

Interviewer: Okay thank you Mr. Skrodzk now the first question is you are aware that you are being recorded for the purpose of my interview.

Skrodzk: Yes

Interviewer: Thank you. Okay please state your name, rank, and you know a brief detail of your service.

Skrodzk: Alright Thomas E Skrodzk retired as an army colonel spent 26 years in the military. Started out in the infantry did a tour in Vietnam was transferred to the quarter master core and was pretty much on low gestation the rest of the time I was on active duty. Commanded a DMC and a 3rd ID of the 426 SMT battalion in the 101st and was the G4 for the 101st for a two year period. The last period the last year was or Desert Storm Desert Shield. Became the Garretson commander after a short stint as the IG at Fort Campbell and then retired in 1994.

Interviewer: Okay so how much do you think you had with the 101st?

Skrodzk: Total time of my service was about 10 years because I served in the early 70s had a couple of company commands and some staff positions in what was then the course port organization. And then came back here as a battalion commander, G4, IG and then Garretson Commander.

Interviewer: Right so ten years of 26?

Skrodzk: Twenty six

Interviewer: So a pretty good portion was with

Skrodzk: Yeah I grew up with the logistics of the 101st and how it operated. We went to hot refueling which was a big concept back after Vietnam and it was cold refueling run up and down the runways and we finally convinced the aviators that the best way to do it was how we did it in Vietnam. You pulled up got gas and flew away you didn't have to shut down. And so we actually did it with unit equipment 102nd quarter master company which then was a truck end QM company 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: On the flight line. So the air assault was engrained pretty much into my background. Most of the units I served with other than the 3rd infantry division were light units. I spent four years with the 23rd division, I spent two years with the 177th infantry brigade in Alaska, and a tour with an air mobile division one on of the first air mobile divisions 21st armor division in Vietnam. The only way we could get around was to fly so that was pretty much my career was dealing with air assault and supply by air.

Interviewer: Would you mind detailing your service with the 21st armor division?

Skrodzk: Yes actually I was infantry officer but I was an advisor to a battalion. We had a division advisory team headed by a colonel, I was a captain then, and each regiment had a colonel some captains some sergeants advising the South Vietnamese division. And actually we were really there to call in air strikes it was kind of our at the ten year mark of the war or whatever it was. We surely were not the experts on how to fight a war they were. And fresh captains like myself coming in obviously had to learn pretty quick how to survive. I was in the delta way down in the south part of Nan Cam union force rice bowl

and the only way you got around was by helicopter. Our U.S. helicopters were better than the models the Vietnamese had. So they moved their artillery for them and we flew everywhere we flew, I did a lot of flying.

Interviewer: Yeah I imagine you would.

Skrodzk: And we relocated to 3 core during the ___ defensive in 1972 and fought the ___ who had come down from the north and had of their divisions in the south operating except for one. We figured we our division got chewed up in a two month we lost 4200 killed and wounded.

Interviewer: Ouch

Skrodzk: Yeah it was pretty touch it was a tough year for the war. Not so much for American deaths it was the worst year of the war for the Vietnamese _____ 1972. Most people don't realize that but I got out of there in one piece so.

Interviewer: And we're all thankful for that.

Skrodzk: Thank you

Interviewer: Okay then so would you mind comparing and contrasting air mobile operations with the Raven to air mobile _____ operations to the 101st.

Skrodzk: Never much similar and I'm sure you could take to someone who operated with one of our American units you know the first calv or anybody else with the 101st. They did everything by helicopter and it's all been chronicled. But we didn't move around without getting ___ I mean I did many a combat assaults you know going into a combat situation. LZs going skids of helicopters sitting on the edge just was the way we did. And of course they learned it and their pilots we trained and they had their V-Nav the Vietnamese air force pilots that we flew with. And we were supposed of course by American gunships. And then we would call in airstrikes as needed. They had the navy offshore and then jets out of ___ in Thailand and facts that came on station. But we would respond to situations and then we would relocate all the time. So you didn't stay in one location ___ you were chasing the VC there. And we would get on helicopters and fly and then walk and then fly and then walk somewhere and spend the night and then head back and fly somewhere else. That was pretty much how we operated so all of our resupply had to come from helicopter.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: Just no question about it. Very light you know we ate with them I wasn't a sea ration fan and when you're walking around in the rice patties in the heat and in the rain and stuff they are too heavy to carry so.

Interviewer: Interesting ___ on the questions. So first question then is if you could please discuss general peace the screaming eagle project.

