we'd get the, we're taking incoming right in the, in our base camp. Didn't call it base camp, I think they referred to it in Vietnam as base camp. It was company area it was three, four miles back from the front. And ah--that was kinda nerving because you just sitting there trying to relax, write a letter and then, ya know, all this stuff started. Didn't happen that often, but when it did, it was, it got your attention. So that's what we would do. Ya know, we be pool patrols, listening close to what, and then they would call them out guards. That was, that was what it was like. One time, it'd be Pork Chop, next time be back, next time be reserves, Hill 200, Hill 347, take your turns going onto patrol and, ya know, don't step on the mine. And ya know--If you smell the garlic, you were too close, that was it. And ah--So--

Mik: I've heard that, did that happen to you?

Rich: Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah. The most unnerving was the burp gun and ah--I had one of those. I took it off a prisoner, but the ah--I lost it. I cleaned it up and put it in my duffle bag and lost it when I was going home. Made us fall out, drop everything; I came back and they, ya know, that was it. And some young lieutenant was giving

me a lot of stuff about it. But the burp gun was, ya know, it's just a [makes sound] and it really unnerved, ya know, because I think they carried nine rounds. And it wasn't all that powerful, but it sure keep you alert because I mean they could do a lot of damage, but ah--and ah. Everything we did was at night. And so that was it. But ah-- yeah, I remember coming back from one patrol and they got back just before daylight and the Koreans were all screaming 'cuz its Chinese major was sitting on top of the hooch. He was hungry. And he'd come right through the lines and wanted to get in line to eat and they spotted him. And so, the Chinese were good. I mean they were, they ah--they had some good troops. And they were really--it was ah--you just had to stay awake. I mean, that's, there was no time to fool around. But ya know, it was unnerving, that was everyday. I mean everyday--wherever we go to. And then the worst was when they say the word would spread for going up on the chop, ya know. The nerves would start to get to you a little bit. Yeah--

Mik: How long did that last?

Rich: Huh?

Mik: How long did that last, that Pork Chop was that much in play?

Rich: Well, from April, April 1, before I got there, ah--the 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment, the 17th Regiment had; it was a UN war. And that was, that was a good experience because you had ah--you had good and bad, but everybody contribute. So we never really thought we were gonna. Isn't like a unilateral thing today. I mean, like the, like the ah--the Princess Pats, the RCR, the people, the countries that sent some of their best regiments. So they were good people there up on line. And ah--it lasted, that lasted for ya know, well, it had all during the war, but never to the extent. It was probably from, from the early part of '52 to the end of the war. And ah--that's where, ya know, the pressure was to break through the Pork Chop. Now in part of the divisions, there are two people attached to them two countries. They had a battalion, Haile Selassie's palace guard. They were very good. Ah--they were attached to the 32nd and ah--the Ethiopians and then the Columbians. And ah-- I think our sector included all those and Pork Chop. But the way it was set up--[**End of Tape WCKOR061**]

Rich: And that was it, and then—

Mik: Just like continuing your life.

Rich: Yeah, try to get back.

Mik: Were you a banker, then, for a long time?

Rich: No, no, no. I left that after a while and I got involved with the chemical companies up in New England and that's where I met my wife, up in New England.

Mik: Don't worry about going on at all. Every word is important. But I would like you to go back through those UN troops again.

Rich: Okay--well, that lasted ya know, like five months, I'd say. And the ah--but all the UN troops were good, I mean they ah--some were better than others and ah--same with our troops, but the whole UN experience for was, was eye opening because ah--as I say, I got to see the Princess Pats. Now their specialty is camouflage and they still do it today. Some of them that went to Iraq. I mean, we use to where [mumbles]. Admirable, you could look with glasses in the valley and they wouldn't move a muscle for eight hours. You never find them. I mean they were, that was their specialty. They were very good. They, and ah-- The Royal Canadian Regiment, the RCR Princess Pats. The Gloucosters, the Britouts, but the French are the top brigade there, they had the Belgians. Ah--the Turks were awesome. I wrote in some of my memoirs, I said, "Thank God the Turks were with us," ya know. Those guys were tough. And Major Hickey, the English ah--author wrote a book on them. I mean, Americans and Brits ran out of ammo, the Turks ya know, they just go running into the valley, ya know, and if they like you, they take you with them, give you a big hug. I mean, those guys were. And ah--it's always interesting ah--we did some research on that and found in the Korean, all of Islam still looked to Turkey as the defenders. And ah--with that little bit of knowledge, figuring out how to take a good bit. And why they weren't about to be bought off to let us use, USE their, you know, their stuff. They're the backbone of Islam. And that was, but they ah--in fact there use to be a Turkish restaurant here. I can't think of it down on King Street. And ah--oh--it began with a T. The son now has the place out on Mineral Point Rd. And it's Otto's. And ah--but when he was down there, we had talkin' about it and boy, he bought me a drink and he tell me how much his father is so proud. Turks were really, really proud of that ya know. Now you see 'em where everything is just messed up and I mean. And I went back to Washington, I talk to the Turks there. Got this, gave me this pin, I can go any place in Turkey with this little pin. So, you had some, and the Aussies were very good. It was, it was interesting, I mean, in the rear areas, the US troops, they be playing baseball, the Brit areas, they be playing ah--cricket or the Korean kids be learning how to play soccer so. I mean we had all this going on, it was quite an experience. And ah--so yeah, five, five months of this. That was it, up and down, up and down. And ah--

Mik: What was it like when you went up to the top?

Rich: Yeah—

Mik: Tell me exactly what that involved?

Rich: Well, they ah-- after the, the first job, ya know, everybody going up and part of the second were ah-- ya know, you had a, going up, just leaving the checkpoint and going up. And I saw mostly casualties came in. And ah-- they go back to the Columbians; the reason for that, the Columbians were attached to us. And frankly, ah--they didn't perform as well as some of the other ah--outfits we had there. I

remember when I was in Camp Drake, they were coming through and ah--ya know, they were small in stature and I remember this once, sergeant get up and said, ya know, "Break out the seventeen thirty-fives," or something. And these guys were dressed up and the lieutenant look like Simon Bolívar, but they were, they were good people, but I don't think they were that well trained. Net result was we lost Baldy, they were attached to Old Baldy. And ah-- they were kinda asleep at the switch so. That was a very important thing and that, I guess that had just finished when we were down in Pusan getting ready to come up. But I found the significance was that we had a checkpoint and you had Old Baldy was, was on the, on the west side of Pork Chop, but that loss gave the Chinese a, an observation post. So the, when our troops went up in the deuce and a halves and if they could call in fire and the worst part of it was when you had a get in those deuce and a halves and they'd say ok, the lights went out and then they revved that up and they'd go forty, fifty miles an hour. We just roared through there, ya know, space. Sometimes, ya know, gotta make a bad turn, you lose people and ah--the reason being that we lost Old Baldy and so they just called in all that fire and they'd walk the fire right up to you. So, you had that excitement, ya know, before you got to the checkpoint, they had the checkpoint and ah--but by then, they, they got some air force personnel that had these, the first batch of, I think, M39s or T18, I forget the number, but they were the, the APS. Ah—armored personnel carrier. And then you get in the checkpoint and then they would ah--then we'd go up like a squad at a time. Ya know, you could take maybe fifteen, sixteen people plus ammo. And ah--the thing about that was again, from the advantage point of Baldy, ah--they would radio back and to the troops on Poca and Haseco so they would, they would, it was a cut like Pork Chop.

We'd come down here and you had this little cut in, that was where we were in blocking position. And then when you went up this road, this access road, you had to make a turn when you were wide open. And we use to, we nicknamed it "Clobber Corner." I mean that was it. And you could tell because you were in this thing and this white, white, red light, and all white walls and then the incoming would, I mean, they either hit you or went short or went right over your head, ya know. And then down in the gulch area. So that was the thing, you know, you were saying, you couldn't wait to get there, ah--so you had the from the deuce and a half, you had to make that forty, fifty mile an hour sprint to get to the checkpoint, then get in and so, it was better than having to walk up. Because then you had no protection. At least you could get there. And then when you got there, then they would, then they would put in mortars on you, ya know, 'cuz they knew we were coming and that was, that was--open the doors and then you went out and then you had to sprint down the, down the road to a trench and then duck in the trench and then you were relatively safe for awhile. Then you moved along the trench depending on what platoon, certain areas. You either went down the east, ya know, different fingers, that was it.

That was, that was ah--and then some of the stuff that they pulled, they used to intercept mail. I remember being up there May 1st. That was big, that was you know, the communist day of May 1st. And ah--they had, what would be the

equivalent of ah--Tokyo Rose. And I don't remember the name for it, but they would start out with this, ya know, welcome George Company and ah--how are you tonight? And ah--ya know, and ah--I see you're fighting Wall Street's War and you're here and they go all through the propaganda and then. And ah--some of it ah--we want you to know that ah--when we decide the next time it's our time to ah--we ah--we're not going to take prisoners. And you should know that and the trenches will be filled with blood. And all this stuff. Well, some of the new guys, really, ya know. I remember a guy from Davenport, Iowa, he had a Dear John and he read it to him. And they would come out with that. Yeah, they read the letter to him and then they had another woman on there and she would say, ya know, I wonder who's, who's she sleeping with tonight. Stuff like that, it was really rough stuff. And the poor guy would, ya know, flipped out. So that was a real demoralizing thing. But ah--but I remember ah--like when President Bush said bring 'em on. I don't remember anybody jumping up and say bring 'em on. I mean, ya know, that just wasn't there. I mean, we just checked our weapons, that was it, make sure your grenades, ya know, don't pull a John Wayne, keep the cotter pin in and ya know. And just do your orderly job. I mean, the fifth, it was just take care of your business and that's it. So it was unnerving. And ah—

Mik: Was that radio broadcast or from speakers?

Rich: Oh, speakers. Yeah, speakers. They had loud, we were only at Pork Chop, four hundred from Haseco maybe six hundred from Poki so, an average of five hundred yards. So I mean they would turn on the speakers and that was it. And the bugles that were in. And play the bugles and then they, and then they had--but they would also play their, their ah--various ah--records. I can remember one ah--translated this. Well, that, they, they play that when they preparing to die. And ah--and some of them did. I mean much like, ya know, what they're doing in Iraq now. They did have suicide people. They, for example, they would wait in the monsoon. After the first Pork Chop, I think they made General Trudeau. He made, he was an engineer, that was his first assignment. And then now, he's in charge of this division. But it was his intention to rebuild all the bunkers, make the trenches seven feet deep and wide. He wanted the Jeeps to be able to drive through the trench. Wide enough, quote unquote, for a Jeep to drive through because it was his feeling and rightly so that most of the casualties taken on the Pork Chop will be because the trenches were too narrow. Ah--and Pork Chop was the only--had sixty-four fighting positions. It was for one company. And we send company after company. So it got to the point where you'd have to have a company would lose maybe a third or forty percent of their men trying to get into the--to relieve somebody. And then because the trenches was so narrow, nobody could move any place. And you pump in ah--the wounded and the dead and it was like, ya know, you're stepping over bodies and then they had to work their way off. Then they get hit going off, so. You start out with, with X and then you got up there and you have X minus this and then, ya know, at the end of a given time, you got, ya know, pieces of George and pieces of Lub, and pieces of Easy and who knows what. And he wanted everything built so that it would last longer. And ah--that was his situation. And ah--make the trenches wider and

trench--were for a short time, it worked pretty well. We'd go up and dig while another company was, was in the firing pits, ya know, kinda support thing.

But, ah-- I remember the first listening post they took. We didn't know it was, it was a mayday. So we were rattled a little bit. And I remember the fellow with me, Duhamel, ah--we, he took care of the sound power. They'd have comm wire, big spools of comm wire, communication wire run out to the fingers of Pork Chop. And we were going off this west finger, which was facing Haseco. And it was a bunker out there that was, not a bunker, but ah--from a big, it was a crater--ah--shell hole it was hit by ah--probably a 155 or something. And that's where ah--we were to follow this wire out and run along this finger and when we got there, call back in. And ah--ya know, check that you were all set. So he was in the lead and then we had a fella from, from ah--it was a Mormon out west some place. Didn't say much and, and a Katyusha rock guy and I brought a three and I can remember we went out, out there and ah--they also had concertina wire we had in front. And ah--then beyond the concertina wire these trip flares were set. Well, what happened, it was funny in retrospect. We're going out and ah--and Duhamel, he was supposed to get there. Wait till we all got situated and call in, but he didn't wait. See so--guy in front of me was still going and I'm coming along and he hooked in the sound power and went to pull it to call in, but he pulled a trip flare. So, the whole area lit up like it was the Fourth of July. And ah--that was ah--I remember that was unnerving because you were exposed and ya know, when I just, I remember I dove to--I rolled down the hill, I roll through some concertina wire. I couldn't get rid of the ????????. And ah-- I couldn't get it off of me, but I, I knew that ya know, you'd run into people down there. I wanted to just get back up on top. I remember dragging that wire and ah-- and I cut my leg in, you either get that wire. Finally, I get rid of the wire and I get up on top and boy they had us zeroed in. The thing that saved us that day was ah--was the slopes. You see up on top, it was like this so when the rounds came in, we were underneath it. And it would blow out. We were, we just hanging on there. And ah--but that was, that was interesting.

But, but some of the things you remember, like I remember like, ah--Duhamel was trying to ah--call in, ya know, and tell 'em what was happening with this backup, Percy 6 and he went to hook it on. He pulled the, he pulled the aerial out, see. And then this round came in and ah-- and we just got, it didn't, nobody got hit, but we didn't know it, but then the Mormon guy got hit, see. And ah--I mean some of the things, ya know, he let go all his water and it started coming down and then Duane started to whack him on the head with this, with the Percy 6, ya know. And I had to roll over and calm 'em down. But I mean, it's just crazy stuff like that. And you say, what's going on? But the whole thing, the mission was aborted. It was all, ya know, blown up and that was the end of it. And ah--ya know, another day, but those are the kind of things that, ya know, you'd face on a regular basis. And well, your name would come up and ok you don't, and change LP to outguard, but same idea. You either do one of those or you'll be cleaning weapons, or you'd go on patrol and. And then ah--that was it. Every day and then after seven days you come back, take a

shower and you go up to another hill. And that's, that's how life was every day out there. Month after month—that was it.

Mik: So it was dread and then just staying alive and then relief and then all over again?

Rich: Yes, exactly. That's exactly what it was. Exactly what it was. Yup.

Mik: What do you mean when you say this first Pork Chop?

Rich: Well, for us, the first Pork Chop ah--there had been others where the ah--like there were regiments there from Thailand and they were involved on Pork Chop, but at that time, it wasn't--the action was in a different area. It wasn't stabilized and it was up and down, flying around. So it wasn't, but when they set up the main line of resistance, which ran a hundred and fifty-five miles east to west. Pork Chop then, if you looked on the map, was the key thing. That's because if they broke through Pork, then the mountains, everything went that way, switch. And they went this way. And they, they would be able to run only thirty-three miles to Seoul. So that was a key area. And towards then end, coming up with the, with the peace negotiations of Panmunjom and Rhee was head hard, or hard-headed about things, he wanted everything to be--but that's where they wanted to hammer away at the ah--and the seventeenth was one of the early divisions over there. They came in Incheon with the Marines and gone all the way up the Yalu and basically, ya know, defeated North Korea. And enough so that then when, when ah--things opened up and ah--McArthur had been embarrassed, it was ah--ya know, the worst embarrassment since Bull Run, ya know. When his ego got the best of him and that's, he wanted to be, ya know, go out with shining stars. And he was heck of a general, but that, that was the end and rightly so. And I think, and Eisenhower would come in, Matthew Ridgway came in and--we got it back and we got things put together. But then Pork Chop for us, the April Pork Chop was the first big attack. Where they tried to really break through. And then the one that ah--the last one was July second, started on the--actually the--from the sixth to the eleventh. Came in the night of six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, five days. That was a big one. That was bigger, that was the biggest one. And that was the one where all the, the coverage was ah--people of the world and Panmunjom. I mean they, nobody was expecting that. They thought it was all gonna be a truce. And then they, they ah--that one hit. That was a tough one. That was like the finally.

Mik: Were you there then?

Rich: Yeah, I--it was the luckiest thing that ever happen to me, I was in the Third Platoon. I was in charge of ah--a squad lead of the machine gun squad, thirty caliber machine gun. Light and heavy water cooled and that was ah--and they had so many men plus there was a corporal. And ah--they had asked me when I was basic, ya know, going to OCS. And I turned it down. Ya know, I said, "Thank you very much. It's an honor, I appreciate it, but I just wanna get my--do my thing and get home." But then ah--they asked if I wanted to go to leadership school. And ah--at first, he was



kidding me, he said that's a good deal, ya know. I didn't mind, I'll shine the boots, I'll do the whole thing. But it's, it's ya know, a shallow point clean up and do it and I said "Boy that's a break from R and R," so. I went to leadership school. And I remember that because ah--July 4th, they had a big parade and ya know, when we drilled the M1s. And I didn't mind it. It was fine, it was a break, ya know, change your venue and just it's, it's great. Only a week of this and, but it only lasted ah--I think like we were there the second, third, fourth, fifth, three or four days. We didn't complete the, the whole week. And I remember going at night, went over they had ah--they had ah--a movie tent. And "Gigi" was playing. Audrey Hepburn was there, I don't know who it was. Maybe it wasn't her.

Mik: Leslie Caron?

Rich: Leslie Caron! That's who it was. Leslie Caron, and "Gigi" was playing. That's it. And ah--and I don't know, but sudden they cut the movie down, stop. And we had, ya know, we kept hearing all this. As a matter of fact one of them turned it off, see. And the word had spread that Pork Chop was hit. Well, then, we turned it off and you could hear the artillery was getting bigger and bigger and bigger. And next thing ya know, we were told to return to the tents. We went to the tents and we laid on top of the tents and then, I mean on top of the bunks. And then we were going back to our companies. Well, it had gotten so bad, this was, now this was the--they hit the sixth, it was seventh, and ah--we were going back to the tents on the eighth. The eighth day of July. And they found out that my company ah--had been set up. They had gone up on the seventh. So there was nobody left in the company except some cooks and the administrators, some of the administrative people. And they had taken people from supply, people, so many cooks, and they were forming this probational company. And ah--so I got back there and ya know, and went into supply and we got, ya know, the ah--you got the flak vest and you got your ammo and then hurry up and you didn't have time to do much, just ya know, drop your duffle bag, get back, report back there and jump on this deuce and a half. So then what they were doing, they went through and picked up people from Easy Company, Fox Company, they were that George, Howe Company. Picking up all these--the making up the provisional company. And ah--so that's what I wound up in. My company was, was up on the hill. So I got up there and I spent the whole night in the checkpoint helping the ah--and this was--it was tough experience. You didn't realize it until years later. Now, I found over there, I was very calm and as calm as you can get, but then, it all fell apart. It started to fall apart when I, we're getting on the, on the boat, I mean the nerves really. But I mean we got up there and I went worked in the checkpoint, which was a little aid station. And you remember some things, like I remember the sergeant coming in ask you if you had a cigarette. And I smoked and I gave him a cigarette. And I can remember all the smoke coming out of his lungs and his neck. And he was hit with Willy Peter. And it's just burning holes in him. It was like a freak movie. Here's all this smoke coming out under his back, down here. It's just like you took and it just was finding the openings, ya know. And gee, I'll never forget that, poor guy.

And ah--so we were there unloading wounded and ya know, that's what they do. You take the wounded, go back to the other checkpoint, by two hundred and they'd take, put the dead on one side and then the wounded, we would go there or Norwegian MASH. The Norwegian MASH had a real good hospital. And I met them later on and in the 90s went back to see the Korean Memorial and they said we always knew when we heard that Seventeenth was getting hit and they woke everybody up. And this is it. And they took care of a lot of our wounded. And sometime, the only ch--unlike Vietnam, the only choppers we had were the bubble chopper and you had these two sleds on it, ya know, and you could put, you could put two, two litter, litter on each side and that's what, if we needed to, get one of those in, take 'em back. So I worked that all night long. But I had some interesting situations there.

The one that I'll never forget, and I have a picture of it. We had monsoon rains from the sixth, seventh, eighth. And ah--and it rained all that night; now the morning of the ninth, the sun came out and everybody's spirits picked up. I mean ah--the sun came out and, and it was a beautiful like a day like today, ya know and it was hot as hell in July. And we worked all night long and, and ah--now we saw the sun. It came up, but I remember everybody went outside just take a smoke break. And I remember going outside and leaning back against the sandbags, and Bubba Newson was our first sergeant, he was a World War II guy. And he was sitting ah--oh right, right over here, ya know, like where that table is, not that far away, I'd say maybe ten yards max. Sitting up on some ah--like a, like a wall made out of sandbags, ya know, around it and another wall. He was sitting there and a couple other guys. And over this, behind, to the side of the checkpoint was where the, the ah--they used to bring in the ammo. And these drivers, a lot of them were in like NASCAR types, I mean they were, they could really handle that truck. A lot of Southern guys, good drivers, good guys. But they'd come in there and they'd dump the ammo and then they'd haul ass and get out. See, so you had this giant pile, like a little mountain that was just, ya know, loaded with, it was an ammo dump, literally. I mean it wasn't, ya know, it wasn't, ya know like storage. It was set up, and it was just, just dump it and go. See, these rounds would come in and I can remember standing there and all of a sudden we heard this mortar round come in. And it just went, plop. And I'll never forget that. We just looked at it, just like I'm looking over there and you could actually see the fins, it was an 81, well, maybe 80. To the fins were spinning and years later I remember it like, like a big top, you were to play with on the streets. This damn thing and I remember I looked, everybody looked and it was like, ya know, another seconds, or whatever it was, but phew!!! We all took off. And like a damn fool, I took off and dove in the ammo dump. Ya know, I mean how many, the grey matter on that one was off the charts. And here I am, I'm, I'm in the ammo dump head down, and I started to look up and I see fifty caliber, grenade, heavy wooden boxes are grenades and I says, ya know, this is, is crazy. So, so phew, but I stayed there, and they, a number of rounds came in and ah-- thank god, nothing hit.

And ah--and then I got back to the ah--to the ammo dump and ah--or not the ammo dump, to the aid station, but what was going on was significant. It was a, an old

World War II guy. I think he was part of provisional company, but he was from Fox Company, big gut, he was a, he was like our, sergeant born, he was a mess sergeant I believe. And it was his job to ah-- take these APCs and kinda, put them back fifty yards, ya know, stretch them out because we were under observation, that was the biggest thing. Under observation from Old Baldy. So they could see where the line was and you'd hide 'em over bridges, there was a little crick there and so it wouldn't be exposed and then, he'd wave 'em up, ya know, and you'd have one at a time come in and then it was our job, we had to run out and if there was, ya know. And we'd load 'em up with water, jerry cans, water, load the things up with ammo, whatever we needed. The whole idea was they'd go up this winding road and they'd dump their ammo, get it in the supply and then they'd bring back the dead and the wounded. That was it. So you had, you had guys loading over here and then they'd come back and you'd pull off the wounded and the dead. And that was it. That was, that was the whole thing.

And I remember doing this and ah-- all of a sudden I look up and here's this whole new thing, it's, it's ah--it's these two Marines and ah-- and ah-- and an amphibian thing. It had like a Higgins boat, ya know, one of those front loaders. And they had different uniforms, had like the camouflage things, and these two young Marines. And I'm saying, what in the, what are they doing here. And ah--while we were doing all this, ya know, they had asked, like, ya know, can they help out. I don't know how they got over there or what, ya know, but. So I guess he said, yeah, fine. Get that Higgins boat in and I must've been unloading ah--ya know the wounded, when they brought it up. So, and so the Higgins boat was told them to go back in line. See, so he had wave and you were waiting for the next one to come up and here come these two Marines and I said, gee, what kind of a weird thing is that. And ok, so then they decided because of the shape of the thing that they would, they would just put some water on it. I don't think it was as strong as one of our APCs. And send it up empty and you could take more wounded down. We're taking an awful lot of wounded. See, but I remember then that ah--I took back and I, I went back over to the, to the aid station and some, and then I looked out the aid station and a number of different rounds came in. And I looked up the road and here is this, the Marines and they're blocking traffic. These poor guys, they froze. They just wouldn't move. And this whole, I'll never forget this, all this mess sarge went up and I saw, I could see this. I'd say it was about sixty, seventy yards up the road. And people were screaming get that thing off the roof. We had not only the APCs were exposed in the back, but we had wounded that we couldn't get back because only one way. And I remember him taking the forty-five and I could see him, open the door and pull out, the Marine slam him on the ground, take out the other one, next thing I know, he's jumping in that, that Higgins thing or whatever it was and run it right off the road, bang. The way down and opened it up and he went, but that's been with me for fifty years. Now I don't know whether those two, they were alright, ya know, typical Marines, cocky, cock of the world, one of these things. But I don't know, ya know, whether they, what happened. I don't know, I mean they could've been, he was right, because if you want to play soldier, that's ya know, I mean, you're blocking the road here. Ya know, move, move it. And they didn't, so I

don't know what their fate was. And ah--I find sometimes like pray whatever happened, ya know, but ah--that was one of the things. And ah--and then next thing ya know, ah-- **[End of Tape WCKOR062]**

Mik: Okay, so it's still that first night, is this what, July 8th?

Rich: Now it's July 9th.

Mik: Okay.

Rich: And, the morning hours. Well after this situation with, with the Marines, coming along, with the new shape boat--and then up, and then. You know, switch that out of my head. And I remember working, you know taking in wounded and--now all of a sudden this uh, sec--I think it was a first lieutenant. then, this first lieutenant and I recognized him, he was not with George Company but he was at the school, the leadership school. And I'm there working it and all of a sudden I heard him yell out, "Hemlin!" I look and I am saying, "Yeah that's me, yes, yeah, yes." How did he know my name? And then I realized I had this big blue with white H-E-M-L-I-N, from leadership. And he spotted me from leadership, and I didn't, I still don't know his name. And he called me out and he says, "Got to get somebody up on the chop," he says, "Here's what's going on." He said, "We have to get a plat, a layout of all the 64 positions, we have to know where we are, where Joe is, you know Joe, where he is, and we got to get that information back and it's got to go to artillery because, whatever it is, 15:30 hours we want to hit it, we got to saturate with VT [variable time fuse]." Comes down on you, I'm worried about that, bang. "And so, your job is to go up, get this to Major Noble, get that plat filled out and then you know bring it back, you know communications have been wiped out, so it's got to be me that carries it." Says, "ok." Well, I gone up, you know, the chop in these APCs but all the time with a group, see. But this time I go in this APC, I remember I made it early, you know it was a little nerve racking because that thing was just loaded, I mean all kinds of ammo and everything, and we had a fifty caliber up on top, you couldn't even see a little bit to get up there, I mean if you had to. And just enough room for me to get in the back. And I got the back, and on the tanker says, "Okay, you let it roll." Bang. It takes off and I can remember I'm a sitting, you know you face the rear, and looking in that red thing. Then I remember the things that got me, you know, I look around, where I am supposed to have grenades, I don't have any. I've got a flash light, right. I got an M2 carbine, we used to take M1s, cut the sear down, because M1s everyone wanted the weapon of choice was the M2 carbine, because it was light and then we used banana clips, you know so you could have 60 rounds with that and I had that. But I got an M2 carbine, and I am, I got, and from the dress, you know routine marching around, I have my M1 ammo, which is I don't have that. I got carbine and I don't have my clips, and I don't have a, don't have that, and I got a carbine bayonet which is like having a you know, a Swiss Army knife. I got that little thing and I am saying "What the heck is going on here?" you know, so I take that, hook it on the, on that. And then the imagination takes over, because we are going 'up there'--I think about it, some of it's funny. But we are going along you

know, and then we come around this clobber of a corner and then babababoom, baboom. I could feel it. The closest I've ever heard it, and that was heavy loaded and it's going. Then it stopped, and then it seemed like it went faster. Well my imagination got the best of me, and I figured that the tankers got hit and that this thing is running on autopilot, you know we are right through the cut, you know, I'm headed to North Korea [laugh]. And this--this thing is going to blow up in my face, see. And then we stopped. And I could hear you know, a couple Koreans talking and I say, "You know what." It was like a class B movie, you know. Here I have, they open the door and I fly out, you know. I think about that, that was kind of dumb, you know but. Then I realized what was going on. But then, then things got kind of back to reality. You know I go in and there's this the African-American FFC there, nice guy, and I told him, I said, whatever it was, I said, "I've got to get this plat filled out, Sergeant," I said, "I'm up here to see Major Noble." I didn't know who the hell Major Noble was, turned out that he was a regimental commander, I didn't know that, cause things switch all over the place, you know, I'm in leadership. And a he says, "Major Noble is being taken care of." Ok. So, I think Major Noble had some problems and he was being attended to, I don't know loading him up with morphine or what, but he says, "There are no more officers on the hill." Every officer was killed. "I'm in-" he says, "I'm in command. I'll get this taken care of. What company are you with?" And like a fool I realize, well I said instinctive, I said, "George Company." I should have told him provisional company, "George Company." "Sorry, go back to George. Go back to your company." he said, and then he gave me a time and had this done. Now, all the bad memories come out. I realized, I ask for ammo, and get a couple of clips and I head back up where I know George, you know, I knew where--I found out where they were going on the east, you know the east side of the front ridge. And I started to go up and I knew I was getting close to where George was, because there was this little Irish kid from Brooklyn, and I remember, ah jeez. But I remember, you know I didn't want to step on him, but I had to take his, I took his clip, you know. I could see helmet, and I saw that and I must of moved them and the helmet fell, fell off and all, it was like a Halloween mask, that's all he had. The rest was gone. And then with another kid. And then it was like to keep your head back. Because that was the section where it wasn't covered trenches, you know. I had to step on these guys and go up. And then I got to where the trench ended, you know, and I can remember and I'm coming around and I turn around and now I got, there are two Chinese, and the rest goes blurry. I remember carbining something and screaming, and they are screaming in Chinese. But the result is I have these two Chinese and only one weapon, and there was nothing left in this burp gun, the other guy had nothing, and you know that's it and I've got them. And I'm, this I says, "I am not going, where am I, I'm taking them," so I got them down, and there they go, and they're in and the guys on the base of the supply area getting them tied up in comm wire. And I go back in, and all this is happening like I am a robot man, I'm like just floating. And I remember going back and I get my plat, well--the things, and then I go back out, and I, I get in, and I get the two of them in, and I got my carbine and I can remember I think I have, I know I had the burp with me, because I remember when I got back I cleaned it up, but that's kind of, I figured that one. But I got this carbine, but the thing I noticed,

the one guy is staring at me. See now in the '50s, you know we, nobody was involved in drugs, I mean I think there was some mar--some reeferers they called them. But there was no drugs, I mean, least, I mean it just wasn't a big thing. I didn't know anything about drugs. Well I see this guy and he is staring at me glassy eyed and then I look up close and he's got this sewing needle stuck to his ear, and I look at the sewing needle and down here, and he's got this little patch, and that is where the opium is. And, I'd never seen anything like that. See all ties so what they would do in their caves, you know they had their oxen and, but then they get all high on their, on their, their wine; their rice wine they made like the Japanese make sake. They had their rice wine and then they did the opium stuff. And then the bugles and everything. So this guy was like, I think that's the whole thing, was ,you know I mean, wasn't any big heroic deal, like just, bang, but there they are, and I'm just taking them back and that's it, and I got my plat in here to deliver, and I'm--I kept looking at this guy, and he's just kind of smiling, glassy, mmmmm. And it was like unreal, I mean I just felt, ok you know the door is open, kind of gave him a little boost, that's it, they grabbed him, took him to S1 and S2, I just went through, like I gave--turned in my, I you know. Lieutenant, here, here it is. I go back to the aid station. And later that night, got all my stuff and that was it.

They put in the BT, next day what was remaining of our company came back to get them off the hill. So that was it. But that was, that was, for me that was almost, that was almost like the end of the war, I think. We moved back to a, to a--you know. But I remember the emotions of it, I mean like the a--My friend, Duhume, I found out was the, he was, he was-- We didn't have Lieutenant Russell with us, we had this guy, Brokes, and he was trying to fill a big pair of shoes, he never filled them very well. And, I don't know about him, but anyway, he, when I came back he told this radio man, that he wouldn't, he was not going to come back and ride back off in the duce and a half. He wanted his, his jeep. And the guy who was his jeep driver didn't have to go up because he was from Chicago, a nice guy, he was goin' to rotate home. But he had to go up and take the jeep and go up and get the old man, and he got him, and both of them got a direct hit and that was really, you know--Boom, destroyed it. Jeep's gone, direct hit 105 or something, all because the guy's ego. He could have jumped in the cab of a duce and a half, you know. But I remember that. And Duhamé came back and then he lost it. We just didn't know. I mean there were guys missing, I may have seen some of them, I mean it was like, it was like chaotic, you know. I remember that.

And some funny instances like that was it, and we were gonna go to camp, they were going to bring us back to Camp Casey, that was a British area. And I was in--so they said, "Get all the tent stuff, leave everything," you know load them up and go back, we're going to have, you know, wasn't R&R but just kind of calm down, you know, relax. And I remember that my job was to get all the trucks loaded, and Ethiopians were taking over, it gets a little bit--it was a late, it was funny in a way. These Ethiopians, I mean they are handsome guys, you know I mean very, you know, black, tall, well spoken, you know this was Haile Selassie, the emperor of Ethiopia, and this was his palace guard, and their instructions you know, bring every

man back, they were good and they were good fighters. But we used to have a lister bag, you know, on tripod with the, with the canvas, you know with water in it. And ah--I remember, I look up and I see them taking the canvas lister bag up and they put this big old black pot in there. And like you know like a big soup tureen and you know, my mind is--you know, wow, I liked it better when the water was here, but it was starting to get dark and I remember. And this was a couple of days after, this didn't happen the same day, it was a week later, everyone had calmed down, everybody was at that time. Then they started, people came back and realized, you know, they were grieving and people were, it was just--and then we realized that well, we did a good job and we held the line and that was it. So we started feeling better about ourselves, and the Ethiopians we took over. But I remember that because it was getting dark, and I smoked then. And this Ethiopian guy came up to me, and he said, "Pardon me, Corporal," he said, "Will you have perhaps have a cigarette?" And I remember saying "Here, take the whole pack," you know, "Load them up; let's get out of here [laugh]." That was funny. And then we went back to Camp Casey, pretty much sat out the rest of it and the next thing you know. I can't recall any big, big feelings when--and then we were back up on 347 when the war ended, you know. And we were drained then. It was just okay, nobody really trusted it.

One thing I do remember is they brought up all these old fat colonels, you know, small generals that were coming out of the woodwork, that I could remember them saying, "What's that over there?", I was a--everyone wanted to take pictures, you know. Where they spent--and the Korea was like a war, I mean if you were back past division in I Corps something, you might as well be in Kansas City, I mean it was, that's the way it was, you know. You were there or you weren't there. I mean there's--every war is like that, you know, I mean you got maybe, every fifth guy or every sixth guy or every tenth guy, ten, you know, percent are involved and the rest are running bulldozers and everybody's job is important. But the fact--the thing, I don't know whether, they take the memories with them, I mean, that's, that's it. So when it was over, it was over. I mean at that time you were just going on, running on empty anyway. For me, that was it, and then--and then I think a week or so after that, this, all the guys, I finally got to use my units supply thing, they moved me out of platoon, put me in supply, and that was it. That's what I did. And then awhile latter, you know. They changed company commanders left and right, and none were as good as Lietenant Russell, though. One that stood out was Mineo Anusaki, he was a Japanese Nisei, we got to know him, talk with him. And General Clark was in charge of the 42nd that was a foreign 42nd and a 4-4 duce in Sicily, Monte Catino; and you know Clark used to go to those meetings, staff meeting after battle reports and brag, I think how many, how many losses he had. He never considered the Japanese-Americans as American citizens. He'd just throw them right in, in a way in retrospect he did the same thing with us over there. He was throwing company after company. So we had the same Clark as World War Two had in Italy, and I remember Anusaki telling me about, they were rose growers, his family and how they had, were sent in, had to give up everything and they went to the desert there someplace in Nevada, Las Vegas, maybe out in the desert and live in theses

compounds. So he was, he was a good officer and had an excellent record. But he, the Japanese were hated by the Koreans, he told me that was the one thing, he got his orders, he was going to be sent to K-MAG, which was Korean Military Advisory Group, and he was really nervous on how the Koreans would take to him as a Japanese-American. But he offered the first sergeant the same one who--where the round fell in between us, and me, the two other companies that we could go to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, he wanted to recommend the two of us, put me up as sergeant. You have a 30 day leave and report to Ft. Sill, and then I'd wind up being a chopper pilot you see. So, if I had done that, I think maybe I wouldn't be here. I'd probably wind up in Vietnam, and the leather jacket would look good for about 10 seconds and that was it. I said, "I appreciate it, Sir. But I think I am ready to go home." That was about it.

Mik: Well I think you'd be ready. When you went up to get the plat filled out--

Rich: Yes.

Mik: Did--was that morning, was it daylight?

Rich: Oh yeah, yeah. That was about 13:00, something like that. And maybe, maybe it was fourteen--something like that, but it was, in between that area, because I think it was something like 15:30 was what they were going to throw in. They wanted that all, that's when it was going to come in and they were going to keep that write up. So yeah, it was in the middle of the day.

Mik: So that whole thing, did it all seem like it was slow motion?

Rich: Yes. Yeah. It just, it just like you're just, you know, moving around, you know. But the thing that stood out, in fact I told this, was the guy with that needle. I said, "What the hell?" I, you know, "Look you're dumb." And then the little pouch, and nobody paid any attention to that. You know, but I mean, then it tied in, that's that what they did. I mean most of them were half stoned, you know and that covered up the fact that they, you know, I guess they don't hunger, they don't feel hungry. But, yeah, we had like, interesting things, like there is a friend of mine lives in our little small condominium that talked on Omaha, he was hit there, I don't know how many times, and you probably did something with him, his name is Milo--

Mik: Oh yeah, Milo Flaten.

Rich: Milo Flaten, yeah. And Milo, Milo is an interesting guy and he'd talk, see the Krupp company in Germany used to, made the same potato masher grenades that he used, that the Germans used and the Red Chinese used the same one. And Milo would say, you know he used to pitch for the UW, he'd practice throwing those apples and when the captured Germans would tell him, "You know, we knew we were going to get hit because we saw those apples coming in." But they, they didn't like to use their own grenades because they were sabotaged. And all that goes back to the Sudetenland,



you know where the Czechs, the Germans lived in that Czech area, one of the reasons, Hitler wanted more land. That didn't happen with the Red Chinese, they weren't I mean those, potatoes mashes didn't blow up in anybody's face, I mean. So the moral of that story is, they disliked the Nazis more than they did--of course they were under at that time, Korea I mean they were under Russian rule, so whatever quality control. That's what they used, and they, we had one case where Pake Company went up during that time where they were rebuilding these trenches in the Monsoon rains and they waited until all the rebuilding was done, there were deep trenches and they were soaking wet, and then they would use, they had, they had these suicide guys come in with potato mashes wrapped around them with one pull cord. And they were all, at least stoned or what. They'd jump in the trench and do what they are doing in Iraq, and pull, pull the cord. And the concussion would just sink the trenches completely and they lost a whole platoon, just suffocated. I mean this seven foot trench just sucked them in like--so we just played right into their hand with this making this trench deep enough to drive a jeep through, see came back and backfired on us. A lot of things like that--it happened. But that was it. There were some, you know, some bright spots but, got a little bit different after the war was over. But you still, let me get out of here, type of thing, you know.

Mik: So when you got out did you have bad nightmares, in and out?

Rich: Not, not uh, I am thinking of one funny thing before I do that. The uh, I got home and had seen MASH was playing, you know the movie, I mean TV thing, and I didn't even want to even see it. I didn't want to see anything connected with Korea. Well then years later when I found out, you know what MASH, I say MASH, I said to my wife, I said, "Jeez, that's Mobile Army Surgical Hospital." Dummy, I just didn't want to see it. But I remember kind of a funny incident we had with Norwegian MASH. I know a few Norwegians, I told them, I don't really get around to telling it, but--I was in supply and I am now running supply and we had this, it was coming up on Thanksgiving, it was about this time of the year, you know the war ended in July and our troops were going up with replacements digging, they had to drop back from the DMZ to what they call a Kansas line, you know I don't know how many you know 3000 yards, whatever it was, couple miles. They tell me that part in between now is like a nature studies, eco study, I mean it's just lush now, you know, probably mines in there. And they would dig, digging a new MLR. And this fellow wanted to, the company commander wanted to have something nice for Thanksgiving. So he said, "Jeez, do you think we could get like table cloths?" And again, of course I couldn't come up with anything like that. Well I had this fellow that worked, that was in supply with me, I forget, two three people working, and he was a character, used to be a piano player, jazz player. And he said, "Get the jeep," he said, "I know just where to go." Now he had been wounded and he was back and he knew this Norwegian MASH, he knew the layout of it. And he said, we'll get those hospital sheets. I said, "okay," like a fool and we go back and we got this jeep and says G-17 and we, course we stopped at Seoul, we had a couple cold ones [laugh] and then we, if we pull this off--been all through it, we needed to go home, or go to the stockade. You know, we got to think this out. So we put mud on the

back of the jeep, you know, and so it was all planned, you know it's my jeep and I was driving, and he's in the back the piano player guy, Foster, what a clown. And the whole idea was I am going to go in, and you know and I am going to speak, and I know a little bit of German--I am going to try and talk to the Commandant and then Foster is going to get out he and Fornier are going to have to keep him occupied. Well this was a risky mission. So I guy up and the guy has the typical guard post, you know the European things, and big blonde Norwegian and give him the old, you know, right. And--[German] I'm Commandant." Yeah, yeah sure, we go in and the Commandant comes out there and then I am running out how to describe this, but I am taking a long time because Foster is gone, see. And I am saying if this works, otherwise it's all over. I didn't care at that point, and I am trying to tell him about, you know Pocahontas and Thanksgiving, and at this time, he's, he's really weary of what's going on, "And we'd like to invite you," I haven't told him who we are, you know, and this would be very nice and we need, you know, and if we could do that. And now he's really, he's almost, I could tell to the point where he calls MPs or something, he didn't know what was going on. All of a sudden I hear the yell and I say--and I take off. Here they got the jeep turned around and all I could see they had about 200 sheets, and they're blowing in the wind, and I dove on the jeep and we take off. And we go back. I remember the name, Abel, 33 Abel, up the dirt highway and we got back in and I remember the old man he looked, and later on he said, "Good job, good job [laugh]."

So that memory was one of the happier ones, but I got home and you know. Nothing happened for a couple of months. And I was talking before Duhamel and I, we just got, you know Korea was never, well I mean, we did our job, I mean Eisenhower turned it around. Had we not won that, held the line, I mean who knows? I mean you look at it in South Korea, is the tenth or eleventh largest and North Korea is just bleeding, and we are trying to smash them into the ground, but I mean help them out, it will be okay. But I mean, it was, it was the first real, it was a limited war, but it was a real solid victory. I mean their mission was not accomplished, their job was to take up the whole peninsula; it was denied, out finished, kaput, bango. South Korea grows to be as stable as it was. And that's when I, you know am proud of and all of us were. But there was apathy when we got back. I mean, like we are saying, "Where have you been?" one of those things, "What happened?" And I wasn't ready for the routine. So it took me awhile to try and get my legs under me. I mean, I can remember once going for a job interview in New York, and I went in and I was on the subway and we had, we were talking before, I went over, we went over Duhamel and I, we were finding the same problem. We volunteered to go when the French were still in the Dien Bien Phu. They wanted navigators, pilots; they didn't want any riflemen. I figured, well, we were going to go back--well that wasn't going to work. He wound up getting a job, and I did go back to the bank. But I was still rocky and, uh, it was a--I remember this time, I had left the bank. I couldn't handle the routine. I said, "Thank you very much." I couldn't do it anymore, the old fashioned cage, I felt like I was trapped, I just had to get out, I couldn't, I couldn't do it. I took, and they were sympathetic to us, they understood. But I remember the, you know the, oh the nerves. I remember

this job interview I had. It sounded like I could go to Europe, and my background in the Army and represent this company selling equipment to different PXs, in Europe. Now it sound like a decent job, so I got dressed up and I remember going for it. I remember getting off the--it was Grand Central. And I got off the station, and in those days they used to have the big--they had a little gum machines in between in the subway. You know you put a penny in, you pull the gum out. Well our train started to come in, and I still get it sometimes, you know I mean I got so bad, I hold the gum machine. Anyway, I'd go from gum machines in between trains, I'd get to another one. Another would come in and I would hold the other one. I was--it was crazy. Well I was like maybe an hour away, I missed the appointment. It was one of those things, and I stayed in New York for a week. You know, the nerves, the nerves had really started to take over, I don't know if it was separation or what. But, you know, I just, I just, you know my family, couldn't adjust to it. It's just one of those things. Even this summer, you talk about fifty years later, we are up in a lodge at my son-in-laws' dad and mom have, we are up there, it's an old one, May Wood Lodge is up there, a nice little lake, Upper Clear Lake, nice sunset. But the building is old see, and the kids racing down the stairs, and I can remember race down and jeez, the pounding on the stairs, I am jumping right up. I can remember the people look. Sometimes it is embarrassing but noises [true end of tape 63], quick movements and you find the same thing, it's not-- And I didn't know anything, I guess we never knew anything, what is it Post what is it? Post Stress--yeah. So I never checked out anything I didn't go the BA, you just kind of, that's it, get up and fight through it. But the nerves have been hit pretty hard. And the thoughts. I can close my eyes and I can still see that needle, I can close my eyes and see the fins on the mortar, but it's a lot better, I mean with some of the people I've met and friends, and talk, and my wife has done a masterful job helping me and. But my heart goes out to Vietnam vets—[End of Tape WCKOR063]

Mik: Is it pretty tough when you go through it in that detail again?

Rich: It's good to get it out. I don't think I'll ever be, ya know, like I can't reach a point so I stop at the end of it. But it's less and less. But I wanna get, it's very timely. I'm trying to get my stuff put together because I've been putting off on things, on that. And get that delivered for the kids and ya know, ah-- get rid of the ah--we picked out a burial site and I think that that's ah--I'm very happy with that. Go up to King, one of the benefits you get it isn't worth much. But ya know, but it's something. And going up, it was interesting. My wife would, ah--a friend of that ol' group, they get together three, four women and she's got this little house up there, about ten minutes from King and they went into King, it's a good Chinese restaurant there. And she says she wanted to see the cemetery, ya know. And the same time I had been thinking about it as we went over the Alliant Center, ya know and check what benefits I had and that's one of 'em. And one woman said she said ah--it's like she'd seen a couple times Flanders Field in Belgium. And ah--but I, and then when ah--and they were all emotional about it. And I felt the same way. So we went up and we saw it. What I liked about it is that all the headstones, is one place, all the headstones are the same. And you, there are people in one line, ya know, it's like

Spanish American War, Vietnam, World War I, Korea, World War II. It doesn't, it's not--but you know what I liked about it, it's overlooking a lake, there is no mausoleum. There's no big vault for somebody, some long gone-by judge or this or that and the less fortunate was the one you stepped on, ya know. And it's like and that's how we reminded me of Korea. Everybody was in. Nobody said, "Are you a republican? Are you a democrat? Are you a liberal?" Nobody said any of it. "Are you a Catholic? Are you Jewish or what?" I mean we were too busy, we were all Americans.

Mik: All fighting together. Do you think the way you said the way you did the job in Korea, do you think that in a way that that last Pork Chop did the job in the war? Did that sort of--

Rich: We just blew, after, I mean, everybody, we got direct order from Washington, they took people at the, the hill was destroyed and nothing ever moved--progressed beyond that. And I think a couple of days later, Syngman Rhee realized that's it, they hit the ah--they hit the ah--let's see, that annoyed them because we were well ahead of the 38th Parallel and they hammered away to try and hit the rocks. But that was taken care of. But they never proceed--pursued beyond that. No, and they never followed it up. And they had, they had their T-34 tanks, but they never made run and that's what they were afraid, that they were gonna make their run cuz frankly, we weren't that well ahead. Had they broken through, it would've been in bad shape, had it been into Seoul. I think now all those bridges in Seoul are all, they're all wired up, ya know, self-destruct, but the ah--and that would've been a, the big bargaining chip. And ah--being that close. So the way it was, no territories lost, the line held, and ah--two more weeks later it's over. And then you look at it forty years later, the Pentagon at that time in their own empirical wisdom were convinced that things were gonna happen in Europe. So we really fought with ah--one arm behind our backs. They pulled divisions off line. I think it was very hard to the Pentagon in any case they never admit the mistake that they--to admit that that didn't happen. They misjudged. And the Russians weren't gonna do anything and the way we stood up to 'em, we took care of North Korea. Stood up to the Chinese, this prevented, and moving McArthur out of that World War III and set the, set the ah--the plateau, if you will of saying this is the way we gotta go. So we started in Korea with a ah-- not much of an Army and we ended with a good one. And ah--and the ROK soldiers that were trained that we paid that went over to Vietnam were excellent. As good or better than we are. And ah--very learned and ah--Korea itself was amazing. Most literate country in the world, 98.6 I think is the number on the literacy rate there. Third grade, they all speak three languages. I mean these people, I mean they know their--well, Kwan do and they know all their, I mean, martial arts. It's amazing country. Americans don't realize, I mean lump all the Asians together, but I mean Japan, Korea, I mean, it's just, that's it. And ah--and then we went into Vietnam and ya know, many people know, and that was an awful situation. I mean, it--didn't learn. Didn't learn a lesson. But ah--so you know, you look at that and it's very, it's, it sustains me to think, and I see South Korea and I can, I talk to the old timers and I learned a little Korean, ya know, and I can say. Ah--I can talk to them.

One time, but ah--one significant thing I--you go and I don't think there was, there was never an American that said ah-- "thank you." And that was key, I mean not a key, but I mean it's just, that's it, ya know, get your uniforms taken care of get back to work or something. And I was mentioning before, one time I played golf over here at the ah--at Odana and there were two Koreans, and ah--one wouldn't play very well, the other, pretty good. And I was a single so I asked to go out with 'em. I could pick up, ya know, I'm [speaks Korean], but ah--I knew I could understand a little of the language that they were Koreans. And ah--so I told 'em, I said ah--ya know, Korea and where they were from, Seoul. And I told 'em, I said on my way to the ah--which I was, I forget it was '96 or '97, I was on my way to Washington to see the Korean Monument, ya know. And then ah--they said, "You in Korea? You fight in Korean War?" And I said yes. Ah--And I told 'em, 17th Infantry, 7th Division. And then that was it. And I started to ya know, warm up, take a few swings at my driver. They went off and they--now they talked together, see, and then we get ready to tee off, see, and they came up to me and they say they, I never forget this, they stood in front of me and these guys are in their twenties, PhD candidates or something, they were very bright. And they stood and they said ah-- "We thank you for what you do for Korea."

Mik: Something your own country wouldn't do.

Rich: So, ya know, that's what it's all about. And ah--like I say, and now I see the ah--ya know, what's going on and the, and I found out, ya know, about my company commander, he was shot through the head. And then in Vietnam in October '65 and other people what--what Vietnam that's how they go through. I can understand why they, some of them still live in the fatigues. And that's an awful thing. The ah--those people haven't seen war, haven't seen blood turn to brown, heard the screams, or everything. Those people haven't seen it. And they speak the loudest about something they don't know anything about. And that's unfortunate, where we are in this country. People screaming and yelling about something they don't know anything about. And if you look back and say, I mean, you and like my, ya know, views on Iraq is, ya know, I mean its apples and oranges. But, I don't want to talk politics, but when you send somebody to war, and they, you're giving them fifty years and maybe a lifetime of memories. You better have a good cause. You better have a good cause. I mean we didn't have to look for weapons of mass destruction when, when Hitler invaded Poland and when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, when the North Koreans, ya know invaded. I mean there was nobody running around trying to say see, see, see. And these poor guys coming back and the types of casualties they are--and have to look back and say, ya know, I just--it's an awful thing. So anyway, that's, that's--

Mik: Yeah, you'd hate to experience that and carry that with you for a mistake.

Rich: Right.

Mik: I mean if you gotta know what you're fighting for.

Rich: Yeah, you need something that you can stick in here, under your helmet, ya know, and just. And that's--I don't know, everything seems to be changing. I, but it's ah--it's getting better for me a lot and I--it's good to get this out. And ah--it's really good and I wanna--ya know, get my thing for the kids and that's it and ah--and then ya know, be able to tell them, ya know.

Mik: Did you ever go back to Korea?

Rich: No. No, I had an opportunity to go by myself. They had it paid for, but I--they say Seoul was like Chicago. It's hard to recognize. When I was there, they pave--I went to Seoul once, we never got to see it, it was after the war. And when in fact it was that time when we went to Seoul and we came back and the Norwegian MASH. But the only paved streets were around the Blue House there. The ah--Presidential Palace. I mean it was a dump. It was nothing, ya know. To see what they've done with it, that makes me feel good when I see what they've done and, and how they've done. I really feel good about. Well, they could've never done that under the, the other regime is falling apart.

Mik: I have one just really minor question: In trying to picture Pork Chop in the thick of the battle, is there anything happening in the air, any air support, close air support going on?

Rich: I never saw it once, never. But I have read things where they, they say that they've done it and ah-- And again, maybe it was a time when we were back, ya know, in, in, in reserve and, and. But not on a regular basis and I guess the reason was ah--it's like what they're talking about now, this Mohab, ya know, the mother of all bombs or something that ah--but they wanted to use in Afghanistan and Tora. Well, Korea was very much like that, a volcanic situation. They show you the picture behind me over there and you look at that and you say, in those tunnels, there was—in Haseco, enough for twenty thousand people. And we were attacked by one full division. And ah--I mean, and they just, ya know, they never ran out of people. So the axiom is don't go to war with the, you know, because they had completely disregarded human life. I mean that's another thing, when we were up on Pork Chop, most ah--how can you put it? The most European countries ah--the infantry attacked, it's differ--they mean they soften up, ya know, when you know, when tourists comin' in, but they lift their fire. They never lifted it, never. Now we had to use on the fingers where I rolled down the hill, we had anti-tank mines; they're radio controlled. I mean they would come in and hordes. So you, you'd have hit the switches. And they never raised it. So you'd look out in the morning and you saw the rats were as big as pigs. And ah--you know, the rats were over there and then they'd be, ya know, corpses lying on the-- Because they never raised it, so you had your choice, either you stayed down and, and if you didn't they were right in the trench with you. I mean that, so it's a whole different mentality, whole different set--you talking about a billion people or whatever it is. And ah--that's the type of warfare that was. And ah—

- Mik: It's just hard to imagine those tunnels because you look out there behind you and that photo—
- Rich: Yes.
- Mik: And there's nothing out there and then it's like and all of a sudden they're hundreds of thousands of people charging.
- Rich: Yeah. We would see them one time, for example, you would look at that view right there, and I never forget the first time I saw it, it just startled me. Because we were sitting on Hill 260, and this was when the prisoners were let out. And ah--they infiltrated the KSC, Korean Service Corps. Those were people over fifty ah--and they were still in good shape, but they use to, they were employed, they would patch the carriers, and rebuild the bunkers. They'd come up and rebuild the bunkers. And we noticed that when they, one of the, the best C-ration was franks and beans, everybody always fight over that, get the franks and beans. The other one was, this, when you had three big crackers and the bottom, you had this little thing of jelly, mellow jelly and you took out your, ya know, the old can opener thing, I forget what we call it, and you'd open that up, and then you'd, you had the-- so that was a treat. Well, we found out was, when the sun would go down, ya know, so they say, the morning come and the sun would go down, we were getting these direct hits, and I could remember, you looked across all of a sudden it looked like the whole mountain opened up. They actually, the doors would, the Germans did this in Munich, ya know, when, and, and in that area, do it on trains. It was, the, the trains would like open up and bang. Well, they did this same thing, I mean, you looked across at this peaceful mountain would just--and the rockets were reeled out on, on, on railroad tracks. Manual labor, hundreds of people pushing them out there. We were getting direct hits, I mean run for cover. And, and these prisoners were taking the jelly cans and we weren't paying attention, and they were putting them by our, where the tank emplacements were, like that. And then, before, they would leave, they would brush the dirt off--so when the sun set, come across the way, here is this shining things. They just come out and knocked the hell out of us with things like that. And they wouldn't see 'em again, see. That'd be it. You could--it was like a fake show. You know, I mean, hear these rockets with the pier. So, in fact we, they found out that they had a rats nest under Pork Chop. Ah--that was, it could hold a company. It would be like, you're walking along and you see it not only had the grates, sewer grates, ya know, with the Xs on it and there's culverts going. That's how it was. So while you were up there, you know, looking around, they're underneath digging, and digging, and digging. And that's, ya know, and they had these all along the lines. I mean, they finally had sappers who'd go in, you know, they'd go in and, and try and, ya know, throw some explosives in, but I mean, right underneath you. They would do this. On Hill 347, where it came down to ah--a line. The ah--we had them, you know, blocked off, but, but that's where they had initially come right on through. You wake up and, and they're coming through. I guess they did that under the DMC, but, the man power, that's what I say when

people say twenty thousand. Yeah, well, one division, but they had forced labor in there just doing all this stuff. If we could find the glasses and they'd see them in their rice fields and they had their oxen and. So it's a whole different mentality, I mean, ya know. So it never stops. I mean, they keep going and they just throw, throw wave after wave, after wave at you. And then it gets, it gets crazy. So it was a good lesson in the sense that, ya know, how to--I think President Nixon realized that, ya know, it's good for us to work on an even keel because if you're gonna get involved with China, I mean, you're talking numbers. They, we held our own very well. In North Korea we had no problem what, but China had, was, ya know, the, what the Kuomintang. You know, these are, well--the Mongolians were in there too. Ah--they, they have been fighting for a number of years. But it's not the China of today everybody making tons of money and, ya know, "made in China" all over the world. These were people that, ya know, it's either, it's either fight or you die. I mean, at least they had food and--and they, they bought into Mao Tse Tung. I mean that was it. They--the people's liberation army. So, they-- it wound up, it wasn't a, quote, 'good war,' but it was a just war. And it did the job. And we paid a very high price. One of the bloodiest wars we've ever been in. And you could go the rest of your life waiting for people to talk about.

I'll give an example and you can ask me a question. But when Iraq first started, the ah-- people at 9/11 were upset and my wife and I were shopping at Sentry and this, there was an older woman there and she said ah--she was on the verge of tears, ya know. And I walked over, everybody was nervous, ya know, and I said to her, ah, "Are you ok?" Ya know, and I talked to her, and she said, "Oh, this war thing, they'll do it again." And she started unloading and tell me about her husband. And she lost her husband and her brother who was mental; and about the War II and what happened and she went all about that. And I tried to calm her down and ah--and I, I never forget this. This was not long ago. And I said to her, I said ah—"I think I can understand," ya know, and she said, "Were you there?" And I said, "Not there," I said, "I was in Korea." All of a sudden her, she looked at me like that and she said, "Oh, Korea--[End of Interview]