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**The Vietnam Archive
Oral History Project
Interview with Martin Brady
Conducted by Richard Burks Verrone, Ph.D.
June 25; July 9; August 20, 2003
Transcribed by Laura Darden**

NOTE: Text included in brackets [] is information that was added by the narrator after reviewing the original transcript. Therefore, this information is not included in the audio version of the interview.

1 Richard Verrone: This is Richard Verrone and I'm conducting an oral history
2 interview with Mr. Martin Brady. Today is June 25, 2003. I'm in Lubbock, Texas, on
3 the campus of Texas Tech University in the Special Collections Library interview room.
4 Mr. Brady you are in Garland, Texas. It is approximately 1:13 PM Central Standard
5 Time. Sir, why don't we start with a brief biographical sketch of yourself? Could you
6 tell me when and where you were born and a little bit about your childhood growing up?

7 Martin Brady: I was born in Swoyersville, Pennsylvania, in 1941. I actually
8 grew up in New York City, actually Staten Island, New York. This is approximately
9 1943. I continued on through there until I joined the Army.

10 RV: You were born in Pennsylvania and you grew up in Staten Island. What do
11 you remember about Staten Island and your childhood?

12 MB: Everything. Even with the buildings there I could still walk through the
13 woods. Since they put the Verrazano Bridge up, I mean it's just wall-to-wall. It's just
14 like New York City. It's a waste of an island.

15 RV: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

16 MB: Including me in the family, there was ten: six girls and four boys.

17 RV: Wow, wow, a large family. Where were you in that place?

18 MB: Second from the last.

1 RV: Okay. Did any of your siblings have any military service? Did they
2 eventually go into the service?

3 MB: Yes. I had two brothers, both in the Navy. One was a destroyer greasy toe,
4 and the other one was a yeoman.

5 RV: How about your parents? What did they do for a living?

6 MB: My dad held two jobs. He was a locomotive engineer, locally, not long
7 distance, and he worked for Con Edison in New York. My mom was a homemaker.

8 RV: So your dad helped run the trains there on the island itself?

9 MB: Yeah, he usually took trains from Staten Island, returned them to New York
10 City or Hoboken or wherever.

11 RV: Then did he work Con Edison in the evenings?

12 MB: Well, Con Edison was his full time job, and he took all the railroad time he
13 could get. He worked himself up from a fireman to an engineer.

14 RV: How would you describe your childhood? Was it an ordinary childhood or
15 was there something exceptional that was happening?

16 MB: Pretty much so. I had the benefits of growing up in the country, around
17 animals, a lot of woods and ponds and lakes; and being within a half hour of New York
18 City.

19 RV: Did you get to go into the city often?

20 MB: Very much, yeah.

21 RV: What are your memories of going into New York City? I guess Manhattan,
22 I should say.

23 MB: I got a parochial education, Catholic education. First of all, my first
24 remembrance of going to New York was for a First Communion up to 14th street up into
25 the Garment District. My mom bought me a suit for Communion and then a suit for
26 Confirmation and a suit for graduation. Probably the most vivid memories are when me
27 and my buddies went up and raised hell. We'd hop the train and sneak into the fairy boat
28 and sneak into the subway and go up to the Museum of Natural History and Central Park.
29 Then go down into Delancey Street where the guys grew up that moved to Staten Island.
30 Just common boy pranks stuff.

31 RV: How old were you when you were doing this?

1 MB: Oh, heck, anywhere from ten to fourteen, somewhere around there. Ten to
2 twelve, somewhere around there.

3 RV: Tell me about your schooling. You said you had a parochial education.
4 How were you as a student?

5 MB: I was a smart aleck. (Laughing) I didn't really like being enclosed. The
6 nuns didn't bother me. The religion aspect of it didn't bother me. I just didn't want to be
7 enclosed and didn't want to be held down. I did enough just to get by, I think. I really
8 didn't realize how important it was to have an education. My dad tried to beat it into my
9 head, not physically, but verbally. He'd try to tell us how important it was because I
10 think he didn't even graduate grammar school. I survived, I got along. In New York
11 they have the Regents Examination. You don't pass that, you can't go on. I passed the
12 Regents. They didn't have a Catholic high school on our end of Staten Island, so I went
13 to a Catholic high school in New Jersey, where the rest of my family went, too.

14 RV: How about the rest of your family of brothers and sisters? Were any of them
15 more inclined educationally or was this your personality that was kind of smart alecky
16 and not wanting to dedicate himself?

17 MB: Most of them were good students. The whole family was reasonably smart.
18 Most of them were good students and most of the girls went out and became nurses, RNs
19 (registered nurse). Some four years, some three year. They're all aggressive. They say
20 New Yorkers get hired down the south because they can hump. You know, they can
21 work. They're used to it. It's ingrained in them; you know a good work ethic. I think
22 that we all did pretty well.

23 RV: How about in high school? Did you play sports?

24 MB: No. I managed the varsity team for a while. That was just to get in the
25 games free, the away games.

26 RV: Which sport?

27 MB: Basketball. Being from Staten Island and traveling back and forth, it got
28 time consuming.

29 RV: How long a commute was that?

30 MB: Probably an hour, I guess. It was scheduling. You had to catch the train right
31 to catch the ferry right, then run up the hill to get the school one. I wasn't really

1 athletically inclined. I was too damn lazy. Swimming and that kind of thing—we're
2 only a mile away from the lower bay, not too far from Sandy Hook.

3 RV: What kind of things did you enjoy doing as a kid for hobbies?

4 MB: Oh, everything was swimming. Fresh water, salt water, bike riding, woods,
5 squirrel hunting, rabbit hunting, pheasant hunting, fishing.

6 RV: I guess a lot of people today would not think of Staten Island in that way.

7 MB: Oh, no. Lord, no. Staten Island in that time in the late '40s, early '50s,
8 middle '50s, you could trap animals, muskrat. You know, make four to six dollars a pelt.
9 I know my two brothers before they went to school in the morning, they'd run their trap
10 lines and still have to be in school at seven o'clock. That's the train, the ferry, running up
11 the hill to the school. It was outstanding, it was really good.

12 RV: What kind of jobs did you have as a young boy? Did you work?

13 MB: Yeah, I liked to work. I'd rather work than go to school. I think that was
14 one of the problems I had with being enclosed in a building. I remember working for a
15 fishmonger. He taught me how to, scale, clean, and fillet fish; how to tell the difference
16 to look for bad food and that kind of thing. The money I earned I took it home and gave
17 it to my parents. Naturally, everybody has a paper route. I got gypped too many times,
18 so I gave that up. I answered the phones for a taxi service. I got a quarter an hour, or a
19 quarter a day or something like that. I made more in tips because I was accurate. I could
20 take a message. Even if they were old I could talk to them and get to the information that
21 I needed to get the taxi there to pick them up. I had a couple of other jobs. I worked in
22 the delicatessen stacking shelves, delivering orders. That was good because I had my
23 own bike and I could move fast.

24 RV: How about high school?

25 MB: High school I didn't do much because a lot of travel getting over there.
26 Studying and in the parochial school you got to wear a jacket and a white shirt and tie. I
27 washed my own white shirt every night. I got my clothes ready for the next day and
28 pretty much then during the winter, it's dark at five o'clock.

29 RV: Did anybody besides your brothers and sisters serve in the military that was
30 in your family, your brother or your grandparents, uncles?

1 MB: My eldest sister, when we were still living in Pennsylvania, to go to nursing
2 school, she signed up on something, I guess it's like ROTC (Reserve Officer Training
3 Corps). She received her nursing education through the military. But when she
4 graduated it was the end of World War II and they were phasing everybody out. She
5 never did get called up.

6 RV: Any uncles?

7 MB: Oh, yeah. I had two uncles. One served in the Attu/Kiska Campaign; the
8 Aleutian Campaign rather. The other one, I'm not sure if he went overseas or not. But
9 two brothers on my father's side. I think one brother on my mother's side, served in
10 World War II and then one brother served in Korea.

11 RV: Where I'm leading with this: is how much influence was all this on you to
12 join the service?

13 MB: Not really that much. I think the thing that got me interested in the military
14 was it was growing up and actually meeting the World War II vets. Both, you know,
15 guys who had their stuff in order, and guys that were mentally screwed up. I could even
16 remember one old dude was a World War II vet, and everybody said, "Oh, yeah. Ol'
17 what's his name was gassed. He don't get along." I met all these characters either in the
18 taxicab part of working or in the delicatessen or whatever. It was a small town where I
19 lived. They'd be sitting on a bus bench. Naturally, you'd talk you know. You'd talk to
20 these people, and glean some stories from them and all. Probably that and just actually
21 physically associating with the veterans and then reading. Everything then was
22 magazines were all saga and all these gung-ho magazines and all. But I learned about
23 Special Forces early on. This is long before I intended to enlist. It kind of sounded like a
24 good idea and a good way of doing things.

25 RV: How did you learn about Special Forces?

26 MB: In a magazine. It was one of these exposé. The government has these
27 secret folks that do this and do that. Then I kept my eye out and if any material came
28 along that involved that kind of thing then I scarfed it up and read it. I don't think the
29 regular infantry or the regular Army, the Air Force, Marines or whatever; it didn't get my
30 attention. That wasn't something I would just join the Army to join the Army.

31 RV: What year did you graduate high school?

1 MB: In '59.

2 RV: Was there an expectation for you to go to college, or did you want to go to
3 college or did you say, "Okay, military?"

4 MB: I got a job with a chemical company, and they would pay for my education
5 as long as I maintained a C. I went to Wagner College at night there in Staten Island. I
6 realized then that college wasn't for me. I'd rather be out making money. I was working
7 sometimes two shifts a day. Two or three, four days a week.

8 RV: At this chemical plant?

9 MB: Yeah. You couldn't really concentrate on going to school at night, and then
10 worry about your job and trying to schedule things. I got a withdrawal passing on the last
11 course I took, that was it. Not too long after that I joined the Army.

12 RV: You joined, as you told me before we started recording the interview, in
13 May '61. So, you worked a couple of years, I guess, doing this. Tell me about the lead
14 up to joining the military. What was pushing you to join and stop working?

15 MB: Well, just that it had come to the fore about Special Forces. With Kennedy
16 and all, and that was a big incentive there.

17 RV: Tell me about that. How did he influence you?

18 MB: Well, it was just the whole operation. The fact that: "Oh, boy. Here we've
19 got a Catholic guy that's going to be president. He's ex-military." It just seemed like
20 everything was jelling. I had been thinking seriously about enlisting. It was not too long
21 after that, that I just decided that now's the time.

22 RV: How did your parent's feel about that?

23 MB: They had two boys already that went in the Navy. They were Naval
24 Reserve, then went active duty. That didn't bother them. Whatever I wanted was their
25 primary concern.

26 RV: So, they were supportive in general?

27 MB: Oh, sure. Yeah.

28 RV: So, tell me when you decided to enlist, were you able to talk about going
29 into Special Forces at that time or did you kind of have to go through infantry basic?

1 MB: Oh, no. At that time you had to have four years of service. Background in
2 different fields; be able to speak a foreign language or the ability to learn a foreign
3 language, and several things that you had to accomplish. Which was a good idea.

4 RV: Right, I was wondering if you told the recruiter, "This is where I want to
5 go."

6 MB: Oh, yeah. I told them I wanted to start with Ranger school and go to Special
7 Forces.

8 RV: What did he say?

9 MB: He said, "You're crazy." He says, "Look, stupid, I'm going to sign you up
10 for Airborne administrative clerk." I said, "You're out of your goddamn mind. You ain't
11 never going to get me to be a clerk." But I said, "I'll take Airborne." He said, "Okay, I'll
12 get you Airborne unassigned. I'll see if I can get it for you." He had paperwork made
13 out already. The guy's name was Sack. I can still remember it after all this time. I don't
14 remember his first name because he was an E-7, I think. But I still remember him. He
15 said, "Look, don't be silly. You're getting in there. If you go in there unassigned, and
16 you don't make jump school, they're just going to take you and send you to Korea or
17 send you to Germany or whatever, and you're just going to be cannon fodder. You might
18 not even make the infantry. You might end up being a permanent KP (kitchen police;
19 mess hall duty) somewhere or something." So he said, "Let me sign you up." I said,
20 "Nope. I want unassigned."

21 RV: So, you took your chances?

22 MB: Yeah.

23 RV: You were pretty confident in your abilities to go forward and to make
24 Special Forces?

25 MB: Oh, yeah.

26 RV: Tell me about your basic training. Where did you go?

27 MB: Fort Dix, New Jersey.

28 RV: Not too far away.

29 MB: No. Everybody north of Philly, went to Dix and everybody south of Philly,
30 I think, went to Fort Jackson.

31 RV: Tell me about Fort Dix and basic training. What was it like for you?

1 MB: It was at the time, there's things you don't realize until you are in the Army
2 later on. It was kind of what I expected. It was regiment and regimental. A lot of rules
3 and regulations, and this and that, and I understood. They give you all these little classes
4 to explain why it's important, and it made sense. It really didn't bother me.

5 RV: How did you adopt to the military lifestyle?

6 MB: Pretty well, pretty well. I was rebellious, but never willfully did anything
7 really bad.

8 RV: How long did the basic last?

9 MB: It was eight weeks, I think. Basic training was eight weeks and AIT
10 (advanced infantry training) was eight weeks. But again, it's that the instructors and most
11 of the cadre were all World War II and Korean vets. So, you were kind of in awe, again,
12 of this quality a man, that carried the weight and all this.

13 RV: What do you mean by that: quality of man? What did you see in these guys?

14 MB: Sincerity. They really wanted us to learn to be soldiers. They didn't just
15 come in here to play grab-ass for eight hours a day, and then go home and whatever.
16 These guys were seriously about training us to become soldiers and become effective.
17 That impressed me. Of course, they were from all over the country and a lot of them
18 served multiple tours either in Korea or World War II or somewhere else.

19 RV: Did they talk about their experiences?

20 MB: Sometimes, yeah. You couldn't get too close to them because it's the
21 superior/subordinate type thing. They did present themselves in given situations and
22 they'd explain why things happen this way and how it either helped them or didn't help
23 them or actually caused them problems. Several had been wounded and had obvious
24 difficulties. That was the reason they were teaching basic training instead of being in an
25 active unit. Just because for one reason or another, they were either the wounded or got
26 old or whatever.

27 RV: What would you say was the most challenging aspect of basic training for
28 you?

29 MB: I never really thought of it as a challenge. They taught you what they
30 wanted you to know and they couldn't test you on anything they didn't teach you. So
31 like I say, I paid attention, I did my homework, I did what was expected of me. I didn't

1 have much of a problem. The unknown, probably, was more things to sweat because you
2 read into things. You know, "Guard duty. Oh, man. This guy failed guard mount and
3 they threw him out of the Army." In my family, shoot, that's disgrace. That was the only
4 thing. It was just something that you don't know and they don't tell you about, and you
5 aren't planning on. Once you've done it once, then you can start figuring things out. You
6 start getting street savvy. It's initiation more than anything.

7 RV: Right, and getting used to the Army and the lifestyle.

8 MB: We had a lot of National Guard and Army Reserve people with us. We had
9 one guy that I can remember his name, ol' Annibali. He's from Pennsylvania and the son
10 of a gun must have been forty-five years old.

11 RV: He was in your basic class?

12 MB: He was in my basic class because he had put fifteen years in the Army, and
13 all he had to do was come back and do five. He went down and talked to the recruiter
14 and they got him in. These guys have been in National Guard, had all this prior
15 experience and all.

16 RV: What kind of weapons training did you get?

17 MB: Basic stuff. Then was M-1 rifle, A-6 machine gun, hand grenades,
18 bazookas, 3.5 rocket launcher. Infantry tactics, basic squad, fire team squad, platoon
19 infantry tactics. Digging in defensive posture, offensive. Enough to get you initiated and
20 let you know why things happen the way they do and why we chose this way of
21 prosecuting the war.

22 RV: How did you do with all of that? Did you take to it easily?

23 MB: It was pretty good. But they took the smarter guys and they ended up
24 driving a truck because they knew we knew. So you missed a lot of stuff. But basically
25 it was informative and, like I say, we weren't stupid and we wanted to learn. So that was
26 half of the battle. A lot of these slugs didn't want to do anything. They wanted to get
27 their six months in and get the hell back to Brooklyn.

28 RV: How much did your growing up in the woods, trapping, and fishing and
29 swimming, and that kind of thing help you with your military basic?

30 MB: If I hadn't of done that, if I hadn't been really independent as a kid, I think
31 I'd ended up somewhere in Germany or Korea, or the brig.

1 RV: So, after these eight weeks are up, where do you go for your AIT?

2 MB: Well, it's right there in Dix. All you do is just move across the post. You
3 go in advanced infantry training there. It was during that time that they sent the Special
4 Forces recruiters around. I was in hog heaven. That guy come over there, "Where do I
5 sign. Don't tell me anything." They gave us about a two-hour orientation, took
6 everybody's name that was interested. I think even then that they figured we knew what
7 we were doing because I think then they started initiation of paperwork for security
8 clearance and that kind of thing. They were fairly confident that five or six or ten guys,
9 whoever did volunteer, eventually would make it, or at least get to that point. Before
10 that, also, they had recruiters come in for Airborne: the 82nd Airborne Division and the
11 101st. Of course, guys signed up for that because they hear fifty-five bucks a month, you
12 know?

13 RV: How far into the training did these recruiters visit?

14 MB: Probably halfway, somewhere around there.

15 RV: Was it eight weeks again?

16 MB: Yeah. Again, it just really concentrated then on fire team squad, platoon,
17 company, and the attack and the defense. I think, too, we messed around with mortars,
18 60 mortar, 81mm mortar, just for familiarization because in a company level thing—

19 RV: What kind of things were the Special Forces recruiters looking for, in your
20 opinion, when you first met them there? What did they tell you?

21 MB: They really didn't say what they were looking for. They told us what they
22 wanted and what they were looking for. If we thought we had it, if we had the moxy or
23 whatever, then we needed to sign up and let them evaluate us and they'd let us know.

24 RV: What'd they tell you?

25 MB: Basically, it's: "If you're just here for three years, and go home to mama,
26 then don't even consider it. But if you consider the military as a career and plan on
27 spending twenty years or better or a good amount of years with the military, then you
28 might consider this." Of course, they showed us what it was all about, how it was
29 formed. I think there was ten or fifteen of us ended up going down to Bragg either for
30 airborne or SF (Special Forces) or combination of the two.

31 RV: This is after you finished your advanced and moved down to Bragg?

1 MB: Yes.

2 RV: This is when Kennedy is really initiating a strong push for the use of Special
3 Forces.

4 MB: Oh, yeah.

5 RV: You came along right at this time when the government was really backing
6 this. So, when you finished your advanced training, did you know then that you were
7 accepted into the Special Forces?

8 MB: Oh, yeah, yeah.

9 RV: When did you find that out?

10 MB: I think just about the week before, because then you're still a 'cruit and the
11 personnel people don't have anything to do with you. If it had been in a unit, you'd
12 probably get wind of it a week or two ahead before they cut orders on you. After they cut
13 orders, the first shirt came down, read a list of people and where'd they be going. I found
14 out that I'd be going down to Bragg.

15 RV: How'd you feel about that?

16 MB: I was elated. That was my goal. That was it. At least it was the next step.
17 At least I was closer to getting what I wanted.

18 RV: Yes, sir. Is this still 1961?

19 MB: Yeah.

20 RV: So, you go down to Bragg. When did you go down? This must've been
21 what? September or October?

22 MB: October, we got down there and I can remember, I think it was October the
23 ninth. We got there, we flew in on Piedmont and they picked us up in a deuce-and-a-half
24 truck. On the way back from the airport, you go by the slave market, downtown
25 Fayetteville. I remember then because we're sitting in there, we had those garrison caps.
26 Well, some of them had garrison, the other had overseas cap. The garrison cap is a big
27 bus driver looking hat. The garrison cap is the kind that you can fold and stick in your
28 belt or epaulet or whatever. We were driving through Fayetteville and there's this little
29 old lady walking just like you know, she's going to cross the street. She waited until the
30 truck went by and then she started walking across the street, and she yells at us, "Leg!"

31 RV: Leg?

1 MB: Leg is a derogatory term for non-airborne personnel. So, you know
2 Fayetteville's an 82nd Airborne town. This little old lady, I almost dropped because of,
3 "Leg!" (Laughing)

4 RV: What did you guys think about that? Welcome to North Carolina.

5 MB: First of all, what the hell is a leg? Then we found out later.

6 RV: How long does Special Forces training last there at Bragg?

7 MB: Oh, God. For a medic, it's a long time.

8 RV: You did go into the medical corps. How did you become a medic? Why did
9 you want to become a medic?

10 MB: Everybody that had a GT (general technical) score of over a 110, and could
11 walk and breathe, and talk became a medic.

12 RV: Was that okay with you, or did you want to do something else?

13 MB: Well, no, I wanted to be a demo man. I wanted to be a demolition expert.

14 RV: Why?

15 MB: Well, first of all, because of the results of what you do. You can see it. You
16 can really get a kick, you know. I don't know, it seemed to be that in my mind he was
17 one of the more important people on the team. It's what I had envisioned myself doing
18 anyway. That's what I had planned to do, and of course, you don't have a choice. So,
19 like I say, cattle call or whatever they call it, you line up and they say, "You got a GT
20 score of this—we're giving you—" It actually caused me a problem because when we
21 got to Bragg, we ended up staying overnight downtown in some fleabag hotel. Ended up
22 taking a cab out to Bragg, went out to the 82nd Repo Depot. This is my first
23 indoctrination to, not open hostility, but—(laughing)—we got out to the repo depot and
24 the guys that were supposed to go there, actually they took them in and passed them on.
25 He says, "You guys," he says, "you don't belong here. Get the hell out of here and go
26 back down to Smoke Bomb Hill." We ended up walking with all our bags, duffel bags
27 and all that stuff. We walked back to Smoke Bomb Hill because they wouldn't give us
28 any transportation. Then when I got down to Smoke Bomb, signed into a unit, I didn't
29 know it, but we signed into the PSY-WAR (psychological warfare) unit. Actually it was
30 a PSY-WAR unit that was attached to the 7th Group. So actually what we were doing is
31 signing into 7 Special Forces Group.

1 RV: But you didn't know that?

2 MB: I didn't know that at the time. So, then the next day they got us all out, and
3 processed us and all that. Seventh Group picked us up on a morning report. When we
4 got down to the training group, which is where we're supposed to report in, we got down
5 there and found out that some of us were on orders to go to Laos.

6 RV: Already?

7 MB: On Brightstar (Editor's note: Operation Whitestar), yeah. Because they saw
8 on my records that they had already put down my, I think it was 911 was the MOS
9 (military occupational specialty) code for medic. So, they said, "Oh, hell. We need
10 medics in Laos, grab that kid." So, they grabbed me and a couple of other guys, and send
11 us to Laos for Brightstar (Whitestar).

12 RV: How long had you been there?

13 MB: Two days.

14 RV: Had you been trained at all to be a medic?

15 MB: No! They just, you know, because of your GT score. Anyway, the first
16 sergeant down there at the training group got it all squared away and we made it into
17 training. But now, in hindsight, I wished I'd gone to Laos. (Laughing)

18 RV: Tell me about being trained as a medic there at Bragg? What did they do?

19 MB: Well, we didn't really get trained at Bragg. We got there at a time when
20 there was three companies. There was a Special Forces Training Group Provincial. They
21 had 1st Company, 2nd Company, and 3rd Company. I was in 3rd Company. You report in
22 and they didn't have any room for us. So you're in class A's, and they drop you for ten,
23 you know, push-ups, this and that. If it's raining, you drop in the mud and you do push-
24 ups. It doesn't matter because they don't want you there to begin with because they don't
25 have room, there's nothing they can do about it. So, if they get you to quit, that's what's
26 going to happen eventually anyway, if you let that stuff bother you. We finally got in and
27 got settled in the barracks and all that. Pulled detail, every morning you went out and had
28 reveille formation PT (physical training) and they'd send you out on a detail somewhere
29 to rake leaves or pick pine cones or do something. Just waiting to find out who you are,
30 where you are, what they want you to do. First of all, the primary thing to get done is to
31 get you Airborne qualified. They send you up to the gym up there on Smoke Bomb Hill

1 in the 7th Group area. Lionel Penn was a famous Ranger of World War II and Korea, and
2 he had what he called pre-BAC, pre-basic airborne course. He'd get in there and find the
3 weaklings and get rid of them. We'd go up there every morning and do PT all morning
4 long. Go back and pull details in the afternoon. They didn't schedule you for any kind of
5 a course until you passed the Airborne course.

6 RV: How did you do with that?

7 MB: Well, I had problems. When I got up there, what I considered good shape
8 and what the Special Forces considered good shape wasn't the same thing. So, Penn
9 liked to kill me. Him and a guy named Broussard. I mean it was rigorous. It was really
10 tough.

11 RV: What kind of things did you have problems with?

12 MB: Actually, my hardest thing was running in formation. I just couldn't run in
13 formation. I had problems with upper body strength. I didn't do push-ups or pull-ups
14 right. They weren't chin-ups they were pull-ups. You had to do them perfectly. You
15 never left pre-BAC until they were positive that you could pass that PT test right then. If
16 they had any inclination that you had a weak spot, you didn't go, you just stayed there.
17 So, I ended up staying with Penn for eight weeks. He ended up trying to kill me because
18 he had never had anybody there that stayed that long. I told him, "The only way you're
19 going to get rid of me is to send me to jump school or kill me." He tried his best. I think
20 there was two other guys that were having problems. Most of those they washed out.

21 RV: Did he eventually cut you slack or were you able to actually do it?

22 MB: No, he actually took Sergeant Brouillard, and Brouillard got me to the point
23 of where he said, "Watch this." He took me in and showed me, what the hell, these two
24 rails, what they call them? It's an Olympic event. But he showed me how to do push-ups
25 on those and go lower than the actual, you know, where your chest would hit the ground.
26 That's the way I did all my push-ups. I'd get foot lockers, three foot lockers, that's the
27 way I'd do my push-ups. By the time it came to do them right, I was aces.

28 RV: It was a breeze for you.

29 MB: Yes. Brouillard was—Penn was wounded, had his arm tore up. I'm not
30 even sure if he could jump at that time. He had his arm tore up in Korea. Brouillard had

1 a leg tore up in either Korea or Vietnam. But they were still fantastic, physical
2 instructors.

3 RV: So, when you finished with that, you went to jump school?

4 MB: I went to jump school at Bragg with the 82nd.

5 RV: How was that?

6 MB: Oh, beautiful. That was great.

7 RV: Can you give a description of it?

8 MB: It was so regimented. Everything was like clockwork. If you didn't do it
9 clockwork you ended up doing push-ups or squat jumps or whatever. But the premise of
10 the school was to train you to jump out of airplanes and to do it in such a way you
11 wouldn't be a detriment to yourself or the rest of the people jumping with you. It was a
12 combination of terror, humor, everything. It just so happens that in 1961 and January of
13 '62, the personnel that they had in jump school as instructors—they're world famous
14 now. Bloody Burns. Tomato Face, what the hell is his name? Sergeant. The two
15 German brothers, they were lodge boys. Ostendorph, I think their name was. They kept
16 you interested and again, they wanted to instill in you what they had learned, and they
17 wanted you to learn and do it right. That made it easier. They brought a lot of humor to
18 it, which made things—as harsh as it was because you did everything in the rain and the
19 snow and whatever. It was fun. But again, grueling because you didn't know on any
20 given day, you could do something wrong, and you'd get demerits or do this or do that.
21 If you sprained an ankle or did something to your elbow or got hurt or something, you
22 still had to function. You still took your PT and you still took your PT tests.

23 RV: It sounds like you were able to adapt to all of this and make it through this.

24 MB: Oh, yeah. They get you to the point where you do. Like they say, they tear
25 you down to build you up. It just took longer for me to build up in pre-BAC than it did
26 for the average bear.

27 RV: How many jumps did you actually end up making? Do you remember?

28 MB: You only make five in basic airborne course. I think the first jump we made
29 was in snow. That was impressive. My first jump, I was the first man in the door, which
30 is impressive.

31 RV: How'd you do on that?

1 MB: Oh, excellent. I had no problem. I just wanted to get out of that son of a
2 gun. Again, this guy Bloody Burns, he's a legend. The Army's got leather gloves and
3 then they got a wool insert that goes into the leather. Well, what'd he do is fill that
4 leather glove full of nickels and dimes and quarters, and if he'd catch you sleeping—you
5 know, you're sitting on that airplane probably before an hour before you jump, and you
6 fall asleep, and he liked to catch guys sleeping, and he'd nail them across the helmet with
7 that glove full of quarters. Ring their bell, they call it. He got me a couple of times.
8 Being the first in the door, they're supposed to just tap you on the butt, "Go!" And you
9 go. Old Burns liked a little emphasis. So he kicked me dead in the ass. I thought I took
10 his boot with me when I left. Little vignettes and stuff in jump school. They'd have it all
11 pre-arranged, just to keep things flowing and keep it humorous and keep people
12 interested. They'd say, "You see that sergeant over there, you go over there and tell him
13 that you love his wife." So, you'd run over there and you'd have to be slapping your
14 thigh on every left foot, you'd slap your thigh and say, "Airborne, airborne, airborne,
15 airborne." You ran everywhere you went. The only time you didn't is during lunchtime.
16 You run over there and slap and you got to call the guy's name. "What do you want?"
17 "Sergeant told me to tell you that I love your wife." "You love my wife? Get down and
18 give me ten push-ups." They'd send you to somebody else and say something else. It
19 was a lot of fun. But you were still building muscle and still getting coordinated. I think
20 it was three weeks of ground school and one week of jump school, actually jumping.

21 RV: What kind of special weapons training did you have?

22 MB: Then, you don't really get exposed to weapons other than get you something
23 to do, weapons training itself. Then, you draw your weapon; you're assigned weapon as
24 part of the company. There was all M-1s and I think then they had .45s and K-Bar
25 knives.

26 RV: After you finished jump school, what happened?

27 MB: Got back to the company, back to the training group, you know, full time,
28 they don't mess with you. The guys that stay in the 82nd area, I think they can get messed
29 with. But when we come back they really didn't bother us because it was really rigorous
30 and you spent a whole day there everyday. We'd come back and they'd schedule you.
31 Once they knew you graduated jump school then they'd pass you on to the next phase

1 which would be medical training. For me, I lucked out because in jump school I got
2 pneumonia. They put me in a hospital for ten or fifteen days. When I got out I went back
3 and I took the PT test, I passed the PT test and made my five jumps, and went back to the
4 company. It just so happened that they had a class starting in January down at Fort Sam
5 Houston. So, that's how I go to go to medic training.

6 RV: So, this was in January 1962?

7 MB: Yes.

8 RV: When you went down to Fort Sam Houston?

9 MB: Yeah

10 RV: Tell me about your medic training.

11 MB: Well, basically it was just a basic combat medical training for the first eight
12 weeks. That's bandages and splints and vehicles and transportation of the wounded,
13 setting up tents and doing this, triage. It's their way of training their medics to go to an
14 infantry outfit or artillery outfit or whatever, and function as their medic. So, we take
15 that, and then the second four weeks was advanced medical training. I forget what the
16 heck they call it. But we called it blood and guts, because the first thing, you go in there,
17 they want to separate some of the people that ain't going to make it anyway. They've got
18 a bunch of Army training films of operations and autopsies and stuff like that. The first
19 one that they do is a laparotomy. They open this guy's chest from his Adam's apple
20 down to his belly button. It's all in Technicolor, they just splay it open, and this guy's
21 got a pus gut anyway. But it flops open, and there's guys puking all over the place. So,
22 that made them think whether they wanted to continue.

23 RV: How did you do?

24 MB: Oh, it didn't bother me a bit. Like I say, I had five sisters who were nurses.
25 Seeing blood as a kid, broken legs and compound fractures, car accidents and stuff. We
26 trained, actually, with other people. It wasn't just Special Forces people. We trained
27 with the conscientious objectors and guys that were just going to be medics within a
28 given unit. But once they found out that you could either live with or it didn't bother you
29 that blood and guts and whatever, so that was a little more advanced. You learn a little
30 about instruments, about suturing and basic hospital stuff. Then the last eight weeks,
31 that's all it was, was training for the 91 Charlies, the ward master course, and working on

1 hospital ward. So it was everything that they wanted you to know in the workings of a
2 hospital and medical units. From there we went OJT, on-the-job training. Several of us,
3 I guess about eight of us, went down to Fort Rucker, Alabama, because no one had ever
4 been there before. It was the helicopter center of the Army. So, we got down there, and
5 that's where we chose to go to OJT.

6 RV: What did you do down there at Fort Rucker?

7 MB: Well, they assigned us to different wards to work with a given physician.
8 We'd work, I think it was two weeks on each section, like OB/GYN, emergency room.
9 Everybody loved the emergency room because—they even went in and volunteered to go
10 in on their own time just to get exposed to trauma. That's what's going to be your bag
11 when you got up and got trained and assigned. We're the first folks through, they
12 weren't really sure what'd the hell they were getting into by allowing these Special
13 Forces, trained killers down there. But it turns out, we had a Captain Keller, Army Nurse
14 Corps lady that was in charge of us, our class; and another fellow that was the, he's either
15 the son-in-law of Sergeant York, or he was the grandson of Sergeant York, I wasn't sure.
16 But he was an E-6. He was a pretty good Joe. He was pretty level headed. Again, he
17 was interested in getting us going and getting us trained, and getting the system set up in
18 Rucker.

19 RV: This was an eight-week program at Rucker?

20 MB: Yeah.

21 RV: How did you do personally with all this, rotating through with these
22 different departments?

23 MB: Pretty good. I had one guy go under on me, old Bogus Paget.

24 RV: What do you mean go under on you?

25 MB: He died. I was his medic on my shift. The ward took care of him. You had
26 to do a case study, and he was my case study. So, I spent a lot more time with him, not
27 only on my eight-hour shift, but you know, on my own time, going and interviewing him
28 because he was in and out. But he was grossly overweight. He shouldn't have been
29 operated on. They did a, I remember, a hiatal hernia. They cut him across the
30 diaphragm, across the rib cage. The poor son of a gun, he just went from bad to worse.
31 But he didn't make it anyway. That was my first time with—we had these World War II

1 nurses, and they really didn't like us because they were the closest thing to being doctors
2 that the Army had. These young pups coming here, getting all this good training, and
3 they're going out and pull teeth and do this. Minor amputations and all this. A lot of
4 them didn't like it and they made it clear that they were going to make life miserable for
5 us if we didn't give them their pound of flesh or whatever. This old, I called her Old
6 Battle Brains So and So, but I respected her, she was a good old lady, and like I say, I
7 was raised with a bunch of old ladies of this caliber. Really strict and smart and didn't
8 take any crap from anybody. It was her way or the highway. She actually wrote me up,
9 and wrote me a real nice letter, surprised the hell out of me. The first time I met her, I
10 was in the emergency room, she said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm sterilizing."
11 She said, "What are you sterilizing?" I said, "I'm sterilizing the speculums." She said,
12 "What?" You know speculums, they do a vaginal inspection, and the sterilizer I was
13 using was for surgical instruments that they used in the emergency room. So, she got all
14 excited, "What the hell, what are you, stupid?" (Laughing) "You got a missing gene or
15 something?"

16 RV: This was your evaluation that she wrote this nice letter?

17 MB: Yeah, over and above, the course. She felt well enough that she could write
18 something decent about one of the hoods. But that impressed me, gave me a little more
19 incentive.

20 RV: Did you feel confident when you left this time at Fort Rucker, that you were
21 ready to go into the field as a medic?

22 MB: Oh, sure. Yeah. I was ready, yeah. There's no doubt about it. The CO
23 (commanding officer) was a fellow named Spurgeon Neel, and he wrote the *Neel*
24 *Manual*, which is a survival manual for aviators. He was really a savvy dude, and he
25 took an interest in us because we were the first class he had, and he assigned us a cardiac
26 surgeon. This guy later I found out, left the Army and went to NASA. He had degrees
27 out the left link, as a young guy. He didn't care about the Army. He didn't care about
28 the discipline and all that. All he cared about was medicine. The Army was a way for
29 him to practice. He'd have—at least once a week he'd come in and have a seminar.
30 We'd go to the PX (post exchange) and drink Coke, and he'd give us a class on this or

1 find out where we're having problems and whatever. It was well put together in that they
2 took good care of us.

3 RV: How long did it last at Fort Rucker?

4 MB: Eight weeks, I think it was.

5 RV: At this point, this is 1962. Is this when you received your orders to go
6 overseas?

7 MB: No, no. We finished Fort Sam in, I think, June of '62. Went to Fort
8 Rucker, had eight weeks there, so that would be July. We got back to Bragg, and had
9 what they call branch training. That's where you learn the Special Forces skills that they
10 want you to know.

11 RV: Such as what?

12 MB: Cross training. You know, weapons, land navigation, intelligence, a lot of
13 weapons, operating in the woods. All kinds of stuff. Primarily, it's to teach you Special
14 Forces techniques, the background of Special Forces. They had to divide us up because
15 there was a big bunch of us. So, half of us went to what was then dog lab and the other
16 half went to branch training. So, I was with the bunch that went to branch training. That
17 was, I think, four weeks of didactics and I think one week of field training.

18 RV: What kind of things were they teaching you? Can you give an example?

19 MB: Setting up drop zones, dead letter drops, live letter drops, passing
20 information where ordinary people wouldn't know you were doing it. Demo, raids and
21 ambushes, training of indigenous personnel, fingerprint identification systems, dental
22 identification systems. We had everybody from World War II Rangers and OSS (Office
23 of Strategic Services) to foreign nationals. It was really a good course. Again, these
24 World War II guys, they enjoyed what they did and they really wanted to impart the
25 knowledge. This one, I remember, Sergeant Bassion, he'd be up at the podium. I mean
26 Bragg is hot as Hades. There's no air conditioning in the early '60s. All you had was
27 open windows and ceiling fans. Then you'd be sweating bullets. The guys would nod
28 off. Old Bassion would be up there giving his class. The one classes that he had were
29 kind of the z-machine, kind of boring. He'd dream up ways to keep your attention. One
30 of them, we didn't know it at the time, he'd take a cigar and he'd straighten out a paper
31 clip, and he'd stick the paper clip down in the cigar, and he'd make it a point of flourish

1 of lighting that cigar up at the beginning of his class, and he'd be teaching away, teaching
2 away, and that ash would start burning down. Well, you figured after the first inch, you
3 know the way he swings his hands, does all this, that the ash would fall off. So,
4 everybody stayed awake waiting for this damn ash to fall off his cigar. But they're
5 digesting what he's saying. Then later we found that was one of his techniques. Another
6 one was that something that he felt that he needed your complete attention. He'd have a
7 brick there, and he'd say, "This is a M1A1 brick. It weighs 4.7 pounds. It's 8"x 4x 4. I
8 want to pass it around now and you can actually see it." You pass it around, you say,
9 "Yes, this is a big brick. It's a heavy brick." The last guy that gets to feel it and heft it he
10 takes it back up to the podium and he says, "Okay, now that you know what this M1A1
11 brick weighs and looks like and feels. The first guy that falls asleep is going to feel that
12 brick right across his forehead." Well, I don't care who, but somebody is going to fall
13 asleep. Well, during the class, he takes a sponge and replaces the brick with the sponge.
14 Then first guy that falls asleep, he flings that sponge and I mean everybody hit the floor.
15 We figured this guy's going to die. But that was another trick. This guy, he was an OSS
16 dude, he taught us some really—like I say, it stuck with you after you know, thirty years,
17 twenty-five or whatever as a civilian now.

18 RV: Evidently, yes, you remember it to this day. Tell me about indigenous
19 personnel training. You mentioned that that was part of the branch school.

20 MB: Yes. Certain things, you know, people likes and don't likes. People don't
21 like to be touched or don't ever touch the person's head. Their religion prohibits this and
22 that.

23 RV: Were they training you specifically for Southeast Asia or just in general?

24 MB: In general, but emphasis probably on Southeast Asia because that's what
25 everybody was hoping to make; to get on a team and get assigned because Whitestar was
26 going on. They were already in Laos. Had we finished our training earlier—if I had
27 have been a demo man—you know, in retrospect thinking back that was one of the reason
28 that I wanted to be a demo, because it was only eight weeks, whereas medics were almost
29 a year. I could've actually got a mission to Laos under my belt, where these other guys
30 would still be in training at Fort Sam. Yeah, it was geared towards Southeast Asia. But
31 what they wanted you to know, you could use, adapt it to anywhere in the world. They

1 wanted more or less. It was not only the sociological stuff but they wanted to impress on
2 you that just because you got this interpreter—they actually went through a skit where the
3 guy's using the interpreter, and the interpreter is actually telling the troops, us, we're
4 acting as the indigenous troops and the interpreter is just firing back in English. Actually
5 he's telling us what a dickhead the instructor is. Just because everybody is nodding their
6 head and looking and smiling and having a good time, it's not necessarily the fact—this
7 guy would be telling them you're no good and you're going to chase his wife and
8 whatever.

9 RV: So, after these four weeks of branch training, where did you go? Did you
10 stay at Bragg?

11 MB: Yeah. Then we swapped with the other class. The other class went through
12 branch and we went through the dog lab.

13 RV: What was that like?

14 MB: Oh, murder. The first four weeks is what they call a surgical phase, or,
15 correction. The first four weeks is the didactic classroom stuff. Again, back to anatomy
16 and physiology, but anatomy in physiology at a college level. We had a guy named—
17 what the heck's that guy's name, he smoked a cigar, too. He was the OIC (officer in
18 charge). He was like a college professor. He just ripped through the stuff and there was
19 no asking him to slow down. You don't ask questions or ask for a repeat. You either got
20 it or you got somebody after class to compare notes. But he had another doctor, I
21 remember his name, Dr. Ryan was second in command at the lab. The first four weeks
22 was all classroom. Then the last four weeks was all surgery.

23 RV: How did you do with the surgery part of it? Were you actually performing
24 the procedure?

25 MB: Oh, yeah.

26 RV: What kind of things were you doing?

27 MB: Well, first of all, they issue you an animal. From the date of issue it's not an
28 animal anymore, it's a human being. You in-process the human being just like you
29 would pull them in a hospital.

30 RV: This is a dead animal or is it alive?

1 MB: It's a live animal. You take them in, you give them a physical exam, you
2 take all his notes, just like a human being. You start getting them healthy because these
3 are all animals come out of a dog pound. They were all fixing to get gassed.

4 RV: What animal did you have? Was it a cat or dog?

5 MB: Dog. They'd go and get these out of the dog pounds rather than euthanize
6 them. They'd give them to us because at least they'd have four more weeks of life and
7 really good life because whatever I ate, that dog ate. If I had steak, that dog got half.
8 Everybody took good care of their animal, and they give you the basic first week, I guess
9 to where you can run your blood tests, stool specimens, urine specimens. Find out what
10 the hell is wrong with the animal before you begin, and give you a chance to get them
11 healthy. We fed them good, took care of them. Actually got attached to them.

12 RV: Yes, I can imagine.

13 MB: Me, being single, I had no intention of keeping the animal. But a lot of the
14 married people would do their procedures and then they'd take the dog home. The ones
15 that didn't make it, they were all euthanized and put in the incinerator. It was fantastic.
16 The team consisted of a surgeon, assistant surgeon, anesthetist, scrub, and a circulator. A
17 five-man team in the operating room. We used open-drop ether, actually thiopental
18 sodium to put them down first. Then for the surgical phase, it was open-drop ether.
19 Again, if you did anything that appeared that you were treating the patient as an animal
20 and not a human being, you left the class. They threw you out. Initially, when it's your
21 turn, when you're the surgeon, it's your animal that's going to be wounded. You take the
22 dog, the patient, you give them an IV, you get an IV started. Then you knock them down
23 with the thiopental sodium. Once you're reasonably sure, you got certain things you look
24 for: eye movement, pupil size, and different things like that, it'll indicate the level
25 of anesthesia. They get them down to, I forget whether it's the second, third level, of
26 anesthesia. At that time, you take them out, and they've got a special chamber set up
27 with a Russian carbine, and they shoot the dog in the fleshy part of the leg. From then
28 on, he's a wounded human being. After the chamber is cleared, the team rushes in, gets
29 the animal, brings it back, and you commence. You start the open-drop ether, put them
30 under, get them under for surgery. Then you do a debridement on the wound. Once the
31 debridement done, you don't sew up the wound, it's what they call a delayed primary

1 closure. They leave the wound open but you're not allowed to use antibiotics. All you
2 can do is use sterol technique and soap and water. Then you bring the dog, or the patient,
3 back up where he can navigate and put him back in his cage. Then for the next week,
4 then you are taking care of him, changing dressings, cleaning the wound. Then after, I
5 think it's seven days of supposed ward treatment or whatever. Then you'll do a delayed
6 primary closure on them and you actually open the wound and sew it up. Then after that,
7 you do an amputation. Amputation, if the dog's going to be euthanized they do the
8 amputation. Everything is done under surgical anesthesia. Like I say, a lot of the guys
9 wanted to keep their dogs, so you'd have one dog and then use all four legs so the guys
10 could take their dogs home whole. It was good for the dogs, it was definitely good for us.
11 I think the initial animal of choice was rabbit because the circulatory system was more
12 akin to the human, but they're small and it would've taken longer. I don't think people
13 would've enjoyed, not enjoyed, but treating a rabbit as a human than they would with a
14 dog. Then they stopped using dogs because people complained and said it was
15 vivisection or whatever. So, they started the use of goats. They found out that could take
16 a herd of goats, put them out in the animal storage area, and they'd eat grass and
17 procreate and they didn't have to pay forty dollars a head like they did initially. They
18 could raise their own goats.

19 RV: How well did this prepare you for combat surgery?

20 MB: Oh, excellent, because part of the procedures you do, actually you do—in
21 training you learn to do what they call a crycothyroidotomy. Actually, before you even
22 get the patient ready with the injectable anesthesia, you actually put a trachea, actually
23 the throat tube into his throat, to keep the airway open. You actually perform a
24 tracheotomy on the goat. You do a thoracentesis, which you actually take fluid out of the
25 lung through the rib cage. There's several, several procedures that you can do while their
26 under. Everybody gets a chance to do them, and many a man has given mouth to mouth,
27 or mouth to stoma to a dog to keep them alive because if you fail, you're out, too. By
28 fail, if the patient dies, you fail. Practice nerve blocks, different techniques that you can
29 use. Of course, during a class you learn by doing it to each other. Drawing blood,
30 finding veins, examining a prostate. It's not the most enjoyable thing in the world, at
31 least when it's done to you, you know what the patient feels like and you really know

1 what to look for. It was really to be able to just know instinctively what to look for and
2 to do it by rote; you know, just go into it and get started. It was invaluable, and the
3 teamwork involved. If you're a good surgeon, you're a good surgeon, but if you got a
4 bad anesthetist you could lose the dog just by not paying attention. He's busy because if
5 you cut nerves or arteries, and you're not supposed to, that's another demerit. Of course,
6 there are mishaps. The guy didn't put the leg that's going to get wounded; he didn't put
7 it in the cradle right. The dog gets shot in the leg. Well, you've got to amputate it.
8 There's no way you can keep the animal in a cast for that short of period of time and
9 expect to get any results from it. There were mistakes that way. The guy got his
10 amputation early, so he was free. Most of the time it worked like it was supposed to. It
11 was just outstanding training. The people that taught us were, again, they wanted us to
12 learn. They weren't there just filling time. That's the way Special Forces operates.
13 They're there to impart knowledge and they do.

14 RV: Were they still washing people out of the program at this late stage?

15 MB: Oh, sure. Our honor graduate was a young black dude from the 101st.
16 Darrel C. Bishop, I still can see his face. He snuck off and went to his hometown over
17 the weekend, and his buddy was going to change the bandage and wash the wound.
18 Hewey, Dr. Hewey, was the main mug. But he'd come in and bandage hadn't been
19 changed, his buddy didn't do it. He was the honor graduate. He had the highest
20 scholastic marks and the highest proficiency marks. He got shit canned, they put him out.
21 A guy named Futy, ended up being honor graduate. He got a foot blown off in 'Nam.

22 RV: So, after this four-week training period, what happened next for you?

23 MB: Then, you earned your green beret. Then you got your hat and your orders
24 to group. Some of the guys that you know didn't have much time left and they had their
25 stuff together. They kept them in the dog lab to teach or they put them somewhere to
26 teach or whatever. At that time, they needed people on Oki, and everybody wanted to go
27 to Oki, everybody wanted to go overseas. They needed people in Germany. I think four
28 of us out of the whole class ended up going to the 5th Group, which had just opened up.
29 They opened up in September of '62, I think. Became activated and I ended up going
30 over there in December of '62, got actually assigned to an A Team.

31 RV: Where were they stationed?

1 MB: At Bragg, right there on Smoke Bomb.

2 RV: Is it with this group that you went to Southeast Asia?

3 MB: Yeah. At that time they were sending people TDY (temporary duty) from
4 the 7th. The 1st on Okinawa, the 7th at Fort Bragg, and then the 5th. They had a lot of
5 people filled in from all the groups, actually. From overseas Germany, Okinawa, and the
6 7th. So there was a lot of experienced hands.

7 RV: How soon did you depart for Southeast Asia?

8 MB: I reported in December, and got assigned to A/26th. We left for 'Nam the
9 following June.

10 RV: So, you were there at Bragg for about six, six-and-a-half months before you
11 went overseas?

12 MB: Yeah.

13 RV: Mr. Brady, why don't we take a break for a moment?

14 MB: Sure.

15 RV: All right, sir, could you tell me, what were your duties from December '62
16 to June '66 there at Bragg before you went overseas? What were you actually doing?

17 MB: December '62 to '66?

18 RV: Excuse me, excuse me. Yes, was it '65 to '66?

19 MB: Okay, '65 to '66.

20 RV: Yeah, when you were there with the 5th Group at Bragg before you shipped
21 overseas.

22 MB: Okay, I shipped over in June of '62.

23 RV: Okay, so twelve '61 then to June '62.

24 MB: Okay, most of it was run details. But from January '63 to before we left
25 was all pre-deployment training, it was all raids and ambushes.

26 RV: So, hold on, January '63?

27 MB: Yeah.

28 RV: Okay.

29 MB: We left for Vietnam for the first time in January. Correction, June of '63.

30 RV: Okay, okay. I have my dates confused. All right. So from January to June,

31 you guys did—

1 MB: Yeah. I reported in just before Christmas of '62. It was all details, getting
2 in-processed and doing that. I think we had one field problem, went to the field, jumped
3 in. That was a five- or six-day deal or something like that. Came back, and then
4 everybody split for Christmas leave. Then in January, we started in earnest the pre-
5 deployment training.

6 RV: Can you describe that to me?

7 MB: Oh, it was great. There was a lot of cross training, teaching the other team
8 members medical stuff. They taught us commo and demo and intelligence, that kind of
9 thing, weapons. A lot of emphasis on weapons.

10 RV: What kind of weapons training did you have? Did you know you were
11 going to Southeast Asia, first of all?

12 MB: Oh, yeah. That was the ultimate goal. To train well enough and be
13 accepted on an A Team.

14 RV: So, what kind of weapons training did you have?

15 MB: Small arms, mostly sub-machine guns, that type of thing. Crew-served
16 weapons, 81 mortar, 60 mortar, grenade launcher. Correction, not a grenade launcher.
17 Then it was still a bazooka, the 3.5. Demo. Firing for proficiency. Then it was an M-2
18 carbine. Right about that time is when the Stoner System was coming in. They tried to
19 sell it to the Army and I think the Army turned it down. I think the Navy eventually
20 bought it. Then the first time we left for Vietnam, it was M-2 carbines was the basic arm.
21 Attacks and ambush, escape and evasion; just a little bit of everything, as much as we
22 could.

23 RV: Was the training good?

24 MB: Oh, yeah. Not only was the training good and realistic, but you got to work
25 with your team. These guys had been—just like me. The younger guys anyway had been
26 sent off to school, training somewhere. Actually, we got to function as a whole team, I
27 think, in January or February. As it would turn out, one of the guys that turned up being
28 my senior medic on that trip was a guy that was in my class, so I knew him well. The
29 other guys that the, the commo man, he'd been in school. The demo man, he'd been in
30 school. It was a feeling-out period, get to know them, what they knew and how you got
31 along with them and where you could improve things or whatever.

1 RV: How many men were on the team?

2 MB: Twelve-man detachment. Two officers, ten enlisted. Captain is the team
3 leader, infantry officer most of the time. Then there was almost exclusively infantry; XO
4 (executive officer) the same infantry. More or less then, he was more the administrative
5 man. Then the team sergeant, usually an E-8, was the team daddy. He took care of
6 discipline, organization, running the team. The liaison between the officers and the
7 enlisted men. Then they had two intel, one intelligence sergeant, usually an E-7. Two
8 medics, two commo, two demo, and two weapons, light and heavy.

9 RV: So you trained with this one specific team, so you guys got to know each
10 other well?

11 MB: Yeah.

12 RV: When did you actually get your orders to go overseas?

13 MB: Well, I guess probably April or May, we knew exactly where we were
14 going. The team leader, Captain Yoder, got in touch with Captain Aldridge, who was on
15 the ground in Vietnam. He was the man in charge of the team we were going to replace.
16 Actually, we were pretty well abreast of what was happening in April or May, maybe
17 even before, of what was going on in the camp that we were going to. We had the
18 opportunity to apply some of the training to specific areas that we were either light on or
19 where we wanted to really get down and dirty.

20 RV: Where were you going exactly?

21 MB: It's a little village called Long Phu. It was right near the border of the
22 Chuong Thien and Ba Xuyen Province in the Delta. The team before was a TDY team
23 that we relieved was a TDY team from Okinawa. Before them it was just Father Tong.
24 He was kind of a catholic warlord, one of Diem's people down there in the Delta. He had
25 a Vietnamese Special Forces team assigned there before the—I think the team from Oki
26 got there they got hit by the Viet Cong. They had their stuff in order and this one intel
27 sergeant under the VNSF (Vietnamese Special Forces) team got their asses out of the fire
28 and saved the day. But that's Long Phu, that's what it's noted for, not for anything we
29 did.

30 RV: Right. So, you knew beforehand this is where you were going?

31 MB: Yeah.

1 RV: You knew your mission?

2 MB: Yeah.

3 RV: What was the mission?

4 MB: Actually, it was a combination of missions. We were supposed to go there
5 and, again, area pacification. Win the hearts and minds of the people. Prosecute the war
6 and kill as many Communists as we could, while doing everything else.

7 RV: How were you supposed to pacify, win the hearts and minds? What specific
8 instructions were you given?

9 MB: Well, as medics, we pre-planned a medical program because we knew what
10 the medic in place was doing. We knew what we had to do when we got there. But we
11 also had to keep in mind that we were there to close that camp. Our mission was to close
12 the camp and go build a new one in an area closer to what we wanted to accomplish.

13 RV: So, closer to the Cambodian border basically?

14 MB: No, no. We were in the middle of the delta. We were halfway between the
15 A Team in Ca Mau and the B Team in Can Tho.

16 RV: Okay, so when you say move closer to your mission—

17 MB: To where the communists were. A better position to interdict.

18 RV: Right.

19 MB: But again, when we got there, there was a TDY team from Okinawa that we
20 replaced. The priest, Father Tong was deep into the politics of the region and I guess he
21 was—his-lips-to-Diem's-ear-type of arrangement. I think he knew that we needed to
22 move out of there. So he went to Diem, and told Diem, “Hey, keep this team here in my
23 compound because if they leave then I'm going to get attacked and taken over and
24 whatever.” He said, “Okay.” The Americans said, “Okay, we'll leave them there for
25 awhile and see what happens.” We ended up staying six months there and the short time
26 down in Soc Trang.

27 RV: Before we get there in detail, your preparations at Bragg before you go over,
28 you said they were quite good. Did they prepare you well for living there in the Delta
29 and carrying out your mission?

30 MB: Pretty much. Like I say it's geared toward—where we were we didn't have
31 trucks. The only vehicles we had were sampans and engineer assault boats. Vehicle

1 ambush would be a whole lot different riverine-wise. The theory and the thought of how
2 this could happen and how we apply it here and the way we reacted as a team, that
3 training was invaluable.

4 RV: How much training did they give you on the South Vietnamese culture or
5 the Vietnamese culture in general? How to actually interact with the civilians?

6 MB: Our people did a lot of reading on their own. There was a lot of literature
7 out at the time. Culture-wise—see, what they call culture. I went to language school. I
8 went just as a, to get it in perspective. I went to the Vietnamese language, I went to
9 Korean language, and I went to Japanese language. The Army's version of language is
10 how you communicate with the swell, I mean the swell, not with the swill. We're not sent
11 over there to talk to lawyers and doctors and important politicians and that kind of thing.
12 We're there to get to grassroots people. People who get their hands dirty. If we applied
13 what we learned in language school to these people they'd think, "Where the hell are
14 these folks from?" The training we got, and we trained each other, was more or less
15 getting down to the hamlet individual and how we can get them and impress them, not
16 really impress, but do our job. Just to convince them our way is better. Then the
17 emphasis I think was everything was Diem. If we did well it was because Diem wanted
18 us to do well or you wanted his people to get help.

19 RV: Right, you're basically promoting indigenous government there.

20 MB: Yeah. It didn't bother us because we were getting our job done. I lost track
21 of what the original question was.

22 RV: Let me ask you this. How did you feel personally about going into a war
23 zone?

24 MB: I loved it. I was with a great bunch of guys. We were well trained, we
25 trusted each other. That's what we put all this time and energy into was training and
26 being proficient. First of all, we got selected. You know we were going. We were a go
27 team, and that's feather in your cap. They had their pick. There was a lot of folks that
28 they could've chosen and left you out. First of all, we were picked; we were going; we
29 got orders; we were going there; we know what we were going for; we know what we're
30 going to do, reasonably sure what we were going do when we get there.

31 RV: Right, now you were with the 5th Group, which unit individual again?

1 MB: Charlie Company, C Company, 5th Group. Then there was just—they didn't
2 have battalions, stuff like they do now.

3 RV: You shipped out in June. Is that correct?

4 MB: Yes.

5 RV: How did you actually get over to Vietnam?

6 MB: KC-135. Pope Airbase. We stopped off in Hawaii to give us two or three
7 days in Hawaii to get acclimated. Then from there we went to the Philippines, we
8 RONed, remained over night there because the Air Force likes to buy furniture, I think.
9 (Laughing) They place their order on the way over and then pick it up on the way back
10 when they get rid of us. We stopped in the Philippines, spent a couple of days there, and
11 then we flew into Saigon.

12 RV: What were your first impressions of Saigon when you came in?

13 MB: You know having not really traveled a lot, but I read a lot about the Orient.
14 It was the smell, the sight. Then you have to remember it was a more relaxed war. You
15 figured Saigon was like New York, it was the country's capital. So, you were pretty well
16 secure. But in the back of your mind, the French were here and they kind of thought like
17 we did. You didn't want to jump in and make all kinds of friendships because you don't
18 know who were making friends with. The immediate thing was the people, the smells,
19 the sights, looking for the bathrooms, street vendors, different things. We accepted that.
20 We knew that things were going to be different. It's not like it was going to be horrible,
21 like, "Oh my God, look at that!"

22 RV: Was it close to what you expected?

23 MB: Yeah, pretty much. I think they also got the pictures, I think, too. Tiny
24 Aldridge had said to Captain Yoder I think he was pretty descriptive of what to expect.
25 Then, of course, from the medics. We got the little bit of blurbs of information from all
26 the MOSs. It was a simpler time then. The war hadn't really become a war yet.

27 RV: Right, right, this is the summer of '63.

28 MB: Yeah.

29 RV: Tell me, at this time what did you know about why the United States was in
30 Southeast Asia and why we were backing the South Vietnamese government?

1 MB: Well, we were familiar with the domino effect. We knew that the stuff had
2 been going on in Laos. I didn't get a chance to go to Laos. I knew that from talking to
3 people that did go to Laos how things worked with the indigenous or the local people,
4 and what to expect and what to look out for. I felt confident that I could do it. I thought
5 that I was pretty street savvy. I thought that the other guys with me were all equally as
6 street savvy.

7 RV: Do you remember what they told you about Laos, what was happening
8 there?

9 MB: The big thing, the Laotians had a lot more, I think they wrote a lot of their
10 actions off to religion or politics or whatever. It was the old story about how they
11 changed uniforms, this in the day time, that in the nighttime. If they don't want to fight,
12 they just aren't going to fight. They'll just put on civilian clothes and leave. They can
13 come back tomorrow and get the same pay, and different things. You hear about every
14 war or conflict, Korea was the same. Korean *benjo*-ditches and they eat dogs and rats.
15 Vietnamese eat dogs and rats, and Chinese eat dogs and rats. Stereotypical stuff. But we,
16 I think, had a little more insight because we were prepped by the team that was in-
17 country on the ground.

18 RV: Right. How long did you stay in Saigon?

19 MB: Oh, mercy. I think we just landed there and they either refueled the
20 aircraft—no, they went back to the Philippines. We got on a 130 and went up to Nha
21 Trang, which was the C Team, the headquarters at the time. We flew up there from
22 Saigon on a 123 or a 130.

23 RV: How long did you stay up there?

24 MB: I think the better part of a week because we went in, I think we made a jump
25 or two jumps, zeroed our weapons, got some classes, got some money, got some time
26 downtown. We hit a couple of the good lobster restaurants up there; it's right on the
27 ocean. Then we flew back to Saigon and they split us up then. They got the people
28 going to the Delta naturally got on one aircraft. People going up into III Corps or II
29 Corps or whatever.

30 RV: Is that when you went on down to Long Phu?

1 MB: Yeah. We flew from Saigon to Can Tho by a fixed-wing and then by H-21
2 into Long Phu.

3 RV: What was it like when you first arrived there?

4 MB: It was primitive.

5 RV: Small village.

6 MB: Yeah, very small. Right on the main canal. A lot of intersecting canals. A
7 lot of rice and a lot of banana trees. Pretty much what we expected.

8 RV: How long did you end up staying there at Long Phu?

9 MB: Six months.

10 RV: You've already talked about what your mission was. How did you guys
11 carry that out?

12 MB: Oh, God. Kipfer and I were the two medics. We had a good medical
13 program. We inherited a good medical program from the medics that were there before.

14 RV: Where did those guys brief you? Did they brief you at Nha Trang or did
15 they brief you when you got to Long Phu?

16 RV: All three places. They briefed in Saigon on the tarmac. We got briefed in
17 Tent City in Nha Trang. Then when we went back down at Can Tho they briefed us
18 there. Then actually the people that were leaving briefed us in camp. We had a good
19 civil affairs thing. They had a movie projector. We showed the people films, American
20 films. They loved that.

21 RV: What kind of films did you show them?

22 MB: Most of them were John Wayne. You know emotional stuff that you could
23 look at and glean something no matter what language.

24 RV: This was an effort to win the hearts and minds basically?

25 MB: Well, that and to entertain people. They didn't have much going for them
26 because at night the Viet Cong owned the AO (area of operations). Kids especially, they
27 just loved that stuff. They'd see a fight and people fight with their fists and not kicking
28 each other, that kind of thing. That and everybody in camp loved it, too, because in the
29 camp, we had twelve Americans, I think twelve or thirteen Vietnamese Special Forces,
30 the priest and his entourage. He had about four bodyguards. The strike force that we
31 had, most of them were all Cambodians.

1 RV: Really?

2 MB: Yeah. We had five companies and I think four of them were Cambodian
3 Montagnard or Khmer and the other one was Vietnamese and Chinese.

4 RV: How would you use the strike force?

5 MB: Pretty much like infantry. Camp defense, perimeter defense, camp defense
6 on the outside, ambushes, probings, and raids and whatever. Then we patrolled the
7 canals. We had, I think it was three engineer assault boats that we had twin Evinrude
8 CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) motors on, noiseless motors. Then we had, I think
9 they were Johnsons, 40-horse Johnsons. We mounted machine guns on the front of that
10 and we patrolled the canals and then hold MEDCAPs (medical civil action program)
11 while we were out.

12 RV: Would you patrol at night or during the day or both?

13 MB: Not by boat at night. We had set up ambushes and naturally patrols were
14 out there night and day. You're away from camp for five days or whatever. Five days, I
15 think, was probably the usual.

16 RV: What would you do on these five-day patrols? What was a typical one like?

17 MB: Probably leave at night or early in the morning, get to a designated area and
18 then whatever your main function is. To deny them the use of the area or you gained
19 intelligence that these people are collecting taxes in the area, the people are pissed.
20 Depending on what the initial mission is. But we always kept two companies out always,
21 doing something, because the best defense is a good offense. The companies we had, I
22 think, one company was eighty to a hundred people. They had World War II weapons,
23 all interchangeable ammo. You know the machine gun, the rifle, was all interchangeable.
24 They had 60mm mortars, 81mm mortars, M-1 rifles, M-2/M-1 carbines, that type of
25 thing.

26 RV: So, very well armed?

27 MB: Oh, very well.

28 RV: Now, how did the Vietnamese get along with these Cambodians?

29 MB: Well, they were in control. They paid them so they had them by the balls.
30 You do or you don't get paid. They were happy-go-lucky people. I think back, I worked
31 with the Cambods a lot; they're just the joy of life. They get three slops and a flop. They

1 got all their meals paid for. If they killed a guy, they got paid for it; they got a bounty on
2 it. If they capture a weapon, they got bounty on that. Their family was there. They just
3 enjoyed life and they enjoyed—for them I guess it was being mercenaries. The
4 Vietnamese were in control. Even they were kind of shady because you have to
5 remember, Diem at this time was in power, and he's a Catholic. He brought these folks
6 down from North Vietnam and sent them down into the Delta to do this and do that. The
7 Vietnamese Special Forces, a lot of them were ex-Viet Minh that fought the French. So,
8 they're not completely trusted. Plus, being Buddhist, or Cao Dai, or Hoa Hao or
9 whatever, they're not completely trusted by the priest or by the regime or whatever.
10 There was a little animosity, say, or at least some mystery, you know.

11 RV: How did you all feel about them? Did you trust them?

12 MB: I trusted the ones that I associated with. The ones I didn't trust, I didn't
13 associate with. I stayed away from them or I insulted them to where they wouldn't come
14 near me anymore.

15 RV: What do you mean? Give me an example.

16 MB: Well, the Vietnamese are affectionate people. The Americans described
17 them as effeminate. That would be nothing to see men walking down the street holding
18 hands. It's not a stigma; it's not looked down upon. Lay in the same bed, two or three
19 guys taking a nap, all in the same sack. They're not homosexual, or they might be, it
20 doesn't matter. But it's not looked down upon. It's a necessity because the absence of
21 beds or hammocks or whatever. Two guys in a hammock is not unheard of. Some of the
22 guys were just out for money, and especially being a medic, you had to be really astute to
23 find out things enough to ingratiate or piss off these folks. You need to know the
24 difference between helping someone and giving them a handout that they're going to take
25 and sell or trade for something or whatever. The ones we had, some of them were
26 outstanding, and some of them were just slugs. But you knew them because they knew
27 them. Even the Vietnamese didn't associate with the guys that I didn't like. I guess my
28 choice of people or personnel is halfway astute anyway.

29 RV: How would you rate the effectiveness of the South Vietnamese Special
30 Forces?

1 MB: At that time, it was a completely different Special Forces. Like I say, some
2 of them were ex-Viet Minh; some of them were political appointees. I think the guy that
3 we had, in hindsight, talking to Captain Yoder, that the guy was pretty savvy and he had a
4 good grasp on military tactics and all. He wasn't apolitical, but he wasn't really a regime
5 person. But he wasn't a rebel either. I would say most of them were pretty competent,
6 and if they weren't completely competent, they were a little competent and a lot of
7 confidence. I think they knew that they were in control at that time. The Americans run
8 the operation because we had the purse strings, but they had ways of getting around it. If
9 they didn't want us going somewhere, they could find a way circumvent certain areas or
10 things or whatever. The ones that I liked, that I think were outstanding, the ones that I
11 worked with or had dealings with, I thought were outstanding. They were well trained,
12 well motivated, had good morale, and they were just honest. You could look them in the
13 eye, like an American, like your teammate. Of course, with a grain of salt. They're
14 doing their job. They're not there to please us.

15 RV: Do you think they understood why we were there? Why the Americans
16 were there helping?

17 MB: Oh, I'm sure, yeah.

18 RV: Did you ever have any conversations with them about this?

19 MB: Oh, sure. We'd talk. Some of them—like us, too. I never let on that I went
20 to language school, that I could understand some of the conversation. Although, in the
21 dispensary we tried our best, Kipfer and I, to understand as much of the medical lingo, to
22 find out. They would talk. Another thing is that the interpreters we had weren't
23 Vietnamese or Cambodian. They were Chinese, ethnic Chinese living in Vietnam.
24 We're still in contact with three of them right now. There's one guy living in Houston,
25 another guy lives in DC, but only three months of the year. The other time, he's in
26 Saigon, or Ho Chi Minh City. He has a business over there. The other two we know
27 made it out also. One guy is living near San Francisco, and the other has dropped off of
28 the world somewhere. He's off in one of the Third World countries.

29 RV: This is just from the six months that you spent there?

30 MB: Just from the six months.

31 RV: Wow. Describe what the base camp was like.

1 MB: Oh, God. A mud berm on the side of a canal. The team houses were
2 wooden tree structures with beer can tin for siding, some screening between the beer can
3 tin. Something four-foot-by-eight-foot, like plywood, but it's made out of—they threw it
4 out. They couldn't use it for making beer cans, so they left it in eight-foot-by-four-foot
5 sheets to use as roofing or siding. That was on the side. Then some type of screen up
6 from there and then a banana leaf roof. The newest building in the camp was the
7 dispensary and that was brick. Really American-type of brick, up about four foot, five
8 foot. Then it was screen. We had a tin roof, I think, if I remember correctly. If it wasn't,
9 it was banana leaf. But it was the newest building in camp. We also had a Catholic
10 church. We also had a convent in the camp. We had four or five nuns. I think the one
11 boundary was the bigger canal and another boundary was a canal. The rest were all
12 going into the jungle, primary jungle.

13 RV: How many men would stay in one of these hooches?

14 MB: Oh, hells bells. We tried to keep a long term hot bunking. We keep two
15 companies in the field. Naturally, they would maintain their quarters and all. Each
16 company held about eighty men. I think we had five barracks. They had less than we
17 had.

18 RV: So, you slept in there with all those guys?

19 MB: No, no, no. We had a team house. The priest had his own concrete, two- or
20 three-story building that had been there since the French were there. He lived in there
21 and his entourage and about maybe fifty feet from that was the American team house.
22 Across from the American team house was one of the barracks, and next to the team
23 house was the barracks. We had ten or nine guys living in the team house, which was
24 also the commo room and the TOC (tactical operations center) and all this other stuff.
25 Me and Kipfer and Speece stayed in the dispensary, which is about fifty yards from the
26 team house.

27 RV: How did you all first encounter the enemy?

28 MB: Actually, the team sergeant went out on the first operation with the other
29 team. Him and the captain went out with the captain and the team sergeant from the
30 other team. They encountered some folks. I guess they ran away, or whatever. But they

1 got shot at and made contact. He came back and told us about it and everybody else
2 wanted to know, "Who's next? Let's go!"

3 RV: How about you for you personally?

4 MB: Actually, probably the first contact was not eyeball-to-eyeball. It was a lot
5 of weapons fire. But the poor son-of-a-gun was going from a tree line across a paddy and
6 he did it at a wrong time because the company saw him. What we called a Tham Bao, it
7 was like an intelligence squad that we sent ahead. They were dressed like the VC (Viet
8 Cong) in black pajamas and straw hats, they concealed their weapons. I think that was
9 the first encounter. They probed the camp a couple of times. I think we went down,
10 stayed with the district chief one time and they roused us up down there. Like I say, it
11 was nothing really close or any pitched battle. Probably to the south, down there at Ca
12 Mau, the camp down there, they were actually making contact with organized units,
13 company-sized units. The people we had and what I learned later, they said ours was
14 kind of like a medical R&R (rest and recuperation) center. They didn't want anybody
15 making contact. They just tried to keep us away from their base areas and give up the
16 ancillary stuff, the skirt stuff. But we never did really make a big contact, like I say,
17 other getting probed or the camp itself. We had some people get ambushed in the boats.
18 But as far as big units or any kind of a big pitched battle, no, not on that mission.

19 RV: What particular incidents come to mind when you think back about those six
20 months there?

21 MB: Oh, mercy. Well, there's a lot. The way we worked as a team, the
22 friendships we made, the animosities we picked up. It was actually doing, taking part and
23 accomplishing things. That camp down at Ca Mau, which is the only camp south of us,
24 that's where Rowe and Pitzer and Rocky Versace were captured. When we left, Captain
25 Yoder, when got to the B Team, to process out, to go back to the States, Captain Yoder
26 says, "Hey, my team wants to volunteer to jump into the U Minh," which is the U Minh
27 Forest, "to go in and try and free those prisoners," because they figured that's where the
28 Viet Cong had taken them, to the U Minh. Everyone to a man volunteered, that's married
29 men with kids. Everybody wanted to go home, but everybody to a man volunteered,
30 "Yeah, we'll jump in there and do what we can to get them out of there." I learned a lot
31 about people. I learned a lot about medical stuff, especially.

1 RV: Just tell me about some of what you did, medically.

2 MB: Well, we had the dispensary. Jim Chapman, "Dallas" Chapman was the
3 medic there before me. His junior medic, his name escapes me. But Chapman, I guess
4 they built that dispensary. They had a constant sick call all morning long, they came
5 from miles around. They took motorized sampans to get down there to go on sick call.
6 There were people from district; people from province would come there because they
7 knew they could get reliable treatment. Parents would bring their old folks or the young
8 kids or whatever. But anyway, Chapman had this medical program set up. We just
9 inherited it from them. One of the things I learned from Chapman, this guy again, he
10 teaches people because he wants them to learn and do. We had had some dental
11 anesthesiology and some dental theory. A lot of cleaning and scaling and that kind of
12 thing, but not any kind of dental surgery. But when I got down there and I got with
13 Chapman, he says, "Come on, let's go out, take you out and I'll show you some stuff."
14 We ended up going on some MEDCAPs. I mean the stuff he taught me was invaluable.
15 We made a lot of friends just in dental surgery. We set up, well actually, Chapman had
16 set up a situation where tuberculars, TB (tuberculosis) patients, had a lot of leprosy.
17 Believe it or not just, you know, people mingling in society, they were lepers and there
18 was no stigma. The TB people, we were actually, we scrounged streptomycin, NAS, and
19 PAS: two drugs you have to have if you're going to treat tuberculars. We scrounged that
20 and we had a process where these people would come in every Wednesday or whatever
21 the heck it was, come in for their shot of strep, and get their pills. But it was regimented.
22 We keep track of everybody and we kept records on everybody. The lepers, there wasn't
23 much we could do other than just confirming that it was leprosy that was the problem.
24 After that, there was nothing we could do other than teach them how to not be contagious.
25 In fact, one guy, he was in the strike force, he had leprosy. The arch of his foot was eaten
26 out with it. He showed signs of leprosy and we sent him on to H-21, up to Can Tho, to
27 get a blood test to determine if it was leprosy. The guy, in fact, I flew out with him, when
28 we got up there, the guy told me, he says, "What's the matter with that guy? What, is he
29 shot?" I said, "No, he's got leprosy." He says, "Hell, if you would've told me that when
30 we we're flying up I would've thrown his ass out." I said, "Oh! Wow."

31 RV: How'd you feel about that?

1 MB: I didn't expect anything that abrupt. But I could understand because he's
2 from Hawaii. These guys were over there for ninety days as door gunners for the
3 helicopter. Over there on Molokai, Hansen's disease is highly contagious or something.
4 They didn't want to get association with that at all. But like I say, there was normal sick
5 call and MEDCAPs. We'd travel around, Kipfer and I. I'd go one time, he'd go one
6 time. But we rotated missions, we rotated patrols and everybody got their chance. We
7 kept tabs on it just so we could justify the amount of aspirin and different things that we
8 ordered, penicillin. We had a medical report we'd make—and we were treating a
9 thousand people a week. Some of these people, we knew obviously there were people
10 coming in there saying they were sick, and they'd get the medicine and go trade it or sell
11 it or give it to the Viet Cong. But you had to treat them. We got to learn how to talk to
12 them, get the information from them. Of course, the street savvy aspect of it, you had a
13 thing in your mind of what people look like, you knew repeaters that came in. They were
14 treated well and we set up a really good dispensary, if I say so myself. We sterilized
15 everything, we had a sterile atmosphere. It was really a good setup. We were proud to
16 turn it over when we did turn it over.

17 RV: Do you feel like you were accomplishing the mission of winning hearts and
18 minds?

19 MB: Oh yeah, yeah. The interpreters, within the last few years, but we've
20 reunited with them, some of them. The LLDB (Luc Luong Dac Biet), the Vietnamese
21 Special Forces, I ended up serving with the commo man again in 1964 and '65. That guy
22 is aces. He's not only a good commo man, he's got a good fist, he's got a good
23 knowledge of communications, how to get things done in adversity. He's just a good
24 human being. We served together in another camp in III Corps. I knew him, he walked
25 up and I could tell it was just like a long lost brother.

26 RV: When the six months were approaching the end, were you reluctant to leave?

27 MB: No, no. There was two things that happened while we were getting ready.
28 We had also sent pictures. The general, they could get our after-action reports there from
29 headquarters in Bragg. The only communication other than through military channels
30 that we had was the transoceanic radio, big old bulky things. Every team had one in their
31 team house. They come and woke us up once and told us that Kennedy had been

1 assassinated. We didn't know what the hell to expect. Vietnamese Special Forces kind
2 of locked themselves up and we kind of locked ourselves up.

3 RV: What do you mean, locked yourselves up?

4 MB: Well, we didn't know—oh, I'm sorry, Kennedy was already—no, Diem.

5 RV: Diem was killed first.

6 MB: Diem was killed first. That's when we locked down, went to the mattress.

7 RV: What, kind of defensive posture and waited?

8 MB: Yeah, because we didn't know what they were going to do and they didn't
9 know what we were going to do.

10 RV: Was there a degree of mistrust there?

11 MB: No. It was just that the information that their headquarters was telling them,
12 what they were telling us, that might have been different, we don't know. Just the fact,
13 that their president had been assassinated. I'm not sure whether they knew something
14 was involving the Americans or something like that. We're not sure what information
15 they got from their headquarters. But we were prepared if they had tried to take over the
16 Americans or whatever. Anyways, we had two people come back from Saigon that were
17 there during the riot afterwards, during the curfew time. But, eventually, they smoothed
18 things out and everybody just went back to work. But, then when Kennedy got killed,
19 they came over and said, "Hey, the president has been shot." Say, "Sure he's been shot,
20 he got shot in October." That was a blow.

21 RV: How did you feel when you heard that Kennedy was killed?

22 MB: Oh, devastated. How could this happen in America? Abraham Lincoln,
23 maybe, in 1865, but not in 1963. In Dallas, Texas? Couldn't happen.

24 RV: Did it affect the morale of the guys?

25 MB: Not that way. It was just like a relative passing. You're a little stoic,
26 maybe. But no, the morale was good. You just couldn't believe it.

27 RV: This is a month before you go home?

28 MB: Yeah. That happened on the twenty-second and we left the fifteenth of
29 December.

30 RV: Did you go right back to Bragg?

31 MB: Yeah.

1 RV: What was the mood of Bragg like in December?

2 MB: We got back we went through a week of medical evaluation by Walter
3 Reed. Then we went on leave. Bragg, again, it's so cosmopolitan. There's people from
4 all over creation there. You got like the people in Dallas, "Ah, he didn't get it fast
5 enough." Joe Cracker, you know. So, it ran from that, people were really emotionally
6 upset about it. I was going back to New York, my home of record. I think I went by
7 train. You saw all the stuff and the black crepe. There was a lot of things to worry about
8 at the time. We really didn't know. We knew it happened, but we didn't know the
9 circumstances. The immediate thing was to secure what we needed to secure and do
10 what we needed to do to continue the mission at the time. We really didn't get
11 everything down probably until we actually got home on leave or spent some time with
12 people other than going through the medical stuff.

13 RV: So, back with your family it hit home more, I guess.

14 MB: Yeah.

15 RV: When you left Vietnam and came back and you went on leave, did people
16 talk about Vietnam with you? Did they want to know what you had done, where you
17 were?

18 MB: No, my dad didn't know where it was.

19 RV: Really?

20 MB: Yeah. Several people, they knew what was going on over there. I remember
21 seeing the highlights in the movies with the French, the Foreign Legion over there. So, I
22 knew Saigon. I could compare something even before we went over there. How the
23 people looked, how they dressed, what the terrain was like, and that kind of thing. Most
24 of the people, like I say, it was not a war yet. It was a training mission for most people.
25 Although we already had people killed, Marshan and Gabrielle were killed in '62.

26 RV: Did you get a sense when you were there in South Vietnam during this six-
27 month period that the South Vietnamese forces could actually defend their country and be
28 a viable force there without the Americans in force? This is before we came over en
29 masse. But so you didn't really know at the time that this was going to happen. But
30 looking back did you think that they could defend their country on their own?

1 MB: Yeah. We considered that going over and if they just needed some help to
2 finesse things, learn some tactics, learn how to organize or do something. Yeah, I
3 definitely believe that they could. But remember in this instance there were third-country
4 nationals as the armed force. So had these people, if they got dissatisfied with the LLDB
5 or something like that, which happened later on in the war, they could've waxed them
6 and just went home. Taken the cash or whatever they wanted and just left. They were
7 just a bunch of peasants from Cambodia, some Montagnards even from II Corps.

8 RV: How did they all get along with each other?

9 MB: Outstanding.

10 RV: Of course, there's financial incentive as you said.

11 MB: Yeah. Well they're there for food and clothing and cover. A lot of them
12 were just there to earn money and send it back to Cambodia or back to their family. They
13 had what they call *poc* time (Editor's note: *poc* time is slang for a mid-day break). You
14 eat your noon meal, if you ate a noon meal. Then they'd have *poc* time, you'd sleep for a
15 half hour, an hour, take a nap in a hammock or something. Then go back to work
16 because it helps you through the day. Well, we'd go out and play volleyball with these
17 Cambods. We're just as aggressive as they were. But them communists son-of-a-guns,
18 they were so good, they'd play three men against our five because we were so slew-
19 footed or cumbersome.

20 RV: You called them communists. Were they communists?

21 MB: I called everything as communists.

22 RV: Why do you do that?

23 MB: It started, I think in 1965. If it didn't work right, if it was bad, it was
24 communist. We all wore—do you know what a Ranger tab is?

25 RV: Um-hm.

26 MB: We had some tabs made up saying, "F.U.C.K. Communism" and wore them
27 on the uniform.

28 RV: Did that ever get any reactions from people?

29 MB: They'd laugh. That's what it was meant to be. Hell, they had guys had
30 tattoos made, "Sat Cong," "Kill the Cong," tattooed on them. They were kind of
31 extreme.

1 RV: Right, right. So, when you're back stateside, how much leave did you have?

2 MB: They gave us thirty days, I think. Thirty days leave, and then came back.

3 RV: What was it like going home as a Green Beret?

4 MB: Oh, it was great. I got off, again, landed in LaGuardia, I think. Had to take
5 the subway, whatever, the ferryboat again, and the train again. I think it was in '63, when
6 I got home because it was December and I think there was about a foot of snow on the
7 ground. I didn't have an overcoat, but it was just so beautiful. Everything was the
8 season, just prior to Christmas, getting home and in uniform. I had just made buck
9 sergeant in November or December. Everything was just so clean and pristine. The roads
10 was—there couldn't have been more than two cars that traveled the road. It was just so
11 delicate.

12 RV: Very different atmosphere from where you had just come from.

13 MB: Oh, yeah. Sure.

14 RV: After you went through Christmas and you had your thirty days, you went
15 back to Fort Bragg?

16 MB: Yeah.

17 RV: What did you do?

18 MB: Went right back into mission training.

19 RV: When were you next deployed over?

20 MB: December in that year of '65. Got back in December of '64 and I re-
21 deployed as a company, not as a team. We went PCS, permanent change of station. You
22 went in on a rotation, A Company, then B Company, then C Company. They did that for
23 TDY teams and then after the TDY teams, after they said, "Okay, the 5th is moving over
24 here in total." I think B Company started the first PCS moves, and then the Charlie
25 Company. Our time came up and we left the fifteenth of December '64, because we
26 spent Christmas in Muc Hoa.

27 RV: During this year, you said you did mission training. Was it the same kind of
28 training you did before?

29 MB: Yeah, more or less. There were other things we had to do, too. I remember
30 in January or February, I think we went to Fort Devens, Mass (Massachusetts) two times
31 on a composite detachment. We were opposing the 5th Infantry Mechanized; 2nd

1 Battalion, 5th Infantry Mechanized. The guy that was the CO (commanding officer) in
2 the battalion used to Special Forces and he wrote back a request asking for an A Team to
3 be aggressor, to train his troops against unconventional warfare. So we went up and
4 raised hell with them. His name was Major Hope I remember because he thought he had
5 us by the *coglionis*. The last thing we did was to leave a note. They captured all of us
6 but two. One guy went into the cranberry bogs and they wouldn't go in there after him.
7 The other guy, I forget why the hell they didn't catch him. The last thing we did was
8 pretty prophetic at the time because we made a human bomb when they captured us. We
9 sent him in, and when he got interrogated, he handed a card to Major Hope and said,
10 "You've just been blown up, courtesy of A blah-blah-blah-blah, 5th Special Forces
11 Group." He says, "Oh, shit!" The most obvious thing.

12 RV: They didn't check him?

13 MB: Didn't check him.

14 RV: I'm curious with the knowledge and experience you brought back with you
15 from South Vietnam, did you do any training yourself of other companies of other
16 Special Forces units?

17 MB: Oh, yeah. Immediately when we got back we had the requirements of the
18 Army, too. My senior medic came down on orders to go to Okinawa. He left in January
19 or February and went to Okinawa. Ray Speece, one of the weapons guys, he retired
20 when he got back. The other guys, some went to HALO (high altitude/low opening)
21 school, some went to scuba schools, some went to—you know, split for the four winds.
22 Some got out of the Army. Charlie Thompson got out of the Army; Fred Wardis got out
23 of the Army. Like I say, I split with another team, went to Devens twice and couple of
24 other places. We went down and trained—went down to Breaux Bridge, Louisiana, into
25 Mississippi. I think it was Biloxi, Mississippi—no Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and trained
26 some Army reserve folks there in medical and you know, like we talked about, branch
27 training, things about Vietnam stuff that they wouldn't have access to there in the States.
28 When they go active for their two weeks or whatever then they have access to it. They
29 just wanted us to get down and give them as realistic a picture of what was going on.
30 That went all through the South, all Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

31 RV: Had you made a decision at this point to make the Army a career?

1 MB: Yeah. I had to re-enlist in May of 1964. I got to thinking, "Well, I'm out of
2 here. This is fine and dandy, but I'm going on to bigger and better." I started to get
3 rational about it and I thought, "Well, what the hell are you going to do? You're going to
4 go back to New York, and just like every Irishman from New York, you're going to be a
5 cop or a fireman and all your going to do is change uniforms." Here I made E-5 ahead of
6 schedule and like my boss said, my senior medic, "Brady, you've always had plenty of
7 time and grade to get promoted, you just never had enough time in-service." So, I was
8 either promoted with my peers or ahead of them. So, I figured, "What the hell? If I go
9 back and become a fireman or a cop, I just got to start all over again. So, hell, I'm going
10 to stay in the Army and enjoy myself."

11 RV: Do you regret that decision or do you think you made a good decision at the
12 time?

13 MB: No, I think it was the best decision I ever made in my life.

14 RV: Really?

15 MB: Sure. How did your family feel about you re-enlisting?

16 MB: They were all for it. "He's found a niche in life."

17 RV: So, anything else we should discuss before you go back over to Southeast
18 Asia? Anything that happened of note there during the training?

19 MB: No, just pretty much the way I said it. Just mission training and mission
20 support and these flyaways down to—

21 RV: To another training?

22 MB: Yeah.

23 RV: You go back in December '64 and tell me where you were stationed, where
24 base camp was?

25 MB: Actually, our mission was to go over and build a camp. So, we flew into
26 Saigon then went up to Nha Trang, the same route. The C Team was still up in Nha
27 Trang. We came back to a place called Muc Hoa. It's about, I guess maybe a hundred
28 miles west of Saigon up near the Cambodian border. There was a TDY team there also
29 from Okinawa.

30 RV: Same situation as before.

1 MB: Pretty much except they still had a month or so to go on their mission and
2 we were just sandbagging. We were just there to share, live there for a while so we can
3 get out stuff right to go down and build a camp. We got there in December '64, stayed
4 with them until January. I think in January, half of the team moved down, and in
5 February, the rest of the team moved down to where we were building a camp.

6 RV: Where was that?

7 MB: That was in a place called Tuyen Nhon, A-415. They sent us, I think,
8 fifteen SEABEEs (construction battalion) to help with the heavy construction. So, we
9 had twelve Americans to start and fourteen or fifteen SEABEEs. Then later on, they sent
10 us two more Americans as CAPO (Civil Affairs Psychological Operations), civil affairs,
11 political officers or whatever. That's when we started building the camp in earnest.

12 RV: Was this another six-month mission?

13 MB: No, this is a year.

14 RV: Okay, so you're deployed there for a year. You were to build a Special
15 Forces camp or—?

16 MB: Yeah.

17 RV: Tell people listening to this or reading this in the future, how one goes about
18 building a Special Forces camp in 1964 in Vietnam?

19 MB: It was in the Delta, the camp was being built about eighty-five miles west of
20 Saigon on a main canal. If you can think of the Pacific Islands being a foot over sea
21 level, the place where we were going to build this camp, because it had a good proximity
22 to a flight strip, if you had a good rain, the place would be flooded. We had to dig, they
23 sent us a couple of bulldozers and we intermingled with the SEABEEs and dug up a pad
24 elevated I guess about four foot above the tidal level. We got the pad laid, got it
25 compacted, then we started vertical construction. It's basically a rectangular fort. Our
26 team leader, our replacement team leader, went ahead and scrounged a bunch of concrete
27 so we got the walls built and capped them with concrete. We used fifty-five gallon
28 drums without the bottoms, used those for the foxhole or the fighting parapets along the
29 wall. From there, once we got the walls built, you can concentrate on vertical
30 construction, inside the camp building barracks and a team house and a commo bunker,
31 and a medical bunker. It's time consuming, we not only had to work building the camp,

1 we had to provide security, which is outgoing security. It was sixteen klicks to the
2 Cambodian border. But again, we had those boats and machine guns mounted on the
3 front so we could do that. Plus, we still ran MEDCAPs and did other things. It was a
4 heck of an experience.

5 RV: How long did it take you to build the camp?

6 MB: Oh, it was a couple of few months, I'd say. I can't remember. But the
7 SEABEEs were there and they did the main stay and then we relieved them on the
8 bulldozers and the dump trucks and stuff like that. They got all the framework built for
9 the barracks and all like that and one of those Delta winds came down, blew everything
10 down. We naturally had a little service rivalry over that. But, yeah, we got it up and
11 done and all during that time we were running operations.

12 RV: What kind of operations were you running?

13 MB: Search and destroy, interdiction, had a lot of canals. Eventually, we got
14 airboats. We had a lot of intel. Our intel sergeant really had a good net going. We could
15 do a lot of damage to them by getting the tax collectors and keeping them from bothering
16 the people.

17 RV: Explain how you would actually go about that. You had received the
18 intelligence on the fact that they were being, taxes being collected on a particular village.

19 MB: Like a particular series of villages or one village or on a specific waterway.
20 Naturally, they had their own means of E&E (escape and evasion) to get out of there
21 should we venture in there. Most of the time we'd set it up like we were going out for a
22 five-day operation or whatever. Get out, usually leave around midnight or very early in
23 the morning, and go to a pre-designated spot, set up, eat, and branch out from there. The
24 Americans and the VNSF might not have the same idea of where to do it, but ordinarily
25 you could talk to them and say, "Look, we're out here to get somebody and to do some
26 damage and hurt them." A lot of times they come around.

27 RV: Were they reluctant to actually do some damage?

28 MB: They didn't have much to say about it. They had to do what they were told
29 to do. If the CO told them, "Don't go in this area," they weren't going into that area even
30 though we wanted to.

31 RV: Who was more in charge, you guys are the Vietnamese Special Forces?

1 MB: Of where to go and when to come back and stuff? Probably the Vietnamese.
2 When the shit hit the fan, it's usually the Americans and the VNSF. It depends on the
3 caliber of the VNSF you had with you, who actually took charge.

4 RV: Let me ask you quickly before you continue, what difference did you see in
5 the VNSF this time around versus the last time you were there?

6 MB: Well, they didn't seem as dedicated. They were newer. I say newer,
7 younger. They were letting them in like me. I was let in early. I should've spent four
8 years in a line unit before I was in allowed in Special Forces. Some of them were
9 excellent, they were just young. They had no inclination of independence. They couldn't
10 do anything but follow orders. It was their livelihood. They lived or died by what
11 happened, and it showed. These old guys, the old street savvy Viet Minh, ex-Viet Minh
12 type people that were comfortable on the ground, they weren't afraid of being stabbed in
13 the back or somebody finking on them to the headquarters, you know, "This guy's talking
14 wild." There was more involved, there was a lot of politics involved. They were either
15 good or they weren't any good. You could tell the difference right off. I could and my
16 team members could.

17 RV: Right, you'd been there before, you could tell. This is still with 5th Group?

18 MB: Oh, yeah, 5th Group. Once they went PCS, it was all 5th Group, no more
19 TDY, unless it was for special projects.

20 RV: Still Charlie Company?

21 MB: Yes.

22 RV: Go ahead and continue. So, you would set up, you would eat in the
23 morning, then you'd fan out. What would come—?

24 MB: Yes. Prior intelligence that have certain areas that the NVA (North
25 Vietnamese Army), Viet Cong would use as way stations.

26 RV: You would actually try to catch them in the act?

27 MB: Oh, catch them with their pants down if we could. Yeah. We did many
28 times. In fact, Tuyen Nhon, I think they were first to log in that they had killed Chinese
29 advisors. These guys were six foot tall. This is later on in 1965; in the fall of '65 they
30 tried overrun the camp there. The thing is, Delta, again. Slogging through those rice
31 paddies. You want so bad to walk on the dykes; but a big tall American walking on the

1 dyke, he's a perfect target. So, you slogged through the water, slogged through the rice
2 paddies. Sixteen klicks to the border is a long way to slog in the mud.

3 RV: Yes, sir. Did you ever encounter any strange wildlife?

4 MB: Oh, yeah. God, yeah.

5 RV: Like what? Tell me.

6 MB: I can't remember if it's at Tuyen Nhon or if it's at Loc Ninh, but these big
7 lizards. You work with these guys, they're Cambods and Yards, they need some
8 nourishment. Well, you hear this stuff, clackety, clackety, clack, it sounded like a damn
9 tank coming through the bamboo. What it was was one of these big, huge lizards. Man,
10 the tail section of the formation opened up on this lizard. It was just like it was Tet.
11 They were trying to kill that lizard for their dinner meal.

12 RV: How big is this thing?

13 MB: It's about four foot. It's a huge Monitor like, not the Komodo dragon, it's
14 not that big, but big enough that the tail would feed a whole company. I mean they even
15 shot one of their own people.

16 RV: Really?

17 MB: Yeah, the tail gunner, he got shot, got wounded. We had to Medevac him,
18 put him in a boat and sent him back. That was funny. There was a lot of little things that
19 I just can't think of now.

20 RV: How about snakes?

21 MB: Oh, snakes are food. Good eating, no fat, easy to cook, easy to clean.

22 RV: How would you catch them and what kind were you eating?

23 MB: Most of them were just rice paddy snakes. They had these little bamboo
24 vipers, the two-stepper, yeah two steps and you die. I had never heard of anybody dying
25 of that stuff. But they're too small to eat anyway, so people just ignore them. But they
26 are hazard around kids. If they're looking for warmth or something like that, they could
27 sneak in on a kid and if the kid panics they might bite them. They're rear fanged and
28 they're like cobra, he's got to chew on you or get a good lucky bite. They eat rats. I ate
29 toads. I'd never think—I'd eat frog legs, but I'd never ever think I'd ever eat a toad.

30 RV: Wait, you said you ate rats?

31 MB: Rats, sure.

1 RV: How would you catch and cook and clean a rat?

2 MB: Well, we didn't catch them. More or less you're a headquarters element.

3 You got the American, usually two Americans. Usually two Americans will be displaced
4 in the formation. Only one American has the radio. It's usually the senior. With the
5 headquarters, you usually have one American, the VNSF, an interpreter, and then what
6 we call, the company commander or platoon commander, the indigenous. The guy that
7 speaks the language and that's been trained as infantry officer. That's usually the
8 headquarters. That's where you find out what the hell is going on, where you're going,
9 what they think is there, and how to circumvent any kind of a bad thing happening to you
10 on the way to the objective. These guys, they don't go out and kill things, they send their
11 boys out. They throw hand grenades in the canal and get fish, or shoot the lizards, or
12 catch the snake, or get the rats. We had a rat eradication program in Long Phu. You pay
13 for them each tail that they bring in and hell we'd just threw the tails away. Well, the
14 kids would go get the tails and come back and get the second time. So, we made them
15 bring the whole rat in. But then we're depriving them of food so we said, "Okay, keep
16 the rats." It was just one of those civil affairs projects. Americans like chicken eggs. If
17 you got twelve Americans, that village is going to run out of chicken eggs real quick. So,
18 you end up eating duck eggs. The Vietnamese would eat the duck eggs and sell the
19 chicken eggs to the Americans to make the money, the hard currency. Whatever meat
20 they could scrounge—we had two guys, Gumption and Waters used to go out with us—a
21 big seine, these throw nets you see the South Pacific Islanders use and Mexican
22 fisherman, their throw nets, these huge throw nets. So, they go out and catch—the canals
23 over there were brackish water canals that were actually tidal. They'd go out and catch
24 shrimp, bring them back. We'd have one night taco night. Old Speece, he was half
25 German, half Mexican, he'd make tacos. Gumption and Waters go out and catch prawns
26 and we'd have shrimp. If you caught a python or something like that, you were in hog
27 heaven, man, because they weighed up to twenty pounds or fifty pounds or bigger even.

28 RV: Good meat.

29 MB: Good meat, all meat, no fat.

30 RV: What were some of the larger snakes that you saw?

1 MB: I didn't see too many snakes in Long Phu because it was all rice paddy. I
2 saw them after they were caught. Live, by themselves, the only thing I saw was cobras.
3 We had a pet python there named Elizabeth, was twenty-one feet long.

4 RV: Wow. How did you keep Elizabeth there at the camp?

5 MB: Oh, fed her chickens. She was in a big cage. We had a monkey named
6 Duke. (Laughing)

7 RV: How did you find Duke?

8 MB: I forget who the hell he belonged to. He might have belonged to the
9 Vietnamese SF, but he didn't like them. He liked the Americans because they'd play
10 with him and give him a banana or something like that. It got to the point where he
11 couldn't stand our cook. We had a Chinese cook. He couldn't stand Charlie because
12 Charlie would say, "Number one, chop, chop!" He'd tell that to the monkey, the monkey
13 would go berserk. He knew that Charlie was smacking his lips.

14 RV: Like he was going to eat the monkey.

15 MB: Eat the monkey, yeah.

16 RV: The monkey knew?

17 MB: Oh, yeah, yeah.

18 RV: So, Duke would go nuts?

19 MB: He'd go crazy when Charlie came. One time we fixed old Charlie up—
20 Duke had a chain, he could only run so far. Charlie knew he'd only run so far.

21 RV: So, would Duke attack Charlie?

22 MB: Oh, yeah! He got violent, yeah! So, we fixed old Charlie, we lengthened
23 the chain on Duke. (Laughing) Charlie come over there antagonizing the monkey, the
24 monkey went after him and he had an extra four foot of chain, he got a hold of Charlie.

25 RV: What happened?

26 MB: Between the Chinese and the monkey squealing, holy crud, you'd think it
27 was a company over there fighting. But he never forgave us for that. But he learned a
28 lesson.

29 RV: Right, right. Let's get back. We were talking about you slogging through
30 these rice paddies and you're going to catch the NVA or the VC. Continue with that.
31 How would that actually happen?

1 MB: There was a limited number of villages and you had to consider that some of
2 these guys were just draft dodgers, they weren't really VC. They'd act like they VC
3 because they evading us, they were trying to get away. But you couldn't tell the
4 difference. We'd hit way stations. There'd be cauldrons of fish, enough to feed a
5 company. They had their scouts out as well as ours. Obviously they'd found out we
6 were coming and vacated, but there was enough there to feed a company. They left a lot
7 of stuff. But the majority of the weapons and stuff they either hid well or took off. In
8 this area, I don't know how many other teams ran into it, but these guys had firing
9 positions at waterline level to where they could actually get into the bunker on the bank
10 of a canal and be down to the waterline to where they could have grazing fire on the
11 canal. They eventually got—they shot my replacement. The boat was coming up to re-
12 supply the FOV (field of view) and we had three Americans and the cook and the LLDB
13 and then, I guess, I'm not sure if they had indig behind them or what. But they ambushed
14 the boat and shot Lindquist and, hell, they took the boat into Cambodia.

15 RV: Really?

16 MB: Yeah. Old Charlie Moro and Lindquist and Fred the cook all got into the
17 elephant grass and buried their weapons. When they ran out of ammo they stuck all the
18 weapons down into the mud muzzle first so they couldn't find them. They just hid out.
19 The NVA or whatever the hell it was was going to burn the elephant grass, try and get
20 them. This guy, Fred the cook, heroic little son of a gun, he's half Chinese half Cambod.
21 He was with us in '63. I went down to IV Corps and got him, brought him up to Tuyen
22 Nhon. He ran all the way back to camp, tore him up, I mean his whole body just looked
23 like he flayed with a whip.

24 RV: Running through the elephant grass?

25 MB: Yes. He got back and told Americans, "Ambush, ambush!" At that time,
26 Bobby Kennedy was up at the Muc Hoa, to B Team, and he had a helicopter. The
27 operations, I can't remember his name, the operations officer at the B Team took
28 Kennedy's chopper and gave it to our people and let them fly recon to find out where the
29 hell the Americans were. So they eventually got them up and picked up the Americans.
30 But Charlie had already taken the boat, the motors, and the guns and stuff, and were
31 heading for Cambodia.

1 RV: Tell me about when you would actually go into a village. How would you
2 conduct yourselves and how would you search for weapons and rice and et cetera?

3 MB: It was kind of cut and dry. Ordinarily, unless they were superior to you,
4 they'd vacate. You'd go into a village and obviously there'd be either kids playing or no
5 kids playing; adult males or no adult males, that would strike you immediately. But a lot
6 of these villages that's what happened. They might have an uncle in the Viet Cong or in
7 NVA or whatever. It's hard to describe. It's just something that you feel and you look
8 for. You go in and you surround the thing if you can, first of all. Then you get in and
9 start looking then if it's a bad place you destroy it.

10 RV: How would the villagers react to you being there?

11 MB: Most of the time, they were happy to see you because you were going to go
12 in and they have stuff for sale. They have fresh fruit, pickled eggs or baluts or whatever,
13 they used to have these little pieces of ham, spiced ham, they'd wrap up it in a banana
14 leaf. We used to buy those just to supplement your diet. Most of the time, you were well
15 received. Either feigned or sincere, it didn't matter because once we moved in, we took
16 over. We never usually stayed in the village for long. It was already set up that the
17 intelligence people would know, in advance usually, who to talk to. They might take
18 everybody into the center of the village and talk to everybody just so they don't blow the
19 cover to the guy they want to talk to. It all depends on if it was a definitely hostile village
20 you were going into. But mainly you are out looking for not stuff that's identified.
21 They've got little mini-villages that they build under the canopy that you can't see.
22 That's what you chance on and hope to run in to.

23 RV: How much of a problem were booby traps?

24 MB: Well, I stepped on a booby trap. I stepped on a mine in '65.

25 RV: Did you really?

26 MB: But it was my fault because I was out in front where I shouldn't have been.
27 I should've been back where I belong. I stepped on a toe popper, scared the hell out of
28 me, scared the hell out of the people behind me. We didn't know how many were
29 around, so everybody took immediate action, but luckily I had those steel inserts in my
30 boot. So all I got was rocks and mud blown up in my face and my crotch, knocked me on
31 the ground.

1 RV: This was during this tour?

2 MB: During the tour, second tour, yeah.

3 RV: What kind of weapons did you carry?

4 MB: This time, we had M-16s.

5 RV: This was the first module M-16, right?

6 MB: Yeah, AR-15s or whatever.

7 RV: Did you have problems with the jamming?

8 MB: Not really. Actually, probably, most of the guys put their M-16s in the arms

9 room and got and M-1.

10 RV: Oh, really?

11 MB: Yeah.

12 RV: More reliable?

13 MB: Well, at long distance. Again, you got anywhere from one to two

14 companies. You could have up to 150, 200 men on one operation, depending on how

15 important it was and what you had to do. Or you'd have four Americans running two

16 companies and then get a pincer going or a hammer and anvil or whatever. It depends on

17 whatever you wanted to accomplish. A lot of guys, one guy liked the BAR (Browning

18 automatic rifle), had excellent knockdown power, excellent distance, you know you could

19 fire forever. Other people wanted the M-16 for close in. People carried shotguns or a

20 combination. M-79, we had the M-79 grenade launcher at that time, and that was really

21 helpful.

22 RV: What was your favorite weapon?

23 MB: I liked the 105 howitzer myself. If I could get in with the howitzer, I felt

24 better about it.

25 RV: What was your favorite personal weapon?

26 MB: I carried an M-16. It was enough if you were a halfway decent shot and if

27 he was that far off, he wasn't bothering me any. You had the choice of automatic and

28 semi-automatic. Ammo is light; you can carry a lot of it. Of course, I carried medical

29 stuff, grenades and smoke and stuff like that. They can get pretty heavy.

30 RV: Were there any weapons that you did not have that you wish you did have?

1 MB: Not really that I can think of. At that time, we were pretty well armed
2 because, like I say, the M-79 grenade launcher was really, really nice because it covered
3 the distance between you throwing a hand grenade and dropping an 81 mortar round out.
4 One of the guys on the team, old Rudy Cooper, he took a picture when the CIDG
5 (Civilian Irregular Defense Group), the companies, had 60mm mortars. Each man would
6 carry two rounds. Well, Cooper was a camera fanatic. What they'd do, being the Delta
7 and all, the ground is really wet, soggy, they'd get a piece of bamboo log and they'd set
8 that down, the flat side down. Then they'd set the small base plate on the M-60, they'd
9 set that on the bamboo, but they'd still have the bi-pod legs for stability and getting the
10 right aim. Well, Cooper was taking his picture and they fired around and he caught the
11 mortar about a foot off the ground where the projectile had left, but the recoil was enough
12 to bounce off of that banana log and bounce the thing up in the air. That was really
13 effective, that was really good. That 60mm mortar was a godsend. The troops carried
14 two or three rounds each in addition to their personal armor.

15 RV: Tell me about the enemy now in 1965. What was your general impression
16 of the Viet Cong and NVA?

17 MB: More organized, better equipped, more numbers. They weren't afraid to
18 move in numbers. They were, what we learned later, was the sanctuary right there at the
19 Fishhook. We were sixteen klicks due south of the Fishhook. Like I say, better
20 equipped, better trained, more politically, I guess, motivated. They hit one of our
21 outposts within 150 yards of camp, killed all of the CIDG and got away clean, brassy.
22 There was a small village up the canal and up the river from us that had a Vietnamese
23 priest up there, Brother Louis. He had a church and a little village built around it, the
24 local Catholics and all. They raided his place several times. A lot more brassy. They
25 didn't realize, I don't think at first, how bad a detriment we were going to be because we
26 covered that area pretty well and we had good intel nets and a lot of agents and a lot of
27 people that just got fed up with the bad folks that came across. We had some pretty good
28 information and we were actually just south of where the district chief lived. So he was
29 secure, so he could do things to get out and get things done and get some information.
30 We had a pretty good intel net. We could move. They gave us more airboats. We had
31 more engineer patrol boats. Eventually the Navy sent down some riverine brown-water

1 Navy folks. They would use the big canals or the La Grange Canal and the Song Vam
2 Co Tay River. It was easy for them to navigate there. But we used the airboats and the
3 estuaries and the smaller streams. Actually, they worked on wet ground, on the rice
4 paddies and all.

5 RV: Let's take a break just for a moment. I need to change this disc out.

6 MB: Sure.

7 RV: Okay, how frustrating was it for you to have the sanctuaries right there, for
8 them to be able to run right into Cambodia and you could not really chase them?

9 MB: Well, we did chase them. But we didn't chase them in force. They tried to
10 draw us a few times, but we didn't know the extent of a sanctuary it was. How much
11 they had sandbagged back there; all the supplies and the armament and the trails and the
12 stuff that were—I think '65 and '66 is actually when we started sending some round eyes
13 across the border and finding this stuff out. They had agent reports and stuff like that. I
14 mean, really, the extent that these folks had taken over in Cambodia. It didn't bother us
15 because we had probes. We were so strong and confident. Again, we had five
16 companies, I think, in this camp. In this camp, we had four-deuce mortars instead of the
17 81. We did have 81s also, but the four-deuce could punch out a round a lot further.
18 Within the villages, the screen of our mortars, we could at least get illumination and HE
19 (high explosive) within minutes of learning that they were under attack or there was
20 something going on. Each man was cross-trained at firing the mortar, aiming the mortar.
21 Cutting charges, setting fuses and stuff like that. Whoever was in the camp, that was a
22 secondary mission that supported the villages in and around us. We could offset that
23 four-deuce mortar and move it down to the district chief's house and add another say,
24 three or five klicks to the range, which Charlie didn't expect and it helped out. Plus, we
25 improvised. I think they were firing the 60-mm mortar from the engineer patrol boats,
26 getting a layer of sand bags. So they could go a mile and be firing. Or go the mile, take
27 it off, and go into the bush and fire it. Artillery support, even if it was only a 60-mm
28 mortar. Of course we had, again, that M-79 grenade launcher. We used that for recon by
29 fire on the canals. Like I say, that was what really perturbed me was the fact they could
30 give grazing fire at waterline level. That was disturbing, especially when you were
31 driving the boat.

1 RV: How did you counter that?

2 MB: You just surrounded yourself with good people. (Laughing) The airboats,
3 you had the directional, was the, if I remember correctly the left hand was the accelerator.
4 It was kind of like the old-fashioned emergency break. I think the right handle was for
5 steering. They had foot controls like in an airplane for the main flap in the back. You
6 could be clipping along a healthy pace, and those things, you could hit a berm and go
7 airborne for about fifty feet.

8 RV: Oh, yeah?

9 MB: Yeah.

10 RV: What was the top of speed?

11 MB: Well, let me tell you. You know what an L-19 Bird Dog is?

12 RV: Yes, sir.

13 MB: Okay, that was an L-19 Bird Dog engine on this small boat.

14 RV: Wow. Okay.

15 MB: The L-19 was so damn over-powered, it killed people.

16 RV: So quite fast?

17 MB: Yeah, it would move.

18 RV: How big was the boat?

19 MB: The boat was, I think, I'm going to say sixteen foot, but it might have been
20 eighteen. We had twin 30s mounted on the front of most of them. I forget how many
21 indig we had, but we had probably at least a fire team, probably maybe even a squad.

22 RV: During this time in '65, this is when the Americans actually started coming
23 en masse to Vietnam. Did you sense a change of in the population itself in Vietnam or
24 did you sense a change in the pace of the war?

25 MB: Yeah, because we started paying attention to them, what they were doing. I
26 went in for a food run into Saigon and the 82nd Aviation detachment, I think, was just
27 arriving. Seeing a bunch of guy in starched fatigues and stuff, I mean really starched
28 fatigues, not spray starched. Seeing a bunch of Americans and then hearing what they
29 were going to be doing, you know, that changed things. Of course, by where we were
30 you'd have an American unit, possibly. I think the 9th Division came through one time;
31 elements of the 9th Division came through. We started paying more attention to what

1 Americans were doing in the war than what we were doing in the war. Then, of course,
2 everything got expensive downtown. If you went into Saigon, the hotels went up and the
3 price of money went down, or money exchange. We were glad to see them. Especially
4 the aviation units because that's where our bread and butter was.

5 RV: Sir, why don't we go head and take a break for today?

6 MB: Sounds good.

7 RV: Okay, thank you.

Interview with Martin Brady
Session 2 of 3
July 9, 2003

1 RV: This is Dr. Richard Verrone. I'm continuing my oral history interview with
2 Mr. Martin Brady. Mr. Brady is in Garland, Texas. I am still in Lubbock, Texas, and
3 today is July 9, 2003. It's about 1:15 PM Central Standard Time. Mr. Brady, we left off,
4 we were in your second tour. Before we started recording here today, we were discussing
5 some time changes from our last interview. Do you want to go ahead and mention those?

6 MB: The one change was that when we returned from the TDY mission, we
7 returned in December of '63. We got back to work, I guess, in January of '64. I think I
8 mentioned that we went on some flyaways teaching the reserves. That wasn't completely
9 correct. We actually went on that mission to Ford Devens. Then when we returned from
10 that we trained for, it was either the Mercury Project or Apollo, one of the astronaut
11 programs where we would go in and secure the return vehicle until they could be
12 evacuated. Then we went into serious mission training for the PCS movement in
13 December of '64. That was the only thing I wanted to update.

14 RV: Okay, very good. Let's pick up with that second tour. You had discussed
15 some of your activities there building the Special Forces camp, running some ops, search
16 and destroy, interdiction, et cetera. When you think back at that second tour how do you
17 see Vietnam changing? Did you see changes from the first time you were over there, the
18 year previous? Could you tell the war was increasing in pace? Again, you're there
19 before the major build-up and then when the major build-up begins in '65. What did you
20 witness?

21 MB: Basically, when we got there, the people don't change and the terrain is
22 pretty much the same. When we went over in '63 we lived in a tent city up in the main
23 headquarters, which was then a C Team. When we got back in '64, they had improved it
24 a lot. They were getting ready for the PCS people. They were already starting on
25 permanent buildings then. There was more Americans there, more business going on. I
26 think by then they had some type of AFRTS (Armed Forces Radio and Television
27 Service), the radio was going, I think. I think it was going at that time. There was more

1 interest it seemed in the war, more news coverage, more media coverage. That was a
2 change.

3 RV: Did you see a change in the enemy, when you would go out on these
4 operations?

5 MB: Yeah. They were in larger numbers. We knew that they had been building
6 up on the other side of the border and had caches there. They used it as a sanctuary and
7 they'd come fight us and then run back knowing we couldn't aggressively pursue them.

8 RV: How much did that frustrate you?

9 MB: It did in ways and then it didn't because we knew what to expect.
10 Tomorrow is another day. We caught them with their pants down a couple of times and
11 surprised him a few times. Kind of made up for the times he surprised us.

12 RV: When you think back to that second tour, what memorable incidents come to
13 mind? What do you see in your mind's eye?

14 MB: After the camp was built we really aggressively patrolled the whole area
15 there. The reports we were sending in and the agent reports we got from our intel man.
16 They started paying a little more attention to the area. They started talking about putting
17 other camps closer and making max use of the set up that we had. Of course, they
18 increased the number of airboats that we got because we used them pretty well. Things
19 of that nature. They bolstered things. We got a civil affairs augmentation to work with
20 the people around there. I think I did mention that around that camp was a lot of Hoa
21 Hao and Cao Dai, those religious sects. That played in with I think, initially when we
22 went there that they didn't really know how to take us and they weren't as cooperative as
23 they turned out to be. We got both sects into the strike force, we recruited them. That
24 runs all the way over into Tay Ninh Province.

25 RV: How did you recruit them?

26 MB: More or less, they needed, they wanted the money. We're paying halfway
27 decent wage for people that didn't have much else other than fishing and farming to make
28 any money. To do that, they needed to travel by boat and go long distances to the district
29 headquarters or province headquarters or move on up to Muc Hoa. Then they ended up
30 paying the Viet Cong tax or whatever. They were getting hosed either way, I guess.

1 RV: Did you sense amongst these two groups, I guess, an increased fierceness or
2 an increased independence from the regular Vietnamese civilians? Based on their history
3 of kind of resisting colonization and then resisting the Viet Cong.

4 MB: Yeah, that and they were pretty feisty as a group anyway. I think the leader
5 of one sect had been assassinated by the communists. One of the leaders was
6 assassinated either by the NVA or the VC or whatever. That kind of helped out the
7 recruiting. It seemed that the people we faced there had better knowledge of tactics.
8 They made better uses of mission support sights and that type of thing. Of course, the
9 weapons were better and probably they had more ammunition than we usually ran into.

10 RV: During this tour, did you get to take any R&R?

11 MB: It was offered. Actually then, I don't think they actually had any R&R out
12 of country. But they started something then on that tour. It was the individual
13 replacements. They didn't send teams anymore they started sending people—no, that
14 came later. Okay. The thing that they started there was if you were in a hot camp they'd
15 try to get you out of the hot camp after six months. They'd send you to a camp that
16 might be less hot or at least it was a change of scenery anyway.

17 RV: They would send you individually or as a unit?

18 MB: Individually.

19 RV: Did that disrupt the unit cohesiveness?

20 MB: I thought it did and I argued against it and I talked the team leader into
21 letting me stay my full year there because I knew the terrain. I knew all the paths and the
22 canals and whatever, and I knew the troops. I thought that was an advantage. The fellow
23 that I was going to be swapped with—a medic up in one of the other camps up by the
24 Seven Mountains, I think—he had a good program going, so he didn't want to leave his
25 place either. He had a really good MEDCAP. I think the guy either got killed or
26 captured later on. It was up, I believe, in the Seven Mountains area. That happened, he
27 didn't want to leave and I wanted didn't want to leave. So they said, "Okay, we'll just
28 leave you where you're at." The PCS move later on, I got that confused with the just the
29 individual rotation. Later on, they did get R&Rs, regularly scheduled R&Rs, to Thailand
30 or Australia. If you extended you could go to Hawaii and this and that.

1 RV: What is your opinion of the one-year tour? Do you think that the United
2 States military or the government should have kind of treated the Vietnam War like they
3 did previous wars where you would serve the duration of the conflict or did you think the
4 one year tour was appropriate?

5 MB: I felt a year tour for my way of looking at it was long enough. There were
6 people there that just stayed over there. I spent all four tours on an A Team. That's
7 basically twelve Americans and whatever little people you need for that given area. I
8 think after a year, you're due for a change. I never really thought about it much until just
9 in the last few years. It just seemed like when you left, you'd be back in six months or a
10 year anyway. You got that chance to cool off and regroup and get your head straight
11 again and go back.

12 RV: How hard was it for you to transition after that year and go back; and then
13 your subsequent tours? How difficult was it to kind of go back stateside, regroup as you
14 said?

15 MB: I don't know whether to tell you now or tell you later. There was one
16 incident that—well, I was out on a recon mission in '67.

17 RV: This is the tour following?

18 MB: Yeah. I get a call on the phone, everything was code names and numbers
19 and CAC (command and control) codes and that kind of thing. They CAC'ed up the
20 thing and said, "Okay, the 1-0 is the team leader, the 1-1 is the second in charge, and 1-2
21 is the radio man. Just the opposite, 0-1 is the little people team leader," and this kind of
22 thing. So he said, "Okay, we want your 1-1 extracted, send him back to camp." I was the
23 1-1 at the time and I told the team leader, I says, "That's me." I said, "There's only one
24 thing they'd want me back for and that's a death in the family." I said, "Well, it's too late
25 now anyway. If they're dead, there's nothing I can do. So just tell them, no. I ain't
26 going out. It'll give away you guys' position and just be a bad situation all around." The
27 headquarters insisted that the 1-1 get out. So then they verified that it was me and they
28 got me out. I went from a bomb crater across the border to New Jersey within thirty
29 hours. I got hot orders to get him back to the States. I get there and went to the funeral.
30 My mom had died. Went to the funeral, got back, and my niece, who was then I guess
31 about fifteen or sixteen years old asked me if I wanted to see her bathing suit that she was

1 going to wear spring break and whatever. I said, "Sure." I thought she was going to
2 bring this suit out. Well, she come out in the thing. There's this voluptuous teenager.
3 This kid is beyond her age. I said, "Holy Annie." Going from a bomb crater in Laos and
4 then back to the States and then all of a sudden, boom! There's this kid. Then the next
5 week, I'm gone again, going right back. It's a hell of a transition. Once you've been
6 there and returned it's common, it doesn't require that much—because like I say, you get
7 this attitude that you're going to be back in six months to a year anyway. That war is
8 never going to end. It used to be a fun saying, "What are they going to do? Send me to
9 Vietnam? Bend my dog tags?" Because you knew you were going back, the war is
10 going to last forever. Some guys couldn't adjust, they couldn't transition. Some of them
11 probably never should have went back to the States they should've just stayed over there.

12 RV: Let me ask you this about Special Forces in general. Some of my
13 discussions with Special Forces men, they've talked about sometimes an overt,
14 sometimes under the table rivalry between Special Forces Army and other branches, say
15 the Marine Corps and other branches. Did you see any of that?

16 MB: Not really. There's always some rivalry. Everybody at the Department of
17 Defense had set the rules. "Special Forces: you got this mission. Anything twelve miles
18 behind the beach forever after is yours. SEAL UDT (U.S. Navy sea-air-land underwater
19 demolition team) you guys got between fifty leagues out at sea to the first mile-and-a-half
20 of beach. Then the Marines, force recon, you got it from there to there or whatever."
21 The terrain was kind of cut and dry. But it was good-natured. It wasn't any serious
22 rivalry or anything at all. But even within Special Forces we had the same thing. Recon
23 people were the crème de la crème. They looked down on the REMF (rear-echelon
24 motherfucker), the rear echelon people. Even the A Team people. Nothing really serious
25 that I can remember now.

26 RV: Anything since Vietnam that has come up in that sense?

27 MB: One thing was the units started training together more. We went to the
28 SPECWARX (special warfare) in the Philippines. That was the Air Force, Navy SEALs,
29 Army Special Forces. We even had the Filipino UDT people there.

30 RV: When was this?

1 MB: That was, I think in '76. That was at Subic Bay. We trained with the Force
2 Recon people in Cuba, went down to Guantanamo with them, and SUBOPS (submarine
3 operations) with them. We got along pretty well.

4 RV: You returned the States after this tour in December 1965. Were you in time
5 for Christmas?

6 MB: Yes.

7 RV: What was that like?

8 MB: It was after the assassination and the first tour. The second tour, it was a
9 little more, I think that's the full Christmas—we had the full Christmas at home instead
10 of halfway there. For a family my size you couldn't help but have a joyous Christmas, no
11 matter what kind of mood you were in.

12 RV: Was it difficult for you to transition back after this full year in Vietnam?

13 MB: No, not really. I didn't sense any change in me that much. The family
14 might have but they never talked about it or they didn't talk in front of me that way.

15 RV: How much did you discuss what happened in Vietnam when you came
16 back?

17 MB: Certain things. Then too, it wasn't really that widespread. They knew what
18 was going on and they knew that I had been there before. They didn't really pursue
19 anything. If I wanted to talk about something, they'd just go along with it. If I
20 volunteered anything they might want me to expand on it or something, but no problems.

21 RV: Were you volunteering information?

22 MB: At times, we'd bring back a memory. Especially my brother because I used
23 to go out hunting with him and we'd talk. He was in the Navy and he knew basically the
24 GI way. He never pushed, never made me uncomfortable anyway.

25 RV: Right. When you returned from leave, where did you go?

26 MB: I went back to the 5th. Basically, I was with the same detachment, although
27 the natural transition of people moving on to another assignment and all.

28 RV: This is in Fort Bragg?

29 MB: Yes. I went back to the same company. I got transferred to another team.
30 My team was kind of just sitting on their hands after the Christmas/New Year break. I
31 heard about this thing going on up to Fort Devens, the aggressors against the 5th

1 Mechanized Division or 2nd Battalion of that division. It wasn't my detachment, it was
2 another. They were interviewing people to see who they wanted to pick so I went over
3 and I got interviewed and I got picked. We went up there to aggress against the 5th Mech.

4 RV: How did you do?

5 MB: We did well. Went up twice actually. The first time we went up and we
6 gave them classes and they gave us some people to act as guerillas and we trained them
7 and told them what we wanted them to do. It was a very good trip. As I said, Major
8 Hope was an old Germany buddy of my team sergeant. He's the one that requested the A
9 Team to go up and be the target for his people. He knew that we enjoyed it and we did
10 our best to confuse and do whatever we needed to do to win.

11 RV: How much did you use the tactics of the Viet Cong and NVA that you had
12 witnessed over in Vietnam?

13 MB: Oh, yeah. We did a lot of things. One thing is how we won the war. I told
14 you about that. We got one of our indig then to go in, double agent, just to go into the
15 thing there raising hell about the troops cutting down his trees and stealing his rabbits or
16 something. He finally got in to see Major Hope, opened his coat said, "You've just been
17 blown up."

18 RV: Nobody had searched him or thought of searching?

19 MB: No. They were too interested in the fact that he was raising enough cane
20 there to make them a little humble or back them off a little bit. Plus, these are all
21 Americans. It's not like a little man coming up or little people coming up and raising
22 hell.

23 RV: How long did this last? You said you went up twice.

24 MB: Yeah. We went up the first time and then actually went on to the field
25 problem the second time. I guess this is in February or March, somewhere around there.
26 The first part was at Fort Devens. Then actually the field portion took part in the White
27 Mountains in New Hampshire. That's when we aggressed against them.

28 RV: When did you get back down to Bragg?

29 MB: Just before spring starts.

30 RV: When you got back to Bragg did you know you were going back over
31 eventually to Vietnam or did you have an opportunity to do something different?

1 MB: Everybody knew that the group would be going. But before that, a lot of us
2 single guys all volunteered to go on another TDY team. I volunteered and I went over to
3 B Company. I was in Charlie Company and I went over to B Company and got assigned
4 to a team that was a go-team. They already had two medics. So the team sergeant told
5 me, he said, "Hey look, I got to stick with the man I got." We were both E-6s. I out-
6 ranked the guy. He says, "This guy's part of the team already. When the team started he
7 was part of it." He says, "All we can do is keep you as a back-up." So, the sergeant
8 major in Charlie Company had told us, "Hey, if you don't like what's going on over
9 there, you always got a home back here in Charlie Company. So you just let me know
10 and we'll get you back." So, that's what happened. I went ahead and I told him, I said,
11 "Hey look, if you need me, fine. Just let me know. But I'm not going to here as a fifth
12 wheel or a wallflower waiting when I could be over there doing something that's going to
13 help me and my team when we go." So, I went back to Charlie Company. It's another
14 quirk of fate that the guy I out-ranked and almost replaced got killed over there. He was
15 putting out claymores in a rainstorm and a lightning bolt lit them all off and killed him
16 and some indig.

17 RV: So, you went back to Charlie Company and you had not gone anywhere,
18 you're still at Bragg? You were transitioned back.

19 MB: Yeah.

20 RV: Was Charlie Company going to receive orders to go back to Vietnam?

21 MB: I think then it was pretty well known that Charlie Company was going to go
22 back and it would be as a stair-step-type thing. One B Team would leave, and then
23 another B Team, and then all the A Teams under that B Team would leave. They figured
24 we'd all be leaving around December. We started pre-mission training.

25 RV: How much did your training change based on your experience over there?

26 MB: I think we did a lot more weapons training. A variety of weapons, a little
27 more crew-served weapons, we intensified that. Every man on the team was pretty well
28 versed in the 81. I guess we did do 4.2, four-deuce training. Everybody on the team got
29 a pretty good handle on crew-served weapons. Patrolling, land navigation, survival,
30 escape and evasion. It was all pretty well covered. Yeah, the things we learned on that

1 TDY tour—not only us, but guys that were in different other parts of the country would
2 kick in some stuff. We had some pretty good training.

3 RV: Did it bother you that you were going back into a war zone at all?

4 MB: No, no. This is the way things were. That's what you're trained for and
5 that's what you knew what was coming anyway.

6 RV: Had your opinion of the war changed any at all? Had it evolved any?

7 MB: Not really. I never really felt one way or another. It wasn't our job to make
8 excuses for it or to try to defend it or whatever. It was our job, the government had made
9 the decision that these folks were wrong and we just did our best to minimize it. I didn't
10 have pangs of conscience or anything. I didn't feel bad about it.

11 RV: When did you actually go back? Was it December?

12 MB: December of '64.

13 RV: We're in '66.

14 MB: Oh, I mean. Okay, '64. We went back—in the interim, in '66 I went to the
15 7th Group after I had my time off coming back in '65. We went back to the 7th Special
16 Forces Group. This is where we talked about the last time when we went down to
17 Mississippi.

18 RV: Oh, okay. This is when you went around doing different training missions?

19 MB: Yeah, yeah.

20 RV: Okay. This is, I guess, the fall of 1966?

21 MB: Yeah. They needed a medic to go to Okinawa. You had to have a PCS
22 already, a year's trip already finished. There was some other things that you needed to
23 qualify. There was only two, three guys that raised their hand. My sergeant major, his
24 nickname was Leather Lungs. So when he saw my hand, he yelled my name and I was
25 the only thing anybody else heard. So, I got the assignment.

26 RV: So, you went to Okinawa?

27 MB: Yeah.

28 RV: When was this?

29 MB: In December of '66.

30 RV: How long were you over there?

31 MB: I stayed over there, I didn't come back from Oki until '72.

1 RV: That's where you went in and out of country from there?

2 MB: Yeah.

3 RV: When you arrived in Okinawa, what was your assignment? What were you

4 going to do?

5 MB: I got to B Company. You see, each company had a primary area of interest.

6 They had at least one problem every year, one field problem every year. B Company had

7 Taiwan, so they were getting ready to go to Taiwan and work with the Chinese Special

8 Forces, the ROC (Republic of China) Special Forces. So, I got there in time for

9 Christmas and New Years then we started training for Taiwan. I think we were down

10 there for three or four months, something like that.

11 RV: You trained the ROK troops?

12 MB: Yeah, trained with the Chinese Special Forces.

13 RV: You mean the Korean?

14 MB: No, R-O-C.

15 RV: Oh, the ROC. Republic of Korea?

16 MB: Republic of China.

17 RV: The Taiwanese?

18 MB: Yeah. Actually, when you say Taiwanese—we did actually go down and

19 train some, they call them aborigines, but they're really Taiwanese people. Not the

20 people that came over from mainland.

21 RV: Right. What kind of training did you conduct with them?

22 MB: Pretty much the same. Anti-guerilla, that type of thing. They had a lot of

23 troops over in Quemoy and Matsu in the Pescadores, I think that's what they're called.

24 For them to get R&R, they'd give them to us.

25 RV: Oh, really?

26 MB: Yes. We had a good bunch of people. It was hard times out there on the

27 islands, being that close to China. They were bombarding them and stuff. We used them

28 as the guerilla force with the Chinese Special Forces.

29 RV: How long did you train them?

1 MB: It was more training for us, I guess, than it was for them because they
2 already belonged to an infantry outfit. That's all they did on Quemoy and Matsu was
3 train. They had a lot of amphibious training for that type of thing.

4 RV: When you finished training them, where did you go? Did you go back to
5 Okinawa?

6 MB: Back to Oki. I think then we started mission training for ourselves again.
7 Our team had been chosen to go TDY and we ended up leaving, I think, in June of '67.

8 RV: Where did you go in June '67?

9 MB: We went to FOB 2 (forward operating base) in Kontum. There was three
10 FOBs. FOB 1 was up north; FOB 2 was in Kontum; and FOB-3 was in, I think, in Ban
11 Me Thuot or somewhere south of there.

12 RV: What'd you do? Did you set up camp there?

13 MB: Well, actually, they sent four teams over; one went north and three went to
14 the Kontum area. We were training, what they called then, Hatchet Forces. They were
15 exploitation forces. When the recon teams would find something lucrative they weighed
16 the situation and decided whether they bring in there and destroy it or send in exploitation
17 force and occupy the portion of the terrain and evacuate the stuff or whatever. They had
18 always had these exploitation forces but they never had them, I don't think, at company-
19 size units. That's what they wanted us to do was to train these company-size units in
20 tactics as an exploitation/hatchet force.

21 RV: These are indigenous forces?

22 MB: Yeah. Yards, Montagnards. In the interim, while we were doing this, there
23 was kinds of echelons of training. We had two teams in the main camp. We had one
24 team about six miles up the road at the Yard camp and they were by themselves. Well,
25 the two teams we had inside of the compound that FOB 2, the first team took over and
26 they had actually had people recruited for them. They actually had weapons. They
27 actually had clothing and everything where they could just start training right off. My
28 team, we were next on the list. After these people were all armed and clothed and broken
29 in, then we'd get the priority. In the interim we would go with the recon teams and
30 supplement Americans on these recon teams. That's how we filled the time waiting to
31 get our recruits and get started on training our Hatchet Force. Even after we got started

1 training, we still gave support to the recon. They call them spike teams, or RTs
2 (reconnaissance team) or STs (spike teams). One was a six-man team with two
3 Americans. The other was a nine-man team with three Americans.

4 RV: What sort of things would you do?

5 MB: That's strictly recon. Recon, Bright Light, body recovery, bomb damage
6 assessment. Mostly it's just snoop and poop, or specialized things: wire tapping, booby
7 trapping. Most of it was just snoop and poop, go over and find out what's going on.

8 RV: You were serving as the medic for this team, is that correct?

9 MB: Actually, we were just recon people. It didn't matter what MOS (military
10 occupational specialty) you were. You didn't function, you were always a medic no
11 matter what you're doing. They wanted us for reconnaissance. They didn't care what
12 MOSs.

13 RV: How comfortable did you feel doing this? This is your third time in-
14 country.

15 MB: I knew that this stuff was going on. I had talked to folks that had been on—
16 this shady business started in '65. The scuttlebutt, the rumor control would talk about
17 things. We knew what was going on but we didn't know what was going on to the extent
18 that it was when we got over there. There was a lot of things happen between '65 and
19 '67.

20 RV: Why do you think things changed so drastically?

21 MB: Well, they got the nod from the government. They actually started getting
22 people. I mean a big operation going. They had a lot of assets, air assets, that type of
23 thing to support them. Word spread fast and they got a lot of new people.

24 RV: Can you describe some of these operations? You said you did wire tapping,
25 bomb damage assessment.

26 MB: We didn't necessarily do it but it was being done. It was one of the
27 missions. You might be called on to go in for prisoner snatch. You'd practice and
28 practice and you'd go over and you'd try to snatch somebody and bring them back whole.

29 RV: Would the Americans do the snatching or would the indigenous do the
30 snatching?

1 MB: That depends. I've heard stories of guys going out and one big American
2 just went down and punched the guy in the nose and dragged him off. (Laughing) The
3 guy was so horrified to see this huge American come out. It's a team effort. You could
4 stun them, shoot them, wound them. You could go in after a bomb, an Arc Light or a
5 bombing mission while they're still stunned. Or just the old brute force: just jump up and
6 knock them down and get the cuffs on them and drag them back and find an LZ (landing
7 zone) and get out.

8 RV: Who would do the planning for this?

9 MB: The 1-0 is the main man. He's in charge of everything. Usually, the 1-0
10 and the 1-1 are solid. They stay with each other. The indig, it's just like a fist, each one
11 is a finger. They train together. The strategy when they're training, they hear or read
12 reports of things that worked, people that did it before and how they did it and the
13 planning that went into it and the fact that it worked. "We'll try it but we'll change this."
14 Instead of, "I'll use a silenced pistol and I'll shoot them in the thigh. If he starts yelling
15 or shooting then we'll have to do him in and look for another at another time." There's
16 people that went in with the crossbows, longbows. Several different devices, blowguns,
17 different concepts. They'd make it interesting to come back with a prisoner. There was
18 rewards for it. You got maybe a choice R&R. Go over to Taipei for a weekend or a
19 week or something like that. They made it interesting. Of course, there was an old
20 feather in their cap to be successful, you got bragging rights. Any kinds of numbers of
21 specialized operations. Especially the guys that were really good, that's the ones that got
22 the tapping cables and things like that. Of course, the guys that spent the most time on
23 the ground without getting caught were idolized and a lot of times you just didn't have a
24 choice. You were compromised and you just got to get out.

25 RV: What memorable incidents come to mind when you think about that time?

26 MB: The one I mentioned there, just getting out of a bomb crater. The guy I
27 replaced, he's kind of a hard-luck dude. He got shot on his first time out with the 1-0.
28 Then the second time, he got stepped on by an elephant. Actually, an elephant stepped
29 on his foot and broke his foot. That's when I took his place to go and then I got
30 evacuated out because my mom had passed away.

31 RV: Had you been expecting that? Was she sick?

1 MB: No, it was out of the clear blue sky. I never expected anything like that.
2 RV: How did you deal with that and then go back into Vietnam?
3 MB: It's natural. You lose your mom. You don't expect it and they're going to
4 live forever. I think I'd gotten a couple of letters about a month before saying how things
5 were back home and everything was going good. It was a shock, but my concern then
6 was with the team. Once they told me that I had to get out, the only place where they
7 could find was this bomb crater where they could get a Huey close enough on the
8 hillside. The fellow, the 1-0, actually boosted me up on his shoulders to get up and get a
9 hold of the skid. The 1-0 that I replaced, he was a hard-luck kid, too, because he went
10 back in with the same 1-0 and got killed. The 1-0 got the Medal of Honor and the other
11 guy got killed.

12 RV: You said you were in Laos?

13 MB: Yes.

14 RV: What were you doing? Were you running operations into Laos or were you
15 operating—?

16 MB: We were in Laos.

17 RV: Okay. You had your camp set up in Laos?

18 MB: No, no, no. We'd just fly over in the helicopter and get dropped off and
19 snoop and poop for a while, then come back out.

20 RV: What'd they tell you about the Pathet Lao? The indigenous communist
21 force in Laos.

22 MB: We were really didn't get involved because everywhere we went, it was all
23 NVA, they were all Vietnamese. The Pathet Lao stayed away from them. Anywhere the
24 NVA, were you wouldn't find any Pathet Lao.

25 RV: Why is that?

26 MB: The NVA didn't want them there, first of all. The Pathet Lao, more or less
27 are in their centers of population. They're not out worried about what's going on out in
28 the jungle, five to fifteen klicks inside of the border.

29 RV: Did they have a reputation, the Pathet Lao, being poor fighters, poorly
30 organized?

1 MB: From what I understand, they were. Some people are just motivated and
2 some people were motivated by our people for one reason or another; either reward or
3 vengeance or whatever; they fought well. But as a whole, the straight-leg infantry that
4 the Laotians had was not well trained to begin with and not well prepared to fight.

5 RV: How would you differentiate between the terrain in Laos and the terrain in
6 Vietnam? Was it basically the same to you?

7 MB: To me, basically the same because you have to understand except for bomb
8 damage, these places are pristine. They're really, really untouched. If you want to cross
9 a stream you don't have to worry about broken glass or old cans. Even the recon teams
10 policed up everything. They didn't leave anything; or the ones that did paid for it. Some
11 people, they just wouldn't have a bowel movement for five or six days.

12 RV: In order to keep the place clean or not to give away your position?

13 MB: Give away your position. The Americans have a distinct smell. They eat a
14 lot of red meat and drink a lot of beer, a lot of spice and garlic and that type of thing.
15 People can pick that up. Of course, if you use soap and deodorants and that kind of crap,
16 it's another hallmark.

17 RV: Right. How long would the operations in Laos usually last?

18 MB: Anywhere from, they don't even get off the aircraft to five days or if you
19 know, if you get stuck in by weather or something like that, it might last longer. I think,
20 more or less, you prepared for about five-days' stay.

21 RV: Was there any discussion about whether or not, "Here's what you do if you
22 get captured." You're in Laos. You're in a supposed neutral country where the United
23 States publicly said it would not be. Did they talk about this overall political thing at all?

24 MB: No. Chances of you being captured alive were not good. If you were
25 captured alive, it's the old, "Don't tell them anything until they put your nuts in a vice.
26 Don't tell them anything or lie like a son-of-a-gun. After twenty-four hours tell them
27 anything you want because it won't matter." You didn't anticipate anything like that I
28 don't think. You're prepared for it, but you never anticipate it; everybody's invulnerable.

29 RV: Was it more difficult operating in Laos or was it basically the same as
30 operating in Vietnam?

1 MB: Yes, because you had no friendlies. You were completely at the whim of
2 these folks.

3 RV: What about the royal Laos government forces?

4 MB: They never entered it into the equation because the NVA wouldn't let them
5 near them. They might take some Laotians and use them as trappers or trail watchers or
6 something like that. No, they controlled everything there. They owned it.

7 RV: I was talking about the actual friendlies to the United States who operated
8 near Vientiane. They weren't really actually in control or really active in Eastern Laos in
9 general?

10 MB: No.

11 RV: How about any of the Montagnard, the Hmong tribes people? Did you work
12 with them at all?

13 MB: No. Our people did, but we never used any that I know of. They might
14 have on specific occasions. If it was a Laotian tracker or trail watcher or whatever then
15 he might be the one you want to bring back as a snatch. They reinsert them fellows. I
16 think on one occasion they gave us one guy that—I can't remember if he was a snatch
17 victim or whatever, but he was going to be our guide. They sent the American, his
18 controller, in with us and they stayed for a couple of hours and left. They went back.
19 Whatever asset you can get. If you had somebody that's been on the ground in a certain
20 area and you're going back in there you'd definitely want to shrink their head and see
21 what they used, what they found. That kind of information is invaluable.

22 RV: How was your intelligence for these operations?

23 MB: Pretty good, I guess, as much as they could. The assets that the people in
24 Saigon had were tremendous. They'd have a file on the target and it just depended on
25 what target it was and what you were looking for within that target. They had like a grid
26 zone. Everybody dreaded Hotel 9. That seemed to be the place that nobody really
27 wanted to go into.

28 RV: Why not?

29 MB: It was a really hot, hot place and there was limited areas that you could get
30 in, you know an LZ. Of course, they knew that, too. They circumvented that. They put
31 you in somewhere else or let you walk in. There was several places in there that were

1 really, really hot. There was a lot of folks over there and they didn't want anybody in
2 there because they had a lot of things to hide.

3 RV: These recon missions, this was a—one thing on the side of what your main
4 task was, was to train the Hatchet Forces?

5 MB: Yes.

6 RV: How much do you think did you spend running recon missions versus
7 training the exploitation forces?

8 MB: Our main mission was the training of the Hatchet Force and that took
9 priority. But, see, one person wouldn't stop that training. We had three guys to each
10 platoon, four platoons. We were doing more good by going out with the recon team to
11 spell that American or give him some time off or whatever, or just go with him and add
12 another gun. That didn't stop what was happening back at the training base.

13 RV: Now, the Hatchet Forces, they were South Vietnamese?

14 MB: No, Montagnard.

15 RV: They were Montagnard. What were they like? How different was it
16 working with them versus working with the South Vietnamese? Well, they are South
17 Vietnamese technically, but just the difference in two.

18 MB: There's different tribes and each tribe has got a different dialect. We had
19 seven different tribes in our one platoon. We had an interpreter that spoke French,
20 Montagnard, and Vietnamese. We used him exclusively. He could more or less, through
21 his understanding of the dialect, get over to these other folks. It was kind of a hindrance
22 there. But luckily we had this one dude, like I say, that could speak French and then a
23 couple of dialects from Montagnard and get it over. Then, of course, once they learned
24 something you get them hands on and that helps the situation out. It makes it little easier.

25 RV: What kind of tactics were you training these—?

26 MB: Basic infantry tactics. You know, basic weapons, basic fire maneuver. Not
27 anything that you wouldn't need in a regular Army, you know, how to act in a helicopter.
28 A lot of these dudes were never in an aircraft before, some of them. Different things like
29 that. Infiltrating, ex-filtrating, rope ladders, strings, getting out of the McGuire rig,
30 tracking. Whatever you think you might need to not only keep yourself alive but
31 complete the mission.

1 RV: Were you training them to be Special Forces or training them to be regular
2 infantry?

3 MB: No, just be the infantry to the point where they understand the concept of
4 fire and maneuver; they understand what it can do to you and what you can do to the
5 enemy if you do it right. Then how to set up a perimeter, how to fire a claymore, how to
6 use a LAW (light anti-tank weapon), that type of thing. It wasn't anything really
7 grandiose. It was a type of thing where you train them the basics and you actually
8 train together to work together and to employ the stuff that you're teaching them.

9 RV: How good were they? How trainable were they?

10 MB: A lot of these guys, they're professional CIDG. They go from camp to
11 camp. Some of them are just bums. They just go and they sign up and they take the
12 training and say, "Okay, I ain't going nowhere, see you." Then they go to another camp,
13 sign up, take eight weeks of training, get paid, and then go on. Some of them just took to
14 it. There was an incident there that this guy, he ain't stupid. He's in an airplane and he
15 sees, well, there's this village. He says, "Oh, I know that elephant trail. That elephant
16 trail goes to—oh! We're not supposed to be here. I want to go home." They knew
17 where they were. But they didn't know where they were going at the time.

18 RV: How did they react to the Americans? Were they friendly with you, were
19 they personable?

20 MB: Most of the Yards loved Americans.

21 RV: Why do you think that was?

22 MB: Americans are so open. They're generous, they're open, and they didn't
23 look down on them. These guys were running around barefoot with nothing but a little
24 more than a g-string on, hunting with crossbows. They just came out of the caveman era
25 to the modern world. The Americans, they thought, "Well, these guys go out with us and
26 they ain't afraid to go out and shoot it up." It was like a mutual respect. A man's words
27 are a man's words. If this guy says that he was your friend, they pretty much stuck to it.

28 RV: This was different than working with the South Vietnamese, the regular
29 Vietnamese population?

30 MB: Oh, sure. Yeah.

1 RV: The South Vietnamese, did you find them versus the Montagnards more
2 closed, more suspicious?

3 MB: I think they were suspicious because there was more—I'm not sure
4 mendacity is the word. But they knew that why we were there and they kind of looked
5 down on us because they weren't that dependent on another country to come and do their
6 job for them. They were fancy-dancy. You give them a set of fatigues and the next thing
7 you know they look more like leotards than they do your fatigues. They'd have them all
8 hemmed in and Zoot-suited and that type of thing, and, hell— They're more interested in
9 getting their picture taken than getting the mission done.

10 RV: So, they would actually alterate the clothing you gave them?

11 MB: Sure, yeah.

12 RV: To look better?

13 MB: Yeah. Look more dapper, peg-pants, you know.

14 RV: The Montagnards did not do this?

15 MB: They pretty much wore the clothing the way it was supposed to be. Nice
16 and loose where you get a good ventilation and good protection. Don't cut the sleeves
17 off because you might need them, that type of thing. They just seemed to take more to
18 military life or better. I think my battery just yelled at me.

19 RV: Oh, really? Let's take a break for just for a sec.

Interview with Martin Brady
Session 3 of 3
August 20, 2003

1 RV: This is Dr. Richard Verrone. I'm continuing my oral history interview with
2 Mr. Martin Brady. Today is August 20, 2003, it's a little after three o'clock in the
3 afternoon. I'm in Lubbock, Texas, in the Special Collections Library interview room on
4 the campus of Texas Tech University. Mr. Brady, you're in Garland, Texas. Why don't
5 we pick up where we left off, sir? We were talking about your Hatchet Team training.
6 Could you kind of going forward from there, what were you involved in, what activities?
7 Then moving toward the beginning of the Tet Offensive.

8 MB: Well basically—well, at that time I had went on emergency leave for, I
9 think, twenty days. When I got back the rumor control had it that it was something big in
10 the offing. Pretty much, we just continued the training until it became obvious that
11 something was going to happen around Tet.

12 RV: How could you tell something was going to happen?

13 MB: The people. More or less the people downtown would be digging foxholes
14 inside the house, under their bed and stuff. You know, things like that. People would be
15 moving, going away, sending their kids off somewhere. That and the troops themselves
16 were getting a little edgy and they could sense something that was going on. We didn't
17 find out about it. We didn't find out about it; but later on it came out the NVA and their
18 allies told their people, "Stay the heck away from our camp." They said, "Don't mess
19 with the camp south of the river." They said that, "Everybody's got automatic weapons
20 and it's well defined. They got good artillery coverage. So don't mess with them, go
21 right in, go for the city." Basically, they didn't, other than maybe to cover their
22 movement, drop a couple of rounds in and around the camp. But basically, we could sit
23 on the wall and watch the attack on Kontum. It was really awesome to be sitting there in
24 a lawn chair and watching the battle going on, drinking a Budweiser. It was really crazy.

25 RV: Was that the first night of Tet?

26 MB: Yes. We kidded around and they handcuffed one guy to his bed and they
27 called an alert. This guy in his glee to get out and get to his position, he dragged the

1 damned bed with him all the way through. He had to turn it sideways to get it through
2 the door.

3 RV: This is an American?

4 MB: Yeah, Oh, yeah.

5 RV: He wanted to get out and get into the fight?

6 MB: He wanted to get out and get to where he's supposed to be.

7 RV: He took his bed with him.

8 MB: He took his bed with him, through the door anyway. It was the attack on
9 Kontum City was something else. We weren't really involved. We had business of our
10 own. We had teams out that were in trouble and we really didn't have the assets to get
11 them out.

12 RV: Can you describe what you saw?

13 MB: Basically, it was a dual between American air and the NVA anti-aircraft
14 fire. That's mostly what we saw. I guess we were about three miles from the city. You
15 could see the green tracers from the bad guys and our red tracers coming from air
16 naturally. There was a team downtown, B-24 I think it was. An SF B Team. They took
17 some casualties. Later on we find out there used to be some little bars we used to go to
18 down there. We called them the gruesome threesome. Three little beer joints,
19 prostitution. Evidently, they executed a few of the girls because they knew that they
20 were associating with Americans. That night and I think the next day and then the next
21 night and the second day after stuff started we went down and we started clearing. You
22 could actually see where they had set them up in the wire. A lot of bodies laying around
23 and a lot of destruction downtown. Of course, that was what was happening. Air
24 artillery and ground artillery, and the stuff that the NVA had did a lot of damage.
25 Basically, that was our function was to just stay put until we were needed somewhere to
26 go as a reaction force or to bolster some weak spot or whatever and to stand by should we
27 need to go out and rescue some of our folks.

28 RV: What was your first action?

29 MB: In Tet?

30 RV: Yes.

1 MB: Actually it wasn't really much action at all because it was just mop-up. The
2 crew-served weapons in camp naturally supported the people downtown because we had
3 good commo with them. But basically, we didn't really support on the ground as
4 infantry.

5 RV: So when was it that you actually get into the mop-up operations?

6 MB: I think it was the second day after Tet started. Then it was pretty well
7 decided that they didn't get what they wanted and they got run-off. Second or third day, I
8 think.

9 RV: Did you take the Hatchet Teams out or did you all go out in American SF
10 unit?

11 MB: No, we went out with our Hatchet Force. I think we had two or three
12 companies went out. It was just to clear the area.

13 RV: How would you clear the area? What would you do?

14 MB: Basically, just look for any cache they might have hid or where they buried
15 their dead. You know, get information off the bodies or what they carried, that type of
16 thing. Of course, if we ran into any size units just bring smoke on them.

17 RV: This was in and around Kontum?

18 MB: Yes.

19 RV: Did you operate in the city much?

20 MB: No, I think our sector was west of the city. I think it was west of the city.
21 We swept from where we were on the highway, we swept west of that all the way around
22 to Kontum and beyond.

23 RV: How long did you perform these sweeps?

24 MB: I think it was two or three days off and on.

25 RV: After you finished these, what did you, what did your unit do?

26 MB: We had casualties coming in because we had a pretty descent dispensary
27 there. We had casualties coming in from, I think it was the 4th Infantry Division. A
28 bunch of people burned up so we doubled as medics in the dispensary helping out with
29 people. We had some American casualties coming in. The casualties we incurred from
30 our people going with, I think it was seven teams across the fence. They didn't have the
31 air assets to get them all out and several of them were in a tight situation. In fact, we lost

1 one of our people on the twenty-ninth of December. He was being extracted. He either
2 fell out or was pulled out of the strings that were coming out of the McGuire rig. The
3 first American and three little people came out, and the 1-0, the team leader and two or
4 three little other people were coming out and he either slipped out or got knocked out
5 while coming through the trees. He was an MIA (missing in action) for years.

6 RV: Were the remains found?

7 MB: No, they sent in a Bright Light Team few days later. They found out where
8 he had fell through the canopy and they seen where the NVA had come in and sterilized
9 the area. They figured that with the jungle canopy that they had, and the weight, this is a
10 huge man; he's about 6'4", 6'6", pretty near three-hundred pounds. He's a huge man.
11 He was also a medic. They figured that the foliage was probably enough to break his fall
12 where he wouldn't have been killed because they had no idea how high he was when he
13 slipped out of the rig or fell. He was the only casualty KIA (killed in action), or missing,
14 that we incurred in that area. We lost another guy up at the FOB, up north, up by Phu
15 Bai. He was killed. They retreated, they recovered the body. Charlie White, they never
16 recovered.

17 RV: Did you know Charlie well?

18 MB: Yes, I knew him pretty well. He was a medic. I was a medic. I had gone
19 out a couple of times with the folks from the Yard camp. They were up in the Yard
20 camp. It was about six miles from where we were from the actual FOB 2.

21 RV: You were getting ready to be leaving country soon. You left in February.

22 MB: Yeah.

23 RV: Did you know your date you were leaving?

24 MB: No, not really. It was an open date because our people in Okinawa didn't
25 want to yank us and leave those people over there in a bind. If they needed us, we'd stay,
26 they could always extend us. Pretty much by the time we left everything, Tet was well
27 over. Everything was going on. The teams that were coming in to relieve us were in
28 processing.

29 RV: So, you went back to Okinawa?

30 MB: Yes.

31 RV: You were based there in Okinawa, correct? The entire time until 1972?

1 MB: Yes.

2 RV: Let me ask, I don't know if we covered this before, but why did you get the
3 emergency leave? The twenty-day emergency leave?

4 MB: My mother had passed away. I think we talked about it.

5 RV: Yes, sir. I thought that's what had happened. How were you doing
6 personally coming back in country after something like that happens?

7 MB: Oh, it was crazy. I tried to explain to the family, coming out of a bomb
8 crater in Laos and being home within—actually, leaving that bomb crater, getting boosted
9 into the chopper and actually being at the funeral parlor where my mom was waked. It
10 was just within forty-eight hours. It's just going from that atmosphere to the real world
11 and seeing all the family and everything.

12 RV: What about when you came back? What kind of mind set did you have?

13 MB: The same dude that got handcuffed to the bed, he looked there and
14 everybody had a buzz on from drinking beer. That was a weekend and I walked in and
15 he says, "Oh, you're crazy. What the hell are you doing here?" He says, "You were
16 gone. You were clear. You were free. What the hell is the matter with you?" He says,
17 "You're crazy, Brady. What the hell is the matter with you?"

18 RV: He thought you were going to take off.

19 MB: He said if I had a brain in my head, I would've. He said, "I thought I raised
20 you better, you dumbass. What the hell did you come back for? You could've stayed on
21 Oki." He says, "We're all going to be killed. They're going to attack the camp." Of
22 course, he was ragging me was what he was doing.

23 RV: So, when you got back to Okinawa, what did you do?

24 MB: Pretty much the same thing we always did: training and get ready to do
25 something else. Right after I got there, I think we went into rough terrain jumping.
26 Ordinarily, they send you down to Taiwan for their rough terrain school and jump with
27 the Chinese. But they couldn't afford that so my team sergeant, Woody Woodworth,
28 devised a way that we could do the training on Oki. Instead of jumping in Taiwan, which
29 we did eventually anyway, but we could jump in the north, northern Okinawa, which is
30 pretty much tree-covered and hilly. Enough rough terrain to get us the experience
31 jumping in the jungle or forest.

1 RV: It sounds like every time you were extracted from Vietnam you just
2 continued to train and train and train.

3 MB: Oh, yeah. That's for twenty years, you just continue to sharpen or hone
4 your skills. That counts as medical, too, because they send us up to Cui Hospital for
5 work in the ward. I might have told you about this. But before we went down, they had
6 this staff sergeant that was in there. He'd been shot up pretty bad, had a chunk of his ass
7 ripped off. What had happened is they were in recon and they were counting this NVA
8 unit as they went by them and they got caught. The NVA opened up on them.

9 Correction; the one guy, the last guy in the tail gunner of the NVA, either stepped on this
10 guy or came across him anyway. That was it. They got a big firefight and all this.

11 Evidently, the NVA didn't like Americans because he was going to try and shoot this
12 guy's testicles off. On automatic, he tried burn him. This guy was medevaced back to
13 Okinawa. He was on a ward up there when we were on this, they call it cross training,
14 but it's not cross training. It's just getting you back into the medical environment to see
15 how things are done in an ideal situation. I was talking to him and he said he'd never
16 forget it. The guy was just trying to cause as much damage to his genital areas as he
17 could. He did a lot of damage. The poor guy was really, really tore up. He told us some
18 stories about running recon and things they found, tactics they used. We did cross
19 training. We cross trained our other people. A lot of maritime stuff, rubber boat
20 training, swimming, long-distance swimming, scout swimming, things of that nature.

21 RV: This went on all the way until June of the next year when you went back?

22 MB: Yeah.

23 RV: Okay. Did you feel like when you came back from Vietnam and you went
24 through all this training, did you feel that you were getting better and better and better at
25 your job or was it something that was just very, very tiresome and it was draining you?

26 MB: Some of it was kind of boring. But you knew that the more you did things,
27 the more you trained and got away from it, you get rusty at anything. The more you do
28 something, then the easier it is to get back in the saddle, get back in harness. Reaction
29 drills and stuff like that. When we went back in '69, they had what they called a COC
30 course, combat orientation course. That was a week or ten days that they put you back
31 into a combat environment out on Hon Tre Island. You walk around with a rucksack full

1 of sand, seventy-five pounds of sand. You would do long marches, night marches, land
2 navigation, weapons firing, automatic reaction drills, things of that nature. It hones your
3 skills. You learn things that you might do as a mistake. Not taking your safety off, not
4 having a round in the chamber. You're not keeping a round in the chamber and the
5 weapon gets dirty. At least you could fire it and clear some of the crap out of it, that type
6 of thing. Some of it's kind of mundane. The more you do it, the better you're going to
7 be at it when that skill is needed.

8 RV: Who actually was doing the training?

9 MB: It was Special Forces people that were assigned there to Hon Tre.
10 Remember at this time here, the people were rotated out of A Camps and sent back to a
11 higher headquarters or to another camp that wasn't so hot or more toward the rear, or
12 whatever. I knew most of the guys that were training us. Everybody's got a reputation
13 one way or another. You know these guys, they've been there and they know what
14 they're talking about.

15 RV: That was my next question. How much did you take your experiences in-
16 country back to Okinawa and really use them, help others, train others, talk about, "Hey,
17 this is what happened on this operation. Have you ever seen this?" Did you share
18 information like that?

19 MB: Oh, sure. When you get back, you might not stay on that detachment, you
20 move to another one or you might go to another company or you might—depending on
21 the situation. You always relay, especially to the younger guys, they're always curious.
22 It's an ongoing thing, cross training and primary training in your MOS.

23 RV: Did you have a lot of unit integrity? Were you able to keep the men all
24 together?

25 MB: Even today, if fact, last night I was on the phone till about eleven o'clock
26 last night talking to my senior medic in 1963. He's still right outside of Fort Bragg there
27 in North Carolina. We had a reunion in Houston in 2000. We had a reunion in Fort
28 Bragg in 2002. That's just one team from 1963. Except for the team sergeant, I think me
29 and him were the only two that served on the team again together. We knew each other
30 so well, you pick up a phone, there's no need for an exchange of names, you know the
31 voice. The way people walk, the way they walk at night, habits. It was a lot of team

1 integrity, a lot of genuine friendships that grew out of a team assignment. In fact, Kipfer
2 was my senior medic in '63. When we got back in January of '64 he got orders to Oki
3 and went over. He went from Oki, he went TDY to Delta Project in Vietnam. I saw him,
4 he was still there in '65 when—correction; '64, December of '64. When we got over
5 there he was still there. We ran into him at the airport, me and Stuart.

6 RV: Oh, yeah. Did you ever experience any race issues? Did you see this at all?

7 MB: I guess you do to a point. Everybody's got a little racist in them, maybe not
8 racist, but say a prejudice or a bias. The non-Caucasian members of the teams in Special
9 Forces were so good that I don't see where anybody really had a prejudice. The black
10 guys we had were great. They were as sincere and as dedicated as anybody on the team.
11 The Oriental Americans, the same way. Every now and then you'd get a dud, but they
12 get weeded out. But, no, I don't think so. Some of these guys were born and raised in
13 rural Mississippi and Alabama and Georgia, and they were raised—these guys got along
14 probably better with black people, people of color, than guys from New York or New
15 Jersey or Cleveland or Detroit.

16 RV: You're talking about the white guys born in the South got along better with
17 the black guys that are born in the South?

18 MB: Yeah. It's not always that way. You would think it'd be harder for them to
19 get along, but it didn't work that way. It seemed to work well. Like I say, the guys we
20 had were as well trained and eager and anxious to get the job done. There is the basic—
21 and it's not just race or your religion or nationality. It's just some people just don't like
22 people. We had a few of those that they just didn't like anybody.

23 RV: What do you do with those guys?

24 MB: Nothing as long as they do their job. As long as they can, as they say in the
25 infantry: "Close with, kill, capture, destroy the enemy, and deny him key terrain
26 features." As long as they can do that, they got a job.

27 RV: When you're back in Okinawa, how much were you able to keep up with
28 what was happening back in the United States? For that matter, when you were in-
29 country, were you able to do that?

30 MB: Mostly, the only time I really remember keeping tabs on things is when
31 Kent State happened. I think that was up in the city getting re-enlisted when that

1 happened. They had a sign in the beer joint there, Kent State: 0, National Guard: 3, or
2 something. Most of the information I got was *Stars and Stripes* and guys talking, that
3 type of thing. AFRTS, if it was available. I got mail from home and they kept me abreast
4 of things.

5 RV: How much did you write home, how much did they write you?

6 MB: I didn't write very much. But we had a large family, six girls and four boys.
7 Of course, they all had kids and the kids would write. Sent a few care packages and
8 things like that.

9 RV: Now why didn't you write a lot?

10 MB: I got started sending some taped messages back to my dad after my mom
11 died. I got hung up on that and then I'd write them a letter maybe once every couple of
12 months or whatever. To me, writing is a chore. To this day, I hate to write letters. If I
13 can weasel out with a card or something, I'll do that. But I just did it to let them know
14 that I was still okay because most of the guys in SF that, should they get wounded or
15 anything like that, they don't send the message home anyway.

16 RV: Did you tell your family members or those whom you were writing, when
17 you did write, about what you were doing, the stuff that you could tell or did you protect
18 them?

19 MB: Oh, yeah. I told them pretty much as an overall picture, not individual
20 accounts of things. What we were about and how often we did what we did, this and that.
21 No, not really, unless they asked. The FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), we had
22 interim top-secret clearances, and the FBI went around, checking the neighbors. Well, of
23 course, the neighbors called home to my parents saying, "Hey, there was an FBI over
24 here checking out Marty. He's in Vietnam." They didn't know it. It was the FBI telling
25 them where the hell their son is. They didn't know it. You could take the letters the guys
26 go rotating back and they could send them from Okinawa or stateside, they were going
27 back there.

28 RV: Were you ever able to make any MARS (Military Affiliate Radio System)
29 phone calls?

30 MB: I made one MARS phone call and that was from the Marshall Islands. I was
31 the medic and I was also the radio operator. I got a hold of, I think it was the guy, he was

1 either in Saipan or Quadulan, I guess it was. We had a MARS station there in Quad. He
2 got me through to my dad in New York. I think that's the only time I ever used MARS.

3 RV: When was that, do you remember?

4 MB: That was in '71, I think. Yeah, '71, I was down there six months with an
5 engineer team.

6 RV: Tell me what you all what do as a unit for entertainment, I guess in-country
7 and out Okinawa?

8 MB: Pretty much, everybody's got a favorite little joint they go down to because
9 it's getting back into the reality again. They might be Vietnamese or Cambodian or
10 Laotian or whatever, but they're people and things go on. You go down, drink a couple
11 of beers, and then come back to camp or whatever.

12 RV: Did you guys pretty much hang to yourselves, the SF guys?

13 MB: If you got along well with the LLDB, you could get your counterparts and
14 say, "Come on, let's go have a beer." That kind of thing. You usually pal up with
15 somebody on the team because we used to go on scrounging runs for food. Any
16 American unit that was in the area, you go over there and trade stuff and con them out of
17 some fresh meat or whatever, that type of thing. You always went in pairs. When you
18 get five days usually about every two or three months to go to town and blow off steam,
19 go down to Tu Do Street. Usually, the guy that you go on R&R with is your buddy and
20 you usually pal around.

21 RV: What about drug and alcohol use?

22 MB: Alcohol, yeah. Some guys wouldn't touch it; some guys wouldn't touch it
23 on site. But, they drink all they wanted at the B Team or C Team. Other guys just stayed
24 drunk, they just drank all day. You don't drink beer for breakfast, but it's better to drink
25 Coke and beer than it is to drink water unless it's like boiled tea or something like that.
26 Drugs as a recreational use, no. I don't recall anybody on any team that I was ever with
27 that messed with pills or injection. The Vietnamese, the Yards, the Cambods have what
28 they call *thuoc lao*. This, I think, is their pot or chad or whatever it is, but they smoke it.
29 It's like passing a piece pipe. That, I would say would be the closest thing to indulging in
30 drugs. The Vietnamese got a homemade whiskey called *bac si de*. You go to the beer
31 joints and you get a little jigger—well, it's a big jigger of *bac si de* for a couple of

1 pennies and you light it up and you buy a dried squid and you run the squid over until it
2 burns the outer skin. Then you can peel it off and eat the squid with the *bac si de*. When
3 you're with the troops they don't make that much money. If you as an American go
4 around buying beer and drinking beer, this guy can't buy it back. If you go down and
5 you get a five piaster shot of hooch and you eat a dried squid or a dried fish or something,
6 then you're in his league. Then you're not going to put any burden on him because he
7 can buy back.

8 RV: Right. What role did music play while you were over there? Did you all
9 have the radio from time to time?

10 MB: Not really. As a kid in New York, believe it or not, they had the, what the
11 hell is it called? The Midwestern Jamboree or something like that. One came out of
12 Louisiana and the Louisiana Hayride was one. Then there was another one that we'd get
13 up in New York and I got introduced to Hank Williams at an early age and I loved Hank
14 Williams. Naturally, most of the SF guys were country-and-western fans, although guys
15 were really highbrow opera and classical and had really a diverse palate. American
16 music, I think I lost about ten years from '66 to '72, I think, I never really got involved
17 other than recordings of old music. All these rock bands and The Who and the Kiss and
18 the whatever's, never heard them, never cared much for them. I never really caught on to
19 it. To this day, I don't really care for that kind of music.

20 RV: Are there any songs that you hear today that take you back to Vietnam?

21 MB: Oh, sure. The soundtrack from *Forrest Gump*, that really can get you going.
22 A lot of the country-and-western music I remember because when we went to build that
23 camp in Tuyen Nhon in '64, we went over and we stayed with this TDY team from
24 Okinawa for two months or three months. They had access to all these reel-to-reel tapes
25 from Oki. This guy had the best collection of country-and-western music that I've ever
26 seen in my life. He had about fifty tapes, and it went all the way back to the '20s and
27 '30s all the way up through Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings, and Merle Haggard. It was
28 really good stuff. He left a lot of that stuff with our people, too.

29 RV: Did you ever go to any USO (United Services Organization) shows?

30 MB: The closest thing we ever got to USO in Loc Ninh, which was my last
31 assignment there, Martha Ray signed the bunker. The same camp at Lock Ninh at

1 Christmastime, an Air Force Caribou flew in and had Santa Claus painted on the nose of
2 the Caribou. They had some genuine American type women with cold beer and
3 cigarettes and cigars and stuff. They landed and spent about fifteen minutes, had a good
4 talk and some beer and gave us some presents and then they took off for another camp.
5 Because we had three camps in that area: Loc Ninh, Bu Dop, and _____. They were
6 all in the B-33 at Han Quan. But, yeah, that was the closest thing—I was scheduled to go
7 to Australia for R&R. I was scheduled to go to Bangkok for R&R. But I get to Saigon
8 and you run into your old cronies in Saigon and say, “The hell with it. I didn’t lose
9 anything in Australia.” I never did go out of country—I did one time. I went back to
10 Okinawa. The club would have their chit books made, printed on Okinawa because that
11 way it wouldn’t be duplicated or copied in Vietnam. They had a local printer. You had
12 to go, took a turn going back to Okinawa to bring back all these printed up chit books and
13 other stuff from Okinawa back to ‘Nam. So you got a couple of days to visit. That was
14 like an R&R. I think I had five days on Oki.

15 RV: Were your religious beliefs at all affected by what you experienced in
16 Southeast Asia?

17 MB: No, not really I don’t think. When we went over in ’63 we stayed in a camp
18 that we called them a warlord but it was one of the Catholic priests that had come south
19 after they sliced the country in half. They brought down a bunch of Chinese and
20 Vietnamese from the North and resettled them down in the Delta. The guy we had was
21 living in the camp and he had his house and the church was inside the camp. There was
22 even a little convent with nuns, a couple of few nuns that taught school. I was Roman
23 Catholic, but on all our dog tags for religion they put no preference or most of the guys
24 put TAC (Tactical Air Command) Air. We didn’t really want the priest to know what
25 religion because he would definitely use that as the—you know have the advantage on
26 you. We had several Catholics on the team. But as far as the killing and maiming, like I
27 say, not really. I can’t recall ever blaming God or seeking forgiveness. It didn’t seem
28 necessary.

29 RV: Okay. Tell me what you did when you went back in June ’69. What was
30 your mission then?

1 MB: Pretty much A Team assignment again. That's what I wanted. What had
2 happened is a good friend had chose not to go to language school. They offered a course
3 in Vietnamese, a three-month course in Vietnamese. One guy didn't. He wanted to go
4 get his tour over with so he just went directly to Vietnam. Three or four of us went to the
5 Vietnamese language school just to get back to the States and see what the heck is going
6 on.

7 RV: When was this?

8 MB: This is in '69. We went to Crowell Collier Institute, which is in Alexandria,
9 Virginia. It was all civilian clothes, nice, female instructors. All varieties of women,
10 Orientals, Arabs, whatever language or whatever nationality taught there at the school.
11 They had women and men teachers.

12 RV: This is prior to the June '69 when—

13 MB: Yeah. I think it was March, April, and May, something like that.

14 RV: How did you do at the school academically?

15 MB: I did pretty good because I could speak it. I could converse. When you go to
16 these language schools they want you to talk like a lawyer or a doctor. You don't run
17 into people like that. You go rapping like a doctor and they say, "Who's this rube?" We
18 melted them down as quickly as we could and, "Come on, we want to know how you talk
19 to a farmer. We don't want polite stuff. We want to know how to tell a guy to sit down
20 or you're going to break his legs." Of course, you want to learn how to tell them to sit
21 down politely, too. You need to know the difference.

22 RV: Right. Were you able to obtain that information?

23 MB: Oh, yes. We did pretty well. In fact, we had Dr. Cho was a Korean
24 instructor. We went to three months of Korean later on when I got back to Bragg. You
25 had to call her *seun seng nim* which was something equivalent to "exalted teacher." We
26 had some base dudes in that team. She'd just leave the classroom bawling her head off.
27 She had to go up and see Mr. Malock. He was head of the language school at Ft. Bragg,
28 Saudi Arabian native. He'd come down and he'd say, "Okay, who did it? What'd you
29 do?" "The woman, you just can't live with her. She just thinks we're going over to exist
30 in the city and talk to some lawyer or some doctor or something, a college professor.
31 That's not what we're here for. We're here to learn the language of the people." But by

1 the time we left that school she would not let us speak English. We spoke all in Korean,
2 read all in Korean. She taught us, we had, what'd they call it? A special day they have,
3 oh culture time, or culture hour, or day, whatever the heck it was. When we graduated
4 there she bought us a case of beer and it was such a change. She understood then what
5 we were talking about and where we were coming from. She melted, she did us some
6 good. Even in Collier, that was mostly ASA (Army Security Agency) and that type of
7 folks were going to school and they were all college graduates, most of them young kids.
8 They had a couple of old grizzled dudes like us. But we told the guy and the guy knew
9 we were genuine and we'd put two or three tours in 'Nam before we went to that course.
10 They kind of acquiesced and did it our way.

11 RV: Were you learning Vietnamese or Korean?

12 MB: In '69 it was Vietnamese. But I had gone to a Vietnamese course before
13 that in '63 and it was just survival stuff. But usually if I go to another country the first
14 thing I do is learn the basics: count, normal exchange of niceties or whatever. All this
15 time, too, while you're doing mission training you have what they call area study.
16 You're relegated a point in a world that you're going to be responsible for should
17 something happen that they need a team. So you do all this background history and the
18 culture, and the language and all that stuff. You might be training to go to Africa, but
19 your area of study is somewhere in Korea.

20 RV: What was your area study?

21 MB: I think one was right outside on the border of Harbin, China, I think it was.
22 It's right on the other side of the North Korean border. That was one. Geez, it's been so
23 long. But you know it could be anywhere.

24 RV: Do the Special Forces still employ this thing?

25 MB: Oh, sure. Yeah.

26 RV: Yeah, that's what I thought. So when you went back in June '69, back into
27 Vietnam, you were very prepared?

28 MB: That's where I was leading when I got—this guy that didn't go to language
29 school, he was over there in-country already. He had already gone through the COC
30 course and was already down to the team. I think I might have told you this story, cut me
31 off if—

1 RV: Go ahead.

2 MB: He sent me a letter when I was in language school. He says, "Oh, come on
3 over. I know you're coming to Vietnam. You need to come down where I'm at. Got a
4 nice camp, big runway, we got a French guy that's got a swimming pool down the end of
5 the runway. Yeah, you need to come over here. It's real nice, nice calm camp." I said,
6 "Okay." So, I got over to the country, had to fly over that sucker in a LOACH (light
7 observation helicopter) chopper. Holy criminy! They had bunkers out in the rubber, the
8 holes on the PSP (perforated steel plate) on the runway. The Frenchman's house was all
9 tore up; there was no water in the pool, the trees in the pool, a wrecked 123 or a wrecked
10 130 down in the end of the runway. I said, "Holy Etney!" I ended up getting to the
11 camp. Well I wrote this other guy, I said, "Hey, me and Lee is over here at this camp.
12 It's real nice, nice runway, Frenchman's got a pool at the end of the runway, real quiet,
13 you'll like it." So, he came. So, we fished him into it. He wrote back with this other
14 guy, Turkot, "Hey, nice camp, good runway, Frenchman's got a pool at the end of the
15 runway. You ought to come down." Well, he got short stopped because he had one leg.
16 He got shot up in the Mike Force and one leg was shorter than the other so sergeant major
17 put him back in the Mike Force and wouldn't let him go out into the camp. That was the
18 hello I got when I got to camp.

19 RV: Okay. Where were you located?

20 MB: It was in III Corps, III CTZ (Corps Tactical Zone). Loc Ninh was—have
21 you heard of the Parrot's Peak?

22 RV: Oh, yes.

23 MB: Loc Ninh was just directly south of Parrot's Peak. It was just north of Hon
24 Quan on Highway 13, Bloody Highway 13.

25 RV: You were there for one year?

26 MB: Yeah.

27 RV: What kind of operations did you run out of there?

28 MB: Mostly, ambush, interdiction, border surveillance, sweeps, a lot of heli-
29 borne assaults. We got a lot because of the 11th ACR, the 11th Armored Cavalry
30 Regiment, was right outside our gate. Well, one squadron of it anyway. Charlie liked to
31 drop rounds on them and they dropped rounds on us. Of course, they had tanks and

1 APCs (armored personnel carriers). We'd supply little people as infantry for their APCs
2 and tanks. It's strange to be a staff sergeant or—no actually I was E-7 then, I guess—
3 sergeant first class with a platoon of tanks OPCON'ed (operational control) to me. It was
4 a strange war. It was a pretty testy camp. In fact, we used to make a run down to Hon
5 Quan to buy a beer and we'd take the money that we'd sell the beer back to us as a club.
6 If we bought for twelve cents a can, we'd sell it back to us for fifteen or twenty. We'd
7 take the money and we'd buy something we could use in the camp. If you lasted three
8 months without getting medevac'ed, we'd buy each other a watch. We drank a lot of
9 beer, made a lot of money. We ended up buying Rolexes out of the PX (post exchange)
10 and they were 175 dollars a piece. We ended up buying the guys that didn't get
11 medevac'ed Rolexes by the time they left. We also sold beer to the indig because for
12 them it was kind of a prestige thing. They come in and buy canned beer and take it home
13 and show off. There was a good percentage of Yards and Cambods in our camp.

14 RV: Did you work mainly with Americans or was it mixed? Did you mix or
15 work with the Montagnards?

16 MB: At Loc Ninh we had mostly Cambods. We had what they called a KKK
17 (Khmer Kampuchea Krom), the Khmer Serei. Most of those guys, they were good
18 soldiers, they were really good. Most of them were being trained to move back into
19 Cambodia and take Cambodia over which they did eventually while I was there. They
20 took a lot of people out of our camp to be the leadership when Lon Nol, I guess, had that
21 fiasco going. We had five companies: four companies of Cambod, Yards, and one
22 Vietnamese company.

23 RV: Can you describe what you all would do each day? What was your typical
24 day like and your missions?

25 MB: Usually, the LLDB would pretty much try to pick the targets and then you
26 got to do a little finagling there. Certain areas they didn't want to go in and that's the
27 areas we wanted to go in. Most of the time, they'd either compromise or, "Okay, we'll
28 go there. But we won't go all the way there we'll just go around there." Of course, if
29 you hit pay dirt then you'd get some more assets. The 1st Air Cav was in the area so they
30 had a lot of air assets we could call on: gunships or slicks or whatever. Setting your mind
31 where were you going, what you wanted to accomplish, and how you were going to do it.

1 People have pet ways of doing things. Some guys like to take extra mortars with them,
2 60-mm mortars, have their own little artillery. LAWS, light anti-tank weapons for use
3 against bunkers and stuff. Of course, the indig, a lot of them liked to use the communist
4 weapons. That RPG is a good weapon. Plus, you can go ahead and get re-supplied out in
5 the field from whoever you take on.

6 RV: Describe how you would operate. What did you prefer to take with you and
7 how would you operate out in the field?

8 MB: Well, most of the time it was two Americans and usually, me being a medic,
9 there would be probably be a weapons man or a commo man or whatever. Depending on
10 how, what you would plan to do, how big a force you'd have with you, you could go out
11 with a recon platoon for ambushes or something. You might have two companies with
12 you. A company was about 100 men or 120 men, something like that. I just carried what
13 Sam issued most of the time: M-16. At Loc Ninh I always carried M-16 and about
14 twenty-five magazines, some frag grenades, some smoke and Willy Peter (white
15 phosphorus). One Willy Peter and a couple of smoke and a lot of water. I always carried
16 four quarts of water with me. At that time, they had PIR rations (patrol indigenous
17 rations) for the little people. Mutton was one menu, shrimp and mushroom was another.
18 These little fishies, little dried fish that was another menu. We ate what usually the little
19 people ate. Of course, if they killed a snake or a rat or something, they'd throw it on the
20 fire. It was another source of protein.

21 RV: How long would you stay out?

22 MB: Ordinarily about five days unless something happened or you had to move a
23 long, larger distance or whatever. Normally about five days to a week. That was the
24 normal operation.

25 RV: Can you describe some of the contact you had?

26 MB: A lot of times—you're always weary because the place belongs to Charlie
27 and you're just visiting. So you're pretty much aware of what the heck is going on, but
28 every now and then you'd hit on a target of opportunity and it just depends on who is in
29 this strategic position and who's got the mass ass: the fire power and the ability to
30 maneuver. Most of the time we were in charge. Luckily, that way we never really—a
31 couple of times we were threatened with possible being overrun, but not very often. We

1 usually had the upper hand. I think it was 7th NVA Division, the folks that we were
2 mainly up against. You had other smaller units, regiments and stuff like that in the area.
3 Any large contact, I don't think we ever had anything larger than probably a company
4 that I personally—now we've had guys run into a unit larger than a company. When you
5 bring in air assets—mostly it's targets of opportunity.

6 RV: Would you hit them or would you call in air on them?

7 MB: First of all, it's the initial contact. We had what they call a Tham Bao, is the
8 recon platoon and that would be our point. We had point, on point on either side. So as
9 you're moving through the area going to an objective, the objective being the area that
10 you want to scope out or check out, you might have an agent report or something that
11 there's a cache there or something or there might be a bivouac area. These really small
12 villages on the periphery of civilization, hell, Charlie owned them. He'd go spend his
13 night there and they might be his house. You try to get there first light before he got a
14 chance to leave. If he's running his operation there and he knows he's safe there and it's
15 reasonably secure, hiding from the air, that he's not going to be found out. There's
16 chance encounters. I remember we were sitting there taking a break and this guy walked
17 right into the perimeter. Some of the guys are taking catnaps, Ranger naps, and this guy
18 waltzed into the damn perimeter. All of a sudden this guy behind me decides he's going
19 to wax him and he opens up on him and kills him dead about ten feet from where we're
20 sitting. That happened two or three times in the same day. These guys just didn't believe
21 that there was anybody there. Of course, they didn't get that deep into the perimeter.
22 They were well clothed, well equipped. All that Cambodia in that area was a sanctuary
23 for the NVA.

24 RV: Did you ever employ snipers?

25 MB: We had one starlight scope in the camp. I used to get the starlight scope at
26 night and they used to come and steal gas. I used to pop a couple of rounds over their
27 heads when they'd go to steal gas. They wouldn't steal a gallon they'd still the whole
28 fifty-five gallon drum or something. When they knew you were watching them, then
29 they'd slacken off. We had sniper-trained personnel. Actually, performing a sniper
30 mission, I know I didn't do it. The recon people I'm sure did. I guess you could call it an
31 ambush patrol, almost like sniping if you're trying to grab somebody.

1 RV: How often were you able to capture an enemy?

2 MB: Sometimes business was good, sometimes not so good. I think the harder
3 core NVA were tougher to take prisoner. I think local militia and the local people—all
4 you can do is suppose that he's the enemy. They were harder to capture than they were
5 to kill. If you make contact, you got to make a decision, "Do I need air? Do I need
6 artillery? What do I need? What are my assets? What do I want to do?" I remember
7 one time we were out and we ran into a lead element. It was the headquarters for this
8 element of the 7th NVA Division. At that time, our tactics were if you made contact
9 everybody in that area would open up and at least burn one magazine. Well, this point
10 man saw the formation coming, gave the hand signal to the guys behind him, opened up
11 with one magazine, left, and then these guys opened up. The whole world opened up.
12 Then they started opening up and we got the first guy, the initial NVA that got killed,
13 their point man. We got his body and got the stuff off of him and they regrouped and
14 started to counter us. So we called in air and we got some slow movers, A1Es. They
15 come in and dropped a bunch of stuff. I think we got some fast movers in with CBU,
16 cluster bomb units. Then, of course, the gunships. We had slow movers, fast movers,
17 and helicopters come in and support. They liked what they saw because it was a turkey
18 shoot.

19 RV: Which was the most effective to call in?

20 MB: I would say probably the guns because they had the mini-guns. You know,
21 looked like a plowed field when they got finished. The CBU and the mini-guns. But it's
22 just the knowledge that they know that these fast movers come in with napalm. It's just
23 awesome. It's just an awesome weapon. They know they've been had. If they stick
24 around they're going to get waxed. With that much air, God, a man would have to be
25 insane. He's either going to get on your lap or get the hell out of Dodge, you know?
26 That's the only way he's going to get away from the air. It was awesome. The
27 awakening I got at Loc Ninh is I got in one day and I left for the field the next day.
28 Come back from the field and they rocketed the hell out of us. Blew my room up. They
29 had 107 rockets and they were smart because they had delays on them, they'd get down.
30 We were all underground; the whole camp was underground except we had a tower, a
31 water tower. The tops of the bunkers were used for—we used to show movies to the

1 troops. We'd get movies in and watch them ourselves. The Cambods were crazy about
2 American westerns. They loved cowboy movies. That would be on top of a bunker. The
3 camp itself was a perimeter but we also had an inner-perimeter where the Americans and
4 the LLDB stayed. Of course, the commo bunker—most of the mortar bunkers that we
5 fired—we had, I think, we had one or two four-deuce pits and several 81-mm mortar pits.
6 All kinds of fighting positions.

7 RV: Very well defended.

8 MB: Oh, yeah.

9 RV: Did you ever work with any K-9 units?

10 MB: We had one at Loc Ninh. It was OPCON'ed to the 1st Cav, I think. No, we
11 never used—we had several guys brought their dogs. Roland Markey brought his dog
12 when we went to Kontum in '67 from Oki. In fact, they printed a phony set of orders so
13 the Air Force would let her on the airplane. Down at the American Legion, they had like
14 a Xerox machine. So we got orders printed up for Tiona Hida K-9. She was great. She
15 was a German Shepard.

16 RV: How did you use her?

17 MB: We just had her for a pet.

18 RV: You just had her around?

19 MB: But she knew everybody. At night she'd come in and sniff every bunk and
20 she knew when the guys were out. She was just a good all-around dog, American dog.

21 RV: Do you know if you were ever exposed to any Agent Orange or defoliants?

22 MB: We had several places. We didn't know it then. I subsequently had a book
23 on Operation Ranch Hand and this guy had a computerized—I don't know where the hell
24 he got his map from, but the names of cities and everything was screwed up. He had the
25 sites where they had run these Agent Orange and Agent Purple and whatever. Of course,
26 my four trips to Vietnam was with an A Team and that's where we were, border
27 surveillance. Along the highways, byways and the canals and stuff like that. They used
28 it pretty much. We had one place there that we actually saw stuff on the—we went in for
29 what they call a BDA, bomb damage assessment. You could see it on the leaves. If you
30 sprayed DDT or something, the old hand sprayers, it'll leave like a white residue or a
31 scum on the foliage, that type of thing. You never figured it came from Americans.

1 Something that blew up or some type of ordnance. We'd heard about it at the firebases.
2 We had firebases all around between us and the Cambodian border. We had to
3 coordinate if we were in the AO (area of operations) we'd get their frequencies and talk
4 to them and say, "Well, look don't send any ambushes out to this block of coordinates
5 because we're going to be operating there and we don't want to fire you guys up and we
6 don't want you firing us up." All along, not only just Loc Ninh, but several of the camps
7 were sprayed.

8 RV: When you think back at this last year, your last tour there, any memorable
9 incidents or missions that come to mind when you think about it?

10 MB: We went on the Cambodian Incursion. Me and George Reeves went in with
11 eighty-five little people right into a cache there. Hell, they had triangulated 37-mm on
12 the ground. Luckily, they weren't occupied when we came in. We had arms, weapons,
13 uniforms. We found thousands of Chinese bicycles. We had helicopters coming over.
14 We'd lined up ten and twelve bicycles. There was guys getting killed over at the base
15 camps driving these bicycles because they didn't have any brakes.

16 RV: Oh, really?

17 MB: Yeah. I guess the NVA or the porters or whatever used their feet or their
18 hands because they don't ride them, they just load them up like a packhorse. We had
19 weapons; guys were coming for weapons, bicycles, flags, food. It was all kinds of stuff.
20 That's when the NVA were just walking around because they had major units coming
21 from—we helo-lifted in from Loc Ninh and I think we were ten miles into Cambodia. I
22 got pulled out and went with another unit that was fifteen miles further in with another
23 American. Then we were there and there was no water, any water anywhere around
24 there. We were hurting for water and they finally, after about three or four days, they got
25 us some water. The next day we got blown up, so both Americans were medevac'ed.

26 RV: What happened?

27 MB: We think it was a B-40. We were there, we made contact again. We made
28 contact early that morning and they broke and run. We went after them and they set up
29 an ambush and hit us again. We had called in gunships and they were hosing them.
30 We're not sure if it was an American rocket because it was only one and they usually fire
31 them I think in multiples. It was probably a B-40 rocket that got us. It wounded me,

1 wounded the other American. It killed a guy behind me and wounded the radio operator.
2 We were in control. But it was just that one misfortune, the two Americans. The other
3 guy, Pat, was calling in the air on the radio and he called in for a close, I forgot what the
4 wording is, but he wanted it real close. I think it was B-40. I don't think it was a
5 rocket—I think it would've done a hell of a lot more damage than a B-40.

6 RV: You were medevac'ed out?

7 MB: Yeah. They came in and got us on a jungle penetrator.

8 RV: Where did they take you?

9 MB: I forget; some hospital there near Saigon, outside of Saigon.

10 RV: How long did you recover? What were your wounds like?

11 MB: I got hit in the arm. I got hit in the leg. I couldn't move my arm, my hand.
12 My hand wouldn't function.

13 RV: Nerve damage?

14 MB: At that time. As it turns out, they just left the shrapnel in there. The use of
15 the hand came back. But when I was there I just couldn't use it. I had to use a weapon
16 with a left hand. I went over to see what was wrong with Pat. He got the back of his
17 neck sliced open with a piece of shrapnel. I can't remember where else he got hit but I
18 was more worried about him. I told him, I said, "Well, I'll give you half a Syrette of
19 morphine." He said, "No, I'll give you Syrette of morphine." I said, "Fuck you, you
20 ain't giving me no morphine." So, we're there refusing morphine. It was good to see
21 that jungle penetrator come in. Of course, like I say, we'd been without water for couple
22 of days, we'd just gotten water. As soon as that chopper landed, I think they refueled on
23 the way to in Hon Quan, I guess, or something like that. The medics there were handing
24 out cold beer when the chopper landed. We had a nice ice cold beer. Of course, we split
25 there because I was wounded in the arm and the leg. Crowley they classified as a head
26 wound because it was in his neck so he went to another hospital. I think we were both
27 out of there in two or three days. The surgeon from A Company, Special Forces doctor,
28 come in and got us sprung.

29 RV: Did you go back to your camp?

30 MB: Oh, yeah. Of course, they gave us a couple of days in Saigon.

1 RV: Right. How did it feel going into Cambodia, hitting some of their
2 sanctuaries?

3 MB: It was pretty much what we're doing in Vietnam. It's just the terrain was
4 pretty much the same except it was his backyard.

5 RV: Should that have had happened earlier? Sending forces into Cambodia and
6 into Laos in force to take care of these sanctuaries?

7 MB: Yes and no. Yes, that if they knew they were liable to attack they would
8 have had to do things differently, too. I think the B-52 strikes, had they not been told
9 about it, were pretty effective. We were within five klicks, I think they told us. We were
10 on an operation to get a message from the base camp saying, "Where's your RON?
11 Where're you moving to?" They pretty much know where we're going but a lot of guys
12 won't tell them exactly where they're going to be because you don't want them knowing.
13 They said, "Well, you need to get the hell out of where you are now because there's
14 going to be a lot of stuff going off there." They had a full Arc Light going into this one
15 area. We bagged up and got what we thought was a safe distance away. We were about
16 five klicks from the main Arc Light and that ground shook like an earthquake. I mean, it
17 was just awesome. You could hear them going over, you could hear them open the bomb
18 bay doors. They were, hell, I don't know, what forty, fifty thousand feet in the air?

19 RV: They're over thirty thousand.

20 MB: Yeah. You hear that growl, you know (growls). I was in a hammock. I
21 slept in a hammock and I'd dug a slit trench underneath the hammock. Man, it was just
22 boom, boom, boom, boom. It was just swinging all over the place. It was really
23 impressive.

24 RV: What other missions or incidents come to your mind besides the incursion
25 into Cambodia on this last tour?

26 MB: I tried to get out with my junior medic. He's a real good dude, he's a
27 Florida boy. He's a lieutenant in the Florida State Police now. I got sick, I got the runs.
28 I had to go back to camp. I wanted to go out and spend a week with him or at least a few
29 days out in the woods with him because I was getting ready to rotate. I had less than a
30 week left. That and I guess, running Highway 13. We had a jeep and two deuce-and-a-
31 halves usually made the run down the Hon Quan to buy stuff at the PX. Naturally, we'd

1 go by truck. There was always APCs blowing up, and mines and stuff. Right down the
2 street from where we had to camp three Americans got killed in, I think it was '66, '65.
3 They got ambushed down there. Me and this guy, George Reeves, we used to go down
4 there just before dark, go down there and drink beer. Then come back through the rubber
5 in a 106 jeep. It was a set-up. The incoming team was their captain and the team
6 sergeant, and the team sergeant and the captain from the team that was leaving were
7 going down there to show them around and Charlie was waiting on them, did them a job.

8 RV: You spent so much time in-country on such dangerous missions. Why do
9 you think you were spared? Was that just luck? Was it skill?

10 MB: I think it's just luck and street savvy. Most of it's just it wasn't to be. Good
11 friend, the guy I wrote the letter to telling, "Come on, nice camp, easy day, come on
12 down," he got gut shot. Another one, it was, I think northeast of Loc Ninh, the LLDB
13 didn't like to go there. We finally got an in, they made contact and he got wounded, got
14 shot, medevac'ed out. They were going to MEDEVAC him back to Oki and he damn
15 near died in the aircraft so they landed in the Philippians and they doctored him up some
16 more there. That was the first time I had gotten out of camp in three months was to go
17 see him. The initial MEDEVAC was the hospital there in Saigon. I saw him there. Like
18 I say, he was being medevaced back to Okinawa and something happened. He busted
19 open or something in the aircraft and they landed in the Philippians.

20 RV: Did he make it?

21 MB: Oh, yeah. Poor bastard, he ended up getting the same wounds he had. They
22 opened him up again and found some wire that they had used wire sutures but they also
23 found he had cancer in the pancreas. So he was a control freak. He got to the point
24 where he couldn't do for himself so he committed suicide. He took a .45 and put a round
25 in his heart.

26 RV: When did that happen?

27 MB: April of '95. There was a picture taken of three guys. The guy that sent me
28 the letter, me, and the guy I wrote the letter to, we're standing in front of the bunker. It's
29 funny because all three of those guys got cancer and it's all attributed to Agent Orange.
30 Two got prostate cancer and Kenny got the pancreatic cancer.

31 RV: So, you got prostate cancer?

1 MB: I got prostate cancer, Lee Carter got prostate cancer. The other guys, I
2 haven't really been in contact with. Old Montagnard Maynard and Rotten Roger, those
3 guys I have no idea what kind of—but so many people, this is what, five or ten years ago
4 one of the guys from our SF association was saying we lost 239 people to cancers either
5 prostate, brain, or lungs.

6 RV: You're saying that's not coincidence?

7 MB: No. It can't be a coincidence. That amount of people and this is five, ten
8 years ago, 239 guys. The guys I know never even made it off the operating table. It's all
9 brain cancer, lung cancer, prostate cancer. In the case of Kenny, it was pancreatic cancer.
10 They wouldn't have known it had they not opened him up to clean up this wound.

11 RV: When you were getting ready to leave or when you're getting really short to
12 leave in June 1970, did you know again when you were leaving or was this something
13 that just came out of the blue?

14 MB: No, no. Your PCS was coming up. I pretty much knew and I pretty much
15 knew I was going back to Oki, too, because ordinarily I would've been sent stateside.
16 But I told them, "Send me to Okinawa, don't waste the time sending me to the States."

17 RV: You stayed there another what, eighteen months or so?

18 MB: From the summer of '70 to the summer of '72.

19 RV: What did you do when you were there?

20 MB: Again, training.

21 RV: Still training?

22 MB: Yeah. That one six-month stint down in Marshall Islands. We were down
23 in an atoll down there. We built several water attachments, built a school, or a couple of
24 schools, actually. Rebuilt the seaplane ramp, cleared the runway. They had a seven-
25 thousand foot Jap runway. We cleared the coconut trees off of that so they could get a
26 little airport. Did a lot of work, worked seven days a week for six months.

27 RV: Did you know you were not going back to Vietnam or was that a possibility?

28 MB: No, because we still had in '73 and '72 we still had TDY teams going.
29 They had what was called FANK (Forces Armées Nationales Khmeres) and a couple of
30 acronyms for training Cambods and different ethnic groups over there right up until '75, I
31 think.

1 RV: So there was always a possibility that you would go back?

2 MB: Oh, yeah. You knew it was going to happen again.

3 RV: Did you want to?

4 MB: Sure.

5 RV: Why weren't you sent back up?

6 MB: Well, one thing is the reason I didn't get extended on Okinawa was because
7 I wasn't on the island. I was down there in the Marshall Islands. I couldn't do the
8 paperwork and you couldn't trust anybody to run it through for you. Subsequently, they
9 said, "Okay, it's time to go back." Anyway because it was six years overseas then, they
10 had to rotate me back for an eye operation or something.

11 RV: What was it like going back to the United States after spending that much
12 time over in Asia?

13 MB: Well, actually, as soon as I left I got into, I think it was San Francisco. I
14 took a plane to Washington, D.C. and went to change clothes at the little fort there in the
15 men's room. Changed clothes and went to the Pentagon and requested to go back to
16 Okinawa.

17 RV: What'd they say to you?

18 MB: They said, "Get out of here. You're lucky to even get into Special Forces.
19 Get the hell out of here." So, I reported back down to Fort Bragg." At that time there
20 was a brain drain. They thought that there was too much talent in Special Forces, they
21 need to spread it around. So they were taking different MOS's and assigning them to leg
22 units, civilian component, National Guard, reserve, that type of thing. I guess I was lucky
23 to get back to Bragg but I didn't know it at the time I just cried like a monkey eating
24 onions. I wanted to go back to Oki.

25 RV: What was your reception back in the United States in San Fran and then
26 Washington, D.C.? Any problems at all?

27 MB: Not for me. There was one humorous thing. When I was going back to
28 Kontum when my mom died, I was flying out of LAX (Los Angeles International
29 Airport). I'm sitting there reading something, I was in uniform and I was going back on a
30 civilian aircraft. I'm sitting there and I get the presence, you know you get that feeling,
31 and I look up and there's about five or six guys there all in these suits, white shirts and

1 ties. I think, "Holy Christ. This is either a Mormon convention or it's the FBI." What it
2 was, as it turns out, it was the Israeli intelligence folks.

3 RV: Really?

4 MB: Yeah. They saw the patch and the beret and they just wanted to chat. But I
5 was really surprised. They were there for some type of training or meeting or something,
6 I forget what the hell.

7 RV: This is the Mossad?

8 MB: I'm not sure if it was the Mossad or, but you know they brush things off.

9 RV: Was it a friendly chat, a good time?

10 MB: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. They were just interested. "How things are in 'Nam?
11 You going back?" We had a fellow at Loc Ninh who—he later committed suicide also.
12 A fellow named Eric Canstein. He was a lieutenant. He was our XO (executive officer).
13 His dad was a stockbroker in Boston. Evidently, he got recruited. The Israeli
14 intelligence, I guess they needed a Mossad or one of the military intelligence people.
15 They were looking for headhunters to interdict the Arabs coming into Israel proper. They
16 paid a flat rate plus whatever you caught, killed, or captured. He turned it down because
17 he already had a good job going back to Boston. But something happened to him. I
18 don't know what flipped him off but he ended up committing suicide.

19 RV: Let me ask you a couple of different questions about your Vietnam
20 experience before we leave there and talk about back in the United States. Thinking back
21 over all that time, are there particular brave incidents that come to mind?

22 MB: Brave?

23 RV: Yeah, anything that you just will always remember happening?

24 MB: No, not off hand. It's your perception of bravery. I think there's guys that
25 are brave to the point of being foolhardy, taking unwarranted chances. But no, I think it
26 was so commonplace. No, I can't think of anything, where you would say, bravery. I
27 didn't believe in writing people up for medals. I never wrote a person up for a medal.

28 RV: Why not?

29 MB: I figured it was our job. If it was something really exceptional, yeah. I've
30 seen people write themselves up and forward it. There was air medals. We used to
31 ride—they're armed helicopters but they just had machine guns. We'd go at dawn and

1 dusk. We'd go out and just kill time, something to do, bullshit with the pilots. We'd go
2 fly door gunner for the night or the morning or whatever, looking for bunkers, or folks, or
3 whatever, see if anything is new in the AO. They'd give the door gunners a chance to
4 stay back, have a night in the club. Guys keeping logs of their hours and all this shit. I
5 don't think most of the guys were like that. Some guys were crazy, were medal crazy. I
6 guess they saw that as a way to progress in the Army or whatever.

7 RV: Do you recall any really humorous events? Does anything come to mind?

8 MB: There's several really. One that just popped in when I thought back of
9 people coming out in strings. Two guys, old Doc Barnes and Roland Markey were
10 coming out on strings. At that time, we were having a moon war. Who could think up
11 the latest moon.

12 RV: The latest moon?

13 MB: Yes. You drop your trousers and wiggle—

14 RV: Ah, okay.

15 MB: That's mooning.

16 RV: Right, right.

17 MB: We'd find different ways of mooning people. Old Markey and Doc Barnes
18 were coming out on strings. Barnes, his lips are moving, you know, you're only sixty,
19 eighty feet below the chopper on these ropes. They're always in the chopper and the
20 down blasts from the rotors. Markey could see Barnes's lips moving. He yells out, pulls
21 him closer, yells at him, "What the hell are you talking about? I can't hear a damn thing
22 you're talking about! What the hell are you talking?" He says, "I ain't talking to you
23 asshole," he says, "I'm praying!" Then Markey mooned him. Right off hand, I don't
24 know—

25 RV: Tell me about your impressions of Vietnam itself, the country, the
26 countryside.

27 MB: It was beautiful. It was really a lush country. In and around Loc Ninh
28 there, even with the Arc Lights and the bombs and all that, it's still a beautiful place. It
29 was really pristine. It was like an Eden. If you liked hot peppers with your food, you
30 could go over to a bush and pick hot peppers off the bush. They had fruit trees out
31 growing wild. Animals, critters, they had little barking deer there. Several guys had shot

1 tigers up in the Highlands. A really, really beautiful country, the Orient. It's just what
2 you would think. The cities weren't that bad. They weren't that dirty. But most of the
3 American guys just wanted out of there. They didn't like it. They didn't like it before
4 they even got there. So it just carried over into a dislike for the country.

5 RV: I take it from you that you didn't have that attitude.

6 MB: No, I loved it. I thought that it was great. I think I told you before, I never
7 served anywhere but Asia. I never did get to Germany. I figured that's where the
8 business was. I did volunteer for Berlin detachment. But at the time I got married and I
9 married an Oriental. The mission in the Berlin detachment was to stay behind if the
10 Russians had overtaken Berlin. They would just meld into the local populous. You can't
11 do that when you're married to an Oriental. They don't look German.

12 RV: Did you meet her in Okinawa?

13 MB: No, I meet her in the States here. She's Korean, she's not Japanese.

14 RV: What can you say about the Vietnamese civilians?

15 MB: Most of them were pretty straightforward. They're pretty good people. Just
16 like Americans, some trying to sell you the Brooklyn Bridge. But they do that to their
17 own people, too. Most of them I got along with pretty well. I liked them. Some I really
18 liked. Like this one fellow we worked with in '63. I later ended up in the same camp
19 with him in '65. He was good, he was a professional soldier. He was really—he was a
20 commo man. He didn't go out much because they kept him close because of
21 communications with their higher—but he was a heck of a nice guy. I really liked him.
22 He had a good attitude. They're their Special Forces, you know. Until it got politicized
23 and the Saigon cowboys got in and did their thing. You could pretty much tell the
24 professionals.

25 RV: When you got back to the States, how difficult was it for you to transition
26 back into life in the United States?

27 MB: It wasn't hard at all. It's just the opposite of leaving. You're homesick for
28 where you just left. The two best assignments you're going to have is the one you're
29 leaving and the one you're going to.

30 RV: So, it wasn't hard for you at all?

31 MB: No, not at all.

1 RV: Did people ask you about your experience in Vietnam? Did you talk about
2 with anybody?

3 MB: If they asked I'd talk. Again, you've got to size them up. Some people just,
4 "Oh, I don't want to know about that. Tell me about the killing. Did you cut anybody's
5 ears off?" That kind of crap you cut them off at the ankles. If they had a legitimate
6 question, sure I'd answer it, no qualms.

7 RV: What was your opinion of the anti-war movement?

8 MB: I really didn't understand it. I saw pictures in the *Star and Stripes*. You
9 hear about this and that and you know the hippies. At that time, I don't remember
10 hearing about the veterans against the Vietnam War. You hear about these guys throwing
11 their medals. But we also knew there was a lot of wannabes doing this crap. They never
12 went to Vietnam, they never did anything. If a guy didn't like it, that's his bag. I work
13 with a guy right now that he told me, looking me dead in the eye, and we're not close
14 friends because we don't socialize together, but we have a good working relationship. He
15 said that he'd have gone to goddamn Canada.

16 RV: Really?

17 MB: Yeah.

18 RV: How'd that affect you?

19 MB: I didn't let on, but I had thought more of him knowing that he put his
20 service in. Had he been drafted, he'd gone to Canada or Mexico or whatever.

21 RV: Did he know you had served?

22 MB: Oh, yeah. But he didn't care. He figured I could look at it. His thinking
23 was he would be killed and that he wasn't going to get killed he was going to Canada
24 rather than go. To me, there's other ways of serving your country than being in the
25 Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, or Coast Guard. When I was in medic training at Ft.
26 Sam we had a bunch of conscience objectors. Hell, they didn't mind being in the Army,
27 they didn't mind going to war. They just wouldn't kill anybody or carry a weapon. They
28 were superb. I thought they were great. We met a lot of the young guys in language
29 school, they're ASA, like I say. ASA and the intelligence people all went to some type of
30 language school, so we got a good mix in there. If a guy legitimately disliked, because of
31 his religion or whatever, that's all well and good. But to gang up, if one-guy fires up

1 another guy, it's easy to just to do things because you feel like doing them. There were
2 things that we didn't understand: the riots in Detroit and Watts. What the hell is going
3 through these people's minds? Like I say, I think I lost about ten years of news and
4 music and what people were like back in the States because I didn't really associate with
5 it. If you are back in the States, you're on the military base anyway. People pretty much
6 think the same way you do.

7 RV: What'd you think of the media coverage of the war?

8 MB: I didn't like it. When we went into Cambodia Incursion they sent us some
9 news people, I think from CBS.

10 RV: They went with you?

11 MB: Well, they tried to. I'd run them off, wouldn't let them come in. I just didn't
12 want them in there. We didn't need any snooping of what we're doing. They sent them
13 over to the 1st Air Cav, I think. We had an incident in '65, where I and another guy had
14 two companies and Rudy Cooper and someone else had two companies. We left camp, I
15 guess about maybe midnight, one o'clock in the morning. We were going to walk to an
16 objective, two different routes. Rudy was going to hit the objective and we were going to
17 be the blocking force. Well, they hit the objective, but it there was more folks there than
18 they thought and they were well entrenched and they had a lot of problems. They had to
19 call in air and they lost a lot of folks assaulting this one bunker complex. Well, this
20 reporter—well, before that. The troops were taking fire and they took a lot of casualties
21 and when they did overrun the bunker complex, they went in and they got this one bunker
22 and I don't know if the guy was dead already or he was alive at the time, whatever, but
23 they cut his head off. It was this particular bunker that really hosed the Cambods.

24 RV: So, the Cambodians cut the head off?

25 MB: Yeah. They took the guy's scarf and wrapped around the head and he was
26 carrying the head back and this reporter took pictures of it. Well, the son-of-a-gun, when
27 the choppers come in to get the MEDEVAC, the wounded and the dead, the son-of-a-gun
28 jumps on the chopper. He wants to go. He wants to go get this picture of this guy
29 carrying the guy's head. He's got to get the Nobel Prize or something or a Peabody
30 Award or something or whatever. This guys knocking people, wounded people out of the
31 way so he can get on the damn chopper and get back to Saigon. So, Rudy radioed ahead

1 and told him, "Get that son-of-a-gun off of there and get his camera." That's what they
2 did. He was black-balled after that. He never got a ride anywhere.

3 RV: But overall, the overall coverage, you had a problem with it?

4 MB: Like I say, the only coverage we really had was what we could get on the
5 Trans-Oceanic and *Stars and Stripes*, that type of thing. My parents, I think, sent me
6 some newspapers from the local newspaper. It might be old, but you can pretty much tell
7 the way they're going. I just didn't like people coming in. We've had several people
8 interviewed that they just ignored what the hell they said and just printed what they
9 wanted anyway. I just didn't want them around.

10 RV: Has your opinion changed any since the war?

11 MB: No, not really.

12 RV: What do you think about the media coverage today of the current conflict?

13 MB: Well, I think it was a good idea to, I forget the word they use—

14 RV: Embed them?

15 MB: Embed them, yeah, good word. I don't know who thought it up, but I think
16 it was a good idea. At least they were prepared. They made them go through a mini boot
17 camp and got them in shape. At least let them know how to stay the hell out of the way
18 when they needed to. I think that was a good idea—

19 RV: Mr. Brady, let me interrupt you for just a moment, I need to change out the
20 disk.

21 MB: Sure.

22 RV: Okay, go head, sir.

23 MB: It's just so controlled. The sniper incident there in Virginia and D.C., in that
24 area. They just so overloaded you with so much stuff. They're inventing things to make
25 a big hullabaloo to sell papers or sell TV time or whatever.

26 RV: How much did you keep up with the war effort once you left, once you got
27 back in the States? Really, this is when the United States is really pulling out, the
28 Vietnamization policy is in place and we're getting ready to withdraw completely.

29 MB: When I left in '70, they were turning the camp over to, that September, they
30 were turning the camp over to the Vietnamese, excuse me, they call them Ranger Camps
31 or whatever. I talked to the guys that left. Soon as they turned the camp over, hell, they

1 were ripping the wires out to get the copper, the lights and all that stuff. One of the guys
2 that got captured after that, a fellow named Mark Smith, who I knew as a Spc-4. I think
3 he's a colonel now or lieutenant colonel retired. But he got captured and he said he knew
4 he was passing Loc Ninh. He could smell where the NVA had slaughtered the Cambods
5 and they had bulldozers. They just bulldozed over the bunkers. He could smell the dead
6 meat and he knew it was Loc Ninh. He knew he was on his way to Cambodia.

7 RV: Did you think that the Vietnamization policy had any chance of succeeding?

8 MB: I thought so, yeah, I did.

9 RV: Why did you think that?

10 MB: I thought that we had enough people advising these big infantry divisions.
11 Their military was kind of streamlined like ours. I think, hell, these guys have got to be
12 capable. They must be able to fight a war. I guess I was wrong or they didn't have the
13 will to fight. I thought they could swing it. I didn't really expect it to end like it did.

14 RV: How did you feel in '73 when the United States officially pulled out and
15 ended their participation for the most part?

16 MB: Well, I forget really what I felt at the time. I'm sure it wasn't too swift a
17 maneuver in my mind. I knew then, too, though that we had people over there TDY, like
18 with FANK, and some other training base, MTTs (mobile training team). I thought they
19 could swing it, if not, to prolong it or to get to where they'd negotiate another Korea or
20 something. Another Panmunjom or something like that.

21 RV: What about in April '75 when the country completely collapsed?

22 MB: Oh, Lord. I just couldn't believe it. When you think of the good guys that
23 did fight for their country over there: the Cambods, the Nungs, and Montagnards and a
24 lot of Vietnamese. The poor bastards were all going to get slaughtered. It was just a
25 waste to me.

26 RV: What kind of lessons do you think the United States learned from its
27 engagement in Vietnam?

28 MB: Well, I think that they better have learned if they're not going to go over
29 there to win, don't go. If they haven't learned it then we're going to be in big trouble. I
30 think we're going to be big trouble with Africa. Africa is just the old adage that never
31 fight a land war in Asia. I think Africa is the same way. I think you'd get mired down.

1 Those people have been killing each other and eating each other for years. Idi Amin just
2 died and he was supposed to have been a cannibal. He was trained by the British. A
3 country that poor and I don't think they can find other than in South Africa—Mandela,
4 that guy is a saint; he spent thirty years in jail. I think if we get involved in Africa as the
5 United States, if it's a joint with France and Germany and whoever, that's fine. But just
6 to take it on ourselves, I think it's going to be a waste of manpower and a waste of youth.

7 RV: How do you feel about your service in Vietnam today, looking back?

8 MB: I was okay with it. Like I say, that was my job. I was making—that was
9 my living. I was a professional soldier. I definitely believe that you didn't need soldiers
10 back in the United States. You hire these guys, you train them, get them out there. Get
11 them out defending the country. You're not going to defend them sitting back at a desk
12 somewhere.

13 RV: Is there anything that you would change about your experience if you could?

14 MB: Oh, yeah. Lord. Believe it or not, I would've trained harder.

15 RV: Really?

16 MB: Yes, I think. I think I'd have paid more attention to detail, especially like in
17 language. Yeah, I'd change some things, but you say that. The circumstances that you
18 were under you say you would change, but you might not have the opportunity to change.
19 I don't know how to phrase it. You don't really choose the times you're going to be over
20 there. But the times that I went, I guess were pretty fortuitous because other than
21 stepping on that mine in '65 and getting blown up in Cambodia, minor stuff over the
22 years. You wonder why. Why was I fortunate or why was I supposed to go there and not
23 go somewhere else or whatever? But, it's just fate. Like we were talking about before,
24 luck. Luck and street savvy, I guess.

25 RV: You spent a tremendous amount of time on the ground there.

26 MB: My tours, that's probably an average, I'd say, pretty much for a twenty year
27 man. To get at least two tours, two PCS tours to 'Nam. I was fortunate enough to go
28 TDY and go TDY from the States and from Okinawa. It was a broad spectrum of the
29 war, from '63 the guerilla-type war to main-line units, 1970.

30 RV: How was the war most affective to your life?

1 MB: I met some of the greatest men in the world. Like I say, I belong to a couple
2 of fraternal organizations: Special Operations Association, the Special Forces
3 Association, the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars), American Legion, the DAV (Disabled
4 American Veterans). I never did join the Military order of the Purple Heart or there was
5 another one I didn't join.

6 RV: Is there a particular reason why you didn't join them?

7 MB: No, just that I can't afford it. Between my job now and the supporting the
8 church, supporting the family, I got a lot of stuff. As soon as you join, they start hitting
9 on you. You hate to tell them no, but it would just take too much of my time. Plus, most
10 of these organizations, you get in there and you shoot the breeze, drink a few beers. It's
11 fine socially. It's just time consuming. The more organizations you belong to—like one
12 organization we only meet once a year in Las Vegas. You maintain relationships other
13 than just meeting for that one time. They're good organizations and I support them and I
14 make it a point if I do join, like the DAV, the reason I did join is to just show my support.
15 The chapters we have here are mostly World War II vets and Korean War vets. I got a
16 healthy respect for them people because they're the ones that trained me as a recruit in
17 the early '60s. As long as they're accepting that, then I'll join I don't care. But it's just
18 to show support. I'm not running for office and I'm not seeking a position or whatever.

19 RV: Would you ever want to go back to Vietnam?

20 MB: Oh, I'd love to.

21 RV: What would you do if you went back?

22 MB: Shoot, I don't really know. I'd probably like to go back to Loc Ninh and
23 see what the heck is left of that place. Maybe down into the Delta. I took some pictures
24 and my teammates took pictures. That was one thing I would change if I went back. I
25 would take more pictures of everything. We used to go out, me and the junior commo
26 man and the junior engineer, we'd go out at night, go outside the gate. They had a little
27 beer joint there. It was a little restaurant, really. We called them Howard Johnson's, they
28 had push carts and that type of thing. We'd go out there and we'd have a beer or two and
29 the little kids would all come around. They just go crazy to see hair on people's arms.
30 They'd come up and they'd feel you and touch you. They had these two twin little girls
31 that we half-ass adopted. We'd get stuff in the mail for them. I took pictures of them and

1 the two adults, the two brothers that were the fathers of these ten or fifteen kids. I heard
2 later that the Viet Cong come in and assassinated those two hoots. I often wonder what
3 that heck happened to those little kids. But, we had one kid that—I think I told you about
4 Dallas Chapman.

5 RV: Yes.

6 MB: They nicknamed the kid Chapman. Dallas got him a little set of fatigues
7 made. In fact, I just talked to Dallas here a couple of months ago. He moved to Florida
8 from Colorado and he often wonders what the hell happened to Chapman, little kid.

9 RV: Do you go see movies about Vietnam?

10 MB: No. I went and saw, because I wanted to take my wife to see it, *We Were*
11 *Soldiers Once and Young*. It was pretty good. I've seen excerpts of *Platoon*. I've seen
12 excerpts of—oh, Kenny, just before I left for Texas, took me to see *Rambo*. So, I saw the
13 first *Rambo*. I didn't see any of the subsequent. But, no.

14 RV: Why not?

15 MB: There's no need to. Even with *We Were Soldiers Once and Young*. It's a
16 good story; it's a good read, but all the special effects and all this stuff. Charlie wasn't
17 stupid. You never fired from behind a tree most of the time, anyway. They had to do it
18 to show numbers of troops and numbers of troops in maneuver and stuff. Special effects
19 and that and things that I didn't think were necessary. I saw *The Deer Hunter*; and that
20 was wacky. I think I fell asleep during the Marlon Brando—

21 RV: *Apocalypse Now*?

22 MB: Yeah. I used to love war movies as a kid, but it just didn't move me one
23 way or another. I did love *Forrest Gump* though. I really, really enjoyed that.

24 RV: What would you tell the younger generation today about Vietnam?

25 MB: Oh, shoot. Oh, I don't know. I guess you'd have to—I don't know how
26 these kids think today. It was a war, it wasn't a police action, it was a war. You were
27 doing something that your country wanted you to do. If everybody decided, "Well, I'm
28 not going to do that because it might hurt the monkeys in the jungle. I'm not going to do
29 it." If everybody thought that way, hell, nobody would go over there. "I don't like the
30 rice. I'm not going." I think you owe something to this country, not necessarily by
31 joining the Army or going to Vietnam or going anywhere. You owe something to the

1 country, you need to pay back. The kids I've talked to are pretty level headed. They
2 understand that certain things were tragic. But there's things coming out now like that
3 poor little girl running down the street naked that all her clothes were burned off. It's not
4 necessarily so and they're blaming the Americans. Well, from what I understand now,
5 they know that it was a Vietnamese aircraft that did the napalming. But that picture has
6 burned into the sensitivity of how many millions people, American baby killers, maimers.
7 Hell, we did a lot of good over there. I was just telling the guys at work here the other
8 day, we're talking about deformed kids. While I was there at Loc Ninh, I heard about
9 this French dentist that was fixing hare lips. We had several hare-lipped kids in there and
10 one kid had a cleft palate and hare lip. His hands were webbed, hands and feet. The poor
11 little critter, you know he was a hell of a good little sport. He didn't understand English.
12 But you could go mess around with him, tickle him. We'd go see him on operations.
13 We'd stop by in Village 7 to see this kid. I got a hold of the French doctor and told him
14 about him. Anyway, they got him fixed. They wouldn't free up his hands or his feet
15 because they thought he was functioning already but they did fix his cleft pallet. Sending
16 kids to school and orphanages and stuff like that. We did a lot of good, not just a bunch
17 of ogres. We melded in with the population. If we went to the woods with the little
18 people, we ate what they ate, shared what we had.

19 RV: Have you ever been to the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington?

20 MB: No, I drove around it one time, but I didn't go. I've been to the little one
21 they had out here in Dallas. They had the small Wall there in Restland Cemetery there, I
22 did go by that.

23 RV: What was your experience like?

24 MB: Kind of ambivalent, I think. I feel bad. There's guys that were killed in
25 'Nam that are not getting recognition, the guys that are dying here long after the war is
26 over. The guys that I know that got killed were regular guys. It's a shame they got killed
27 and you feel bad that they never got a chance to do or see things that you were able to do
28 because you survived. But the Wall itself, I don't need that kind of a reminder. The guys
29 that I know that are dead, you know the old saying that as long as people are thinking of
30 you or can remember you, you're never really forgotten. I don't need a monument to
31 remind me of the guys that got killed. My computer at work, we got a website called

1 “The Team House” and then the SF and the SOA (Special Operations Association) have
2 their own thing. They got the Wall itself you call up anybody that’s on the Wall and it’ll
3 give you a short blurb of when they died basically, how or if the body was recovered or
4 whatever. There’s other sites on there though that you can look up and actually see the
5 coordinates of where they got killed or became missing or whatever. I think they’re just
6 building too many. Even the SOA, they took a vote and said, “Well, yeah, they’re going
7 to build this monument to Special Ops people down there at MacDill Air Force Base.
8 We’re going to give them so many thousands of dollars to build this monument.” It’s a
9 nice little monument, but then they got some other grab-ass stuff. The center is going to
10 be for Medal of Honor winners only. Then on either side of that they’ll have generals
11 and colonels. It started getting politicized and that type of thing. Instead of building a
12 monument—we had the best remembrance of our dead in scholarship fund. We got a
13 scholarship fund in the Special Ops Association that’s out of this world. They really do
14 some good. I got friends that their kids took advantage of it. It’s a four-year deal if you
15 qualify and your grades stay up. That’s the best monument in the world. You don’t need
16 a bunch of—we’re going to be a country of monuments and no military.

17 RV: Yes, sir. Well, Mr. Brady, is there anything else that you want to talk about
18 or add to our discussions?

19 MB: No, I think we covered just about everything in creation.

20 RV: Yes sir. Okay.

21 MB: Sorry about the rambling.

22 RV: No sir, I appreciate your time very much and we will go ahead and end the
23 oral history interview now with Mr. Martin Brady. Thank you very much, sir.

24 MB: Thank you, Richard.