Skrodzk: Yeah we one thing to keep in mind is General Peace to say is we had a pretty seasoned staff as we went into the preparation for deployment and deployment. And the actual conduct of Desert Shield ___ Desert Storm. All the staff officers at least had been there about a year. And so when we went over

we'd been working together. But he had me working on a lot of projects for an exercise that kind of got called Slim Eagle. And this was not a PT program it was one to lighten the load because there was a lot of talk about cutting back divisions.

Interviewer: If they weren't deployable?

Skrodzk: If they weren't deployable and what it took to get somebody and when you start looking around at the 101st especially with 400 helicopters and all of the ___ equipment that goes with them and we were just starting to get emits and still had requirements for a lot of fuel. Of course a lot of ammunition with ___ fire capability and all of that. And then the rest of the division its troops we were a heavy package. And so we looked at ways to air assault and to do some dune buggy type vehicles and other stuff before the Humvees actually started coming out. Which they came out about that time and yet they were still untested. And as you could see what happened with Iraq and Afghanistan now with the heavy armor plating of them. But we were seeking something that would operate in desert or limited environment and be able to be light weight and somehow shed our skin of when I was battalion commander as example in the discom we didn't have any cots.

Interviewer: What?

Skrodzk: We were not allowed to sleep on a cot and we had gotten rid of them all. And so the first thing we needed when we went to Desert Storm was cots. So cots became an unbelievable you could spend a day talking about cots and what the status was and where they were and who had them and how come somebody else got them and we didn't get them. And why did the 24th division come into port and steal all of the cots and take them before anyone else could get them and you know all of these kind of things were going on all the time. So cots were a real issue the other thing was as we ended up deploying we had to get to the port in a hurry. And whoever could get there first kind of got on the ships and got going so that was another interesting factor.

Interviewer:

Skrodzk: Yeah in a lot of respects it was. One of the interesting things and if you'd find it in there was we've got a ship called the American Eagle.

Interviewer: Yes

Skrodzk: It was the first ship that took us to Vietnam.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: And then it was the first ship that took us to _____.

Interviewer: Oh really I didn't know it took you to ___ too.

Skrodzk: Yeah and the first one that we got for Desert Storm. It was very unusual American Eagle and kind of an interesting story there in itself. But the post did an unbelievable job in getting us to the port. Getting away from your Slim Eagle but we really didn't make a lot of headway there because in the middle of trying to do all of that we ended up having to deploy. In fact we were in the middle of an exercise at Fort Bragg and that's when the rolled up to the Kuwaiti border.

Interviewer: Was it _____?

Skrodzk: It was whatever I don't remember the name of the exercise it might have been. What we always looked at and I guess this is all unclassified now but I'll leave it to your discretion here. But there was an op plan 1020 or 1029 or 1060 or something I don't even remember the name of it.

Interviewer: 1002

Skrodzk: 1002

Interviewer: Yeah 1002-90 was _____

Skrodzk: _____ was well this was the out plan to go into Iran.

Interviewer: Okay it's not.

Skrodzk: Okay and which was totally bare bones hardly a port anything else. And we were exercising that option in fact I had briefed General Schwarzkopf as a part of our as a part of the plan under General _____ down at Brag _____ exercise. And the last thing I remember at our out brief was he came by and said, "Boys he said you better get on home because it looks like we're heading to Southwest Asia." And that's when the news had hit and we flew back home and started our preparation and raced to get over there. So really as far as slimming down the division we never really had an opportunity to do the kinds of things that we looked at. And that would have been get rid of some five tons go with these lighter weight trucks that you know that are out there now that are being used in other parts of the world that are made by Mercedes or Volvo. The diesels and all that kind of stuff that could fit the bill. Go to maybe some more vehicles with better traction and just shed some pounds. But it's just hard to do when you've got the footprint that you know the 101st takes with all of its aviation.

Interviewer: Yeah so then you guys looked at adopting a dune buggy type vehicle?

Skrodzk: Yes we did we did some airlifting exercises with some striped down Humvees and stuff like that. But kind of never really got anywhere with it that I remember, somebody else might have a different take on that.

Interviewer: Yeah I haven't heard of anything I mean the thing though is that looking in the

Skrodzk: You know all of the guys out there the 9th division when they were at Fort Lewis doing some things there.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: They ended up going to a striker brigade which is hardly light weight. But they were doing some stuff like that the time and that's kind of where General P was thinking you know we ought to be taking this approach.

Interviewer: Yeah well the thing is that when I was going through the archives one of the news reports that I found was something about limitations on ground mobility. Because you know I guess there was I'm not if there was not enough or scarce or just enough you know.

Skrodzk: When you say ground mobility you mean transportation assets?

Interviewer: Yes I think?

Skrodzk: Well that's a whole nother subject. But where the Slim Eagle thing in the division part came from the possibility of they had talked about this is stuff that goes on all the time but.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: They had about maybe relocating the 101st out of here to Fort Drum. And that may have come later or before this I don't remember it may have been in the wings but then it became one of these maybe we ought to disband the division. And a lot of that also came out from NATO.

Interviewer: Yes because they

Skrodzk: ____ didn't go we were very upset. In fact General Steiner who was the core commander came here to give us a briefing and he got actually booed and hissed when he said well we took the 82nd guys and we married them up with the 7th division helicopters and we were like you've got to be kidding me. You know why would you even consider when we do this for a living you know.

Interviewer: That's doesn't

Skrodzk: Plus the 160th here and of course they got a piece of that. But you know it was kind of odd. So we didn't want to get left out of the next war and here come the next thing coming up you know it was brewing up in the Middle East and of course obviously they needed everybody.

Interviewer: Right okay so you say that slimming really didn't affect the 101st?

Skrodzk: Can't say that it really did to be honest with you.

Interviewer: Okay

Skrodzk: I mean you just needed every single thing you could and what ended up happening was a little ____ was all of those and I'll say this the difference between you know that period of me serving in Vietnam and the whole 30 years of the folding the gap. And you know were going to re-forge.

Interviewer: Right Europe

Skrodzk: Europe, Europe, Europe, Europe or deploying which nobody did. You know you did your Grenada's you went into

Interviewer: Panama

Skrodzk: Panama you know whose I meant Panama earlier not Grenada.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: But those things and we would do a lot of contingencies of activities around the world. We were drilling stuff up all the time you know kidnapping of someone in Africa and then they send some Marines or somebody else or whatever would happen. But you prepare your whole career and all you talk about is going overseas to Germany to fight the Russians.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: You know or the Korean scenario in Korea going over there to be in Korea stationed or supplement whatever is over there is going to be a right off you know on the 3rd Brigade of the 2nd Division sitting on the boarder that's going to get run over in two minutes you know. So that's always there and this being prepared to deploy stuff. Well here we were now finally deploying and for the first time getting stuff to the port for real and sending it somewhere and needing every single thing that you wanted. Well the unit's appetite for stuff drove you crazy because everybody wanted everything. And they were afraid they weren't going to have anything and somebody else was going to get it like the cots. But you know suntan lotion, bug repellent, ammunition, barrier material, sleeping bags you know you name it stuff we didn't have. And then all of a sudden all this stuff shows up that you're always short in the unit so in other words you don't get the five forklifts your supposed to have until you go to war. Or you don't get the three five tons that you needed. So you're carrying these you're in these units that have degraded by the unit reports readiness reports that in fact show you not of the level of green maybe amber because of both maintenance show shortages. Well all of a sudden this stuff starts showing up from depots everywhere. And we're going where's this stuff been why didn't we have it ____ you know. Then of course the people start pilling in.

Interviewer: Start hording.

Skrodzk: Now you've finally got four squads or teams or more officers or NCOs or whatever you might have needed. And your unit strengthens up close to 100 percent where you might have been running in the 90s or maybe lower. Although we were one of the higher rated units you know we were in pretty good shape people wise.

Interviewer: Actually I think the 101st was over 100 percent.

Skrodzk: Yeah probably ended up that way. And then of course you had a captive audience because nobody was going anywhere unless you got pregnant and had to end up coming back or something.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: But so getting everything down there became a drill while at the same time we were receiving a bunch of stuff. So trying to stay on top of that and I have to really compliment we couldn't have done it without the instillation. And from what I heard from other installations that they didn't have the same kind of level support that we have they never did. And I was installation commander and I can vouch for that but we had trucks in here and we were paying them deadhead to come back and get the stuff and turn around. And the state troopers were letting them run a hundred miles an hour down to the boarder. We sent teams down there there's a guy I ought to give you his number I don't know how much times you've got to do all of this if you've got time.

Interviewer: It's due at the end of the month.

Skrodzk: He was the DTO is name was Mark Dilly and he was a major. His work was unbelievable you know and his team of guys.

Interviewer: You know if he's still in the area?

Skrodzk: He's in Huntsville.

Interviewer: Alabama?

Skrodzk: Uh huh yeah he'd be valuable to talk to I could give you his phone number or his email. He's a great guy.

Interviewer: I'll have to think on that.

Skrodzk: Okay so anyway the effort getting over there was pretty significant and took quite some time because obviously you put stuff on a shipment twenty five, thirty five days later it shows up at a port. And then you've got to get it out of the port and drive it up to where we were and oh by the way we're in the middle of nowhere setting up a base camp out in the desert. We didn't fall in on permanent facilities like the 82nd did. I'll give it to the 24th they went out in the desert and stayed there the whole time. We at least were a King Fad Airbase and thank God I had a building to go into. Yeah during the day we worked out of the staff the main staff did and the headquarters. But most guys were in tents the whole time you know where as the air force had there you know air conditioned tents and things. I slept in the shift plant it was the airport. The airport wasn't built yet and it wasn't finished. And it got to be where we actually paved paid for paving contracted for paving and stuff like that so the helicopters would have spots because on top of all the supply and logistics issues we had a heck of a maintenance problem with all the equipment. Helicopter blades so we had to set up

Interviewer: Sand chews up everything.

Skrodzk: A blade repair facility which was excellently done in Dinar I think it was where they went and fixed all the blades and taped them and protected them form the sand. So the helicopters did great they really did it was pretty amazing and the vehicles did pretty damn good. We had some fuel pump problems with the Humvees and they tried blaming it on JB5.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: That wasn't the issue it was just something wrong with that because we went with this single fuel that was big.

Interviewer: Oh yeah

Skrodzk: That was a very big saver there I mean we had over a million gallons on the ground to start the ground work. So that was quite an oasis for fuel dump or whatever you might want to call it. But the biggest problem was as we were going over and trying to send everything was trying to figure out what we didn't have and that we were going to need. And how we marry ourselves up with that and where does it come from.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: And I can tell you I had fits and I had some arguments with some high ranking people in the AMC world and others who just couldn't figure out that we didn't have these pre-positioned stocks and ____ Garcia and where was the ammo that was in some depot somewhere and how was it going to get to us. And so we had to go to local contractors to get sandbags to get wire to get tents.

Interviewer: Local here or local over there?

Skrodzk: No local over there.

Interviewer: Okay

Skrodzk: And finding those guys and their reliability I mean one of the shames of it is I doubt we're as prepared today as probably as ill prepared today as we were then. I mean you can't underestimate sandbags. I mean we didn't have them.

Interviewer: Aren't they so easy to get?

Skrodzk: Oh yeah

Interviewer: You shouldn't have to worry about that until you have to.

Skrodzk: We were still hauling in ammo and the war was over. You know had it gone on it might have been a different story. But then we had it all sitting there in the desert and had to haul it all back. You know so that was kind of a lesson learned. Yeah we've got rope use but nobody wants to drink rope water and finally thank God the world woke up to bottled water. And when we first started getting it which of course is a huge transportation requirement I mean a semi-tractor trailer brining a load of water bottles ain't a lot of water it doesn't last very long.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: And when you're drinking twenty quarts a day or whatever everybody had to have I should have brought you one of my water bottles that I still have wrapped in burlap you know the guys carried around with them. It just goes fast you know.

Interviewer: I think the requirement I think it was something like a half a case per man per day or something like that.

Skrodzk: Yeah in fact that was a question Schwarzkopf asked me he said how are you going to do the water you know are you going to have enough for everybody. Of course all our answer was then was rope use but we were able to find sources for water that was bottled over there in Saudi Arabia and other places. And it was funny because we were getting bottles that were liked dated a year or two prior and then about the time we went to the war it was like last month. You know so that's how we went through it.

Interviewer: You just sucked it up.

Skrodzk: You just sucked it up you know and of course they had the gas so we got unlimited fuel we had no problem. They had a port there they had a road system in network you know that we could tie into.

The real strain was that on the right on the left hook all we had was one road the Tap Line Road which accident city waiting to happen. I mean it was nothing but a pileup place two lanes barely passable with all that traffic.

Interviewer: Now when you say two lanes do you mean two lanes total or

Skrodzk: Two lanes total.

Interviewer: Awesome

Skrodzk: Oh yeah they would meet you going by breaking mirrors passing each other especially with larger vehicles. Transportation was really an issue.

Interviewer: Oh yeah

Skrodzk: There was no question about it. We had an Egyptian transportation battalion attached to _____ or whoever they belonged to. In fact I met the battalion commander one time and I mean those guys were in so much demand there it was unbelievable. You couldn't use them enough you know and of course they had _____ for carrying around the tank and stuff for everybody that needed that.

Interviewer: The thing is I went up not too long ago to Carlyle to do to some research and I read something that there was some battalion commander somewhere who was essentially offering like a letter of recommendation for American citizenship if those third war truckers would you know take their loads up to the front line.

Skrodzk: Yeah probably true probably true.

Interviewer: Yeah um let's see so we're good with that question. The second question what sort of ammo load?

Skrodzk: Well you know we had a basic load.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: And I couldn't really tell you what the basic load meant and nobody can even explain basic load. It's just whatever you get for the weapon that you have. So if you've got a pistol as your assigned weapon it might be 21 rounds or 14 rounds or whatever the heck the thing was for a 9 millimeter. So basic load was pretty much all we had. I really would draw a blank on what our status was here in the division of artillery rounds and hell fires and you know 50 caliber rounds and things like that. But we wouldn't have had much more than training stocks and some sort of a basic load that was probably protected for a deployment scenario. Because when you would do _____ exercises call up your brigade and say hey you've got you're going out in 24 hours. You know you'd have 18 hours to wheels up you know that kind of a thing. You moved all your stuff to the ready line out at the airfield and that would include drawing your ammo and doing all that sort of stuff. So we had some ammo but any beyond that or any shortages had to come from wherever it was in some ammo depot that the army had somewhere.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: You know at Redstone or whoever had the ammo I don't even remember now but. My brain is forgetting a lot of this stuff.

Interviewer: It's all good it's just one of the things I've read you know.

Skrodzk: And we had to marry that up with our units.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: And I can remember us you know the first tie end ____ you know blowing off some hell fires or something you know our there. And the chief getting mad you know telling the battalion commander hey don't be shooting guys on bicycles with hell fire you know that kind of thing. Because we were trying to protect them and so that was kind of an issue you know we how much ammo. And we did watch our hell fire as you know the war was started by the 101st and Cody fires and bla bla bla to start the air war. Have you seen the video?

Interviewer: No I haven't seen the video.

Skrodzk: Where the guys are in the trailers and they just poo and one guy runs to the next one.

Interviewer: No I haven't

Skrodzk: Then they knocked out all the radar so the jets could come in. It's pretty cool.

Interviewer: I'll have to look that up.

Skrodzk: It's pretty cool.

Interviewer: Okay well the reason I ask this question is because a lot of the you know a good amount of like you know unit histories and jewels reports and stuff its stuff like the 101st did not deploy with an acceptable amount of basic ammo.

Skrodzk: No we didn't we didn't.

Interviewer: I think it might have just been the DRVs ammo but I'm not totally sure.

Skrodzk: That's probably all it was. And you know like I say I'm not really remembering what our status was but we may have had one DRVs worth of whatever that was of a basic load for that time and then some small arms and other stuff. I don't know how many training rounds or if there's a difference in artillery training rounds versus the ____ or ____ they would have needed or time explosion ones or I don't know enough about it to remember it but.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: But then you had MLRS and you know some of the other stuff there. It was an issue that's why it was a panic time because we're trying to figure out where's this ammo coming from that we thought by you know realities sake somebody knows where this stuff is. And we can get it to you because that's

what we do we prepare to be ready war prepositioned in an island somewhere or in the depot but it really wasn't.

Interviewer: Okay and do you have something or are you just reviewing that?

Skrodzk: No I'm just

Interviewer: Okay well I guess this brings us to the third question. Did the 101st draw on any prepositioned stores from either the pre-post ships or ___ cassettes or anything like that nothing?

Skrodzk: No not anything than I already mentioned about getting stuff that showed up from you know wherever they kept those things that we were short already pieces of equipment and stuff like that. And then of course units started ordering stuff like crazy so all of that starts coming in and then it was trying to marry that stuff up with them after they already started getting ready to load out. And get that to the port and catch up with where everything was so you can imagine the nightmare that that stuff turned out to be. So we did get some stuff but as far as barrier material, ammo and when I say barrier I mean in concertina, sandbags, timbers, any other kind of whatever pickets and stakes whatever they call that stuff we had a hard time getting it.

Interviewer: Okay then so question four. Do you know what supply levels the task force deployed with and how long it could have operated from?

Skrodzk: Well they had their package of stuff.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: I would say if they'd have had an attack they'd have been in trouble.

Interviewer: Yeah I've heard that.

Skrodzk: Because really they just went out there and occupied 40 million square miles of whatever. And there are some cool stories though. I mean I didn't bring it but one of my favorite articles if this one sergeant that they had and maybe you read it about there waiting and watching. And it was before the war and it's about a guy in a previous place that was occupied by the 82nd when they first got there. And he's in a ___ and he's wondering who are these guys that may be coming after us you know maybe I'll find out. It's really a cool article it's written but once we got there and could start supplying people with stuff but it was a day to day. You'd fly until you thought you were just going to fall out of the sky because you can't see anything. It's so weird over there as far as that went but once we got the supply thing going of course everything was by air. And once you got your chinooks in country you could do that.

Interviewer: Then we'll go with that line of thinking and what was the question yeah I think I'll just combine what I have for eight and nine here. Now during the Dessert Shield phase how often did chinooks transport cargo? How often did Blackhawks and how often was it ground transportation?

Skrodzk: Well it was mostly by air.

Interviewer: Because of the distances?

Skrodzk: The distance yeah and you know it was tearing up the vehicles the tires and the roads are like you know they aren't. And it's like driving on the face of the moon for the most part. And it would just take too long and of course you had to prioritize assets but there would be convoys of stuff delivered you know to the unit depending on where it came from. But a lot of stuff was done by air because that's limited too you can only put so much stuff in a chinook or hang it underneath it. And a Blackhawk doesn't carry that much you know so that's pretty much how that worked.

Interviewer: Okay so then it was mostly chinooks and not much for Blackhawks?

Skrodzk: Yeah I mean they were training they were doing their stuff they normally do. And of course there is some and then 6th battalion had hueyies.

Interviewer: Yes

Skrodzk: You know even then and of course they were more of a support mission they had a path finder thing and all of that. In fact I've got a couple of pictures here's the mail as an example and that's just a small piece of it.

Interviewer: Wow

Skrodzk: And there was so much crap they all got to be no priority. Here we were there brought our sign from post.

Interviewer: Is that a building made of sandbags?

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: Yeah okay well it works.

Skrodzk: Let me see if that's yeah that's a bunker. This was K _____ military.

Interviewer: KKMC

Skrodzk: Yeah that was kind of an oasis there of

Interviewer: It's weird

Skrodzk: That's place was unbelievable you could go there and eat a meal like you can't find in this town you know. It was just strange you could stay there and it was kind of a place here's a road into it had a way. Here's a pipeline

Interviewer: It looks weird because there's a random fountain there and it's you know it's obviously desert and those weird

Skrodzk: Yeah as opposed to here you have to really camo up. And so carrying all of this stuff in this stuff doesn't lighten your footprint.

Interviewer: No

Skrodzk: Any and then you've got to clean all of that stuff and bring it back.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: Which was a real nightmare and here's part of your pipeline.

Interviewer: Now this pipeline

Skrodzk: That's

Interviewer: Oh that's the trans tap line pipeline oh wow

Skrodzk: And it ran along Tap Line Road. He's mail

Interviewer: Yeah more mail oh wow.

Skrodzk: Here's one that was just an unbelievable thing.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: People were sending stuff in fact no one was even opening it.

Interviewer: Really

Skrodzk: We used buses of course the 82nd was called death by a bus death from a bus that was what it was.

Interviewer: I interviewed a

Skrodzk: Here's some stuff here just kind of

Interviewer: I interviewed a guy you know when I was at temple my undergrad I interviewed the BC for the ROTC battalion. He was with the 101 sorry he was with the 82nd in the first Gulf War. And he called it operation drive around looking for trouble because they drove around looking for trouble.

Skrodzk: Yeah we called it the speed boat. And of course the 130 did a lot of work you know.

Interviewer: Enter theater airlift how did enter theater airlift work for the division?

Skrodzk: Well it just depends on what you're talking about actually there was a lot of confusing yeah here's the building we were operating out of. I'm just showing you some of the stuff. See here the tankers would come in and off load and that was us refueling up these you can see that ____ farm there that was where the million gallons was. And this is the facility as you look at where we were and the base camp there this is

Interviewer: Yeah there's not much there.

Skrodzk: And that's the tent city going in I think is what that was. So just so you can see some of that to get I'm sure you've seen plenty of pictures.

Interviewer: A decent amount yeah. Well you know it's still interesting just to see.

Skrodzk: Yeah you're welcome to look at any of those too.

Interviewer: Anyways you were saying.

Skrodzk: What were we talking about?

Interviewer: Let's see here I had asked about into theater airlift.

Skrodzk: Yeah the weird part was we had so many competing interests for the limited assets that were there. Let me give you one example besides the cots and the ___ material and all the real things that counted. When they started sending in units in December before the war started from Europe.

Interviewer: Oh and they brought in 7 core?

Skrodzk: Yeah they wanted their fair share of uniforms. Okay so we were already in rags and tatters and boots were cracked up and uniforms were wrecked. Not for guys like me but for troopers who were really out there walking all the time and the infantry guy and the guy who's living in the weeds or in the desert. Their answer was to fair share everything all the time. And I used to get so damn mad at Bigonus I mean I stood on his desk a couple of times literally complaining you know. Why would they get them just let me ware whatever the hell they've got now you know what's the difference. Our uniforms are worn out because we got four sets or whatever we got to deploy with and that's all we get. So they could bringing coming from Germany 20 sets a piece if they wanted to you know of their old things. What difference did it make what uniform they were in? Nobody could get that and you go and find these mill vans full of boots and nobody would give them out to anybody because they were hoarding them. And we had guys who just asked if you ever got a hold of General Shelton and he'll still spit nails over boots.

Interviewer: CSM Nichols?

Skrodzk: Sergeant Major Nichols oh yeah. And he and his brigade command and I are all good friends and you know it was hard trying to keep the appetites you know supplied with guys.

Interviewer: It worked.

Skrodzk: So inter theater was I kind of keep getting away from it but you that issue going on. And so you had stuff coming in the country and then it was how'd you get ahold of it? And of you could get to the port or get somebody down there or get the right guy to allocate it to you you got the stuff. But we also were getting things from the states back through Force Com and oh yes by the way we were getting supplied from Fort Campbell. So stuff was getting ordered at Fort Campbell and sent in. I mean we needed light sets we didn't have so you could operate at night. I mean just all those things that you don't have yeah the units have generic light sets but there pathetic and nobody ever used them. And so now we needed them needed special stuff and you had to operate 24 hours etcetera. You needed these tents so you had to find ___ tents it's just a whole gamut of or there's no latrines. You don't dig slip

trench latrines in the desert and you're in a base camp. So we had to try to jerry rig a water system which the engineer battalion commander did Vanansworth who retired as a three star general unless he's still on active duty. Great guy he put together a water system throughout the camp and then we got those guys at ____ to build us what you call shit houses you know. And the first ones they made were so crapily made that they fell apart being shipped to us. The roofs were blowing off of them and everything else. This is a big problem you've got 20,000 guys sitting in a base camp disease and everything else. And we because of General Peay used our own cooks and cooked our own food, we did not use contract feeding. He wanted the cooks first of all to have something to do second of all it gave them the chance to do their stuff and then

Interviewer: Contribute

Skrodzk: Contribute and he didn't trust foreign nationals and other people coming in.

Interviewer: Now out of curiosity that General Peay having the cooks did that have anything to do with I think it was an incident shortly after the 101 arrived in country where lettuce that wasn't washed?

Skrodzk: Well the first time we got lettuce we all got diarrhea. But we got supplements.

Interviewer: Yes

Skrodzk: Okay and mostly supplements were boxed juices, cakes, candies things like that fruit that we would get is called supplements and it was a big variety of stuff that didn't come with the drawing of MREs. So if you ask me about MREs I hate MREs I never did like them. I ate MREs for actually they are better than t-rations. But I ate MREs for like six weeks straight that's how long it was before we even got the t-rations. Then all we could get was like chicken a la king for three meals.

Interviewer: One thing

Skrodzk: Yeah the first time we got steaks you couldn't chop it, chew it, blow it up, cut it nothing. I mean it was like a joke. Here the other units they had contract feeding and were supposedly eating pretty good you know some were so. We opted not to do it after the war was over and we came back to the basecamp to redeploy we got some guys in and finally after a couple of days of it being pretty screwed up they got it straight and we were all eating big. And the wolf burger if you've ever heard that.

Interviewer: Yes

Skrodzk: Well I was the one that got those brought back here. Yeah and anything in the museum like tents and boots and uniforms I got all that stuff and gave it to them put it aside. They used to have a little display in there where now they've got a Taylor's ten an actual Taylor right inside the door where you go in there's a little cube thing. They had a little Desert Storm things there for a while but I guess John O'Brien's got all of that in the back now. But anyway I brought all the stuff back for them to keep that and the other stuff. I've got the Christmas tree we had in the division headquarters at home.

Interviewer: Nice but getting briefly back to the contract food now you said you guys eventually started using it?

Skrodzk: It was after the war.

Interviewer: Oh after the war.

Skrodzk: After the war was the only time we did it.

Interviewer: Okay and how was it?

Skrodzk: It was okay after a few days. Yeah it worked fine.

Interviewer: Okay then let's see I'll move to question five. When did ammunition stocks meet acceptable levels and why did it take that long?

Skrodzk: Acceptable levels really were not ever met because it just took so long and it's so heavy and it takes so much transportation to move it that by the time we got it out to where we were I mean we were getting these trucks coming in as we were __ to the war and they were still coming in. And then we had to stop everything and turn around and bring it back.

Interviewer: Wait now you said you were getting truck as in you were being issued the trucks you were supposed to have had?

Skrodzk: No issued the ammunition on trucks. Ammunition were coming in

Interviewer: Okay

Skrodzk: All the way up to the time we went to the war just we continued to fill up out billets or our bags with fuel so we would have as much fuel on the ground as we could have to start the war. And of course resupply plan was in as we used it we were refilling the bags you know. So we had that going on constantly from the core assets.

Interviewer: Well then on that I'll skip ahead I have a question ten and I'm not sure I have it there but it's please discuss the problems of adequate supply __ that you brought up in your jewels report.

Skrodzk: Which question was that?

Interviewer: Remember I came up with some with three new ones I had ten here.

Skrodzk: Okay they were on the other sheet.

Interviewer: Yeah but again it was about the inadequate supply throughout you wrote a jewels long report that brought up inadequate fuel inadequate threw put threw core. You want mine?

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: Ten on that one.

Skrodzk: Yeah we I guess I'm trying to remember how all that went without casting any dispersions on anybody. But what's supposed to happen is the core support elements would draw the stuff from the theater technically or theoretically. And then threw put it out directly like to the first brigade or something like that yeah that's what threw put is. So it doesn't stop at the division level and then you've

got to re-transport it an all that kind of thing. So that's the thru put concept. And it probably was inadequate in that we probably had to do things like add supplements some additional water it was hard to coordinate how that was all going to work out. When they requested stuff you don't really know what they might need so thru put is a tough nut to crack when you're going from some port thing and you're 500 miles away from where the unit is that's supposed to get it. You know you've barely got roads that can support any kind of transportation. So the boys is an example that went into the FOB from first brigade took every single thing they could possibly carry with them that was allowed you know in terms of ammo and water and fuel so that they could operate the leapfrogging into that FOB 70 miles away. So within three hours or an hour 90 minutes or whatever it took to get there you know we were on the ground and they just kept on resupplying. Well in the meantime under the executive officer of the brigade came the convoy of all the brigades' equipment. And he had all the stuff he could bring which was then going to be the barrier material, the ammo, stuff beyond what they initially needed to operate with. Okay so we never really got to test the real deal because the war ended 100 hours after it started and we were able to keep up with whatever the demand was. Had we gotten into a pretty significant fight you know any of the units not just ours and nothing against anything that anybody did because they did you know a wonderful job I'm glad I didn't have to go do it. I was an infantry guy then but Tom Hill and his brigade and sergeant major and everybody they did phenomenal job of what they did. And then they sent the 2nd brigade out and then pretty much the war came to an end. And there was the 24th doing their thing and of course 82nd was off the side with the French who didn't do much of anything to sort of stop ___ and run. But the 3rd brigade went in and they were 100 miles from Bagdad you know on the first night or the second day whatever it was.

Interviewer: Yeah I think it was midday the second day I'm not sure.

Skrodzk: General Bob Clark who's a good friend of mine in fact I'm going to see him next week and spend some days with him at his house in San Antonio. But he went to he calls it he went to bed that night wondering what Saddam was thinking knowing the 101st was 100 miles away from Bagdad and we were just continuing to supply. And so a lot of it came from the thru put which was a core under Beauchamp which was our core support here that fit under the core _____ and all of those guys. So depending on what was being sent it depended on what asset might be used. See there's a transportation brigade you know there's MP brigade there's all that. So we started having problems right away with POWs because we didn't have enough wire to put around them not realizing we really didn't need any wire because these guys weren't going to do anything anyway. But the MPs were trying to play MP and they came to us with these requirements for you know millions of miles of wire that we didn't have. I mean but what guys did when they loaded up their trucks and stuff they tore all the shit houses apart and took the wood with them so they could make barriers. We didn't know what we were going to get into. You know you could be in a protracted conventional war for days or you know months or something. We didn't have any idea so. So it's kind of unfair to say that we don't know what we would have done. We would have done fine but you know as we went we had enough to do three or four days of activity and then the resupply was it was going to be there you know.

Interviewer: Right okay so we'll jump back to question six. And here mine is what services did the division contract for and how affective was contracting? You said earlier that you food you guys didn't

Skrodzk: We didn't ___vail ourselves with the food contracting but we did on supplements so that would be class one there. Water class one, tents we bought stuff a lot of this contracting was done by r-sent they were contracting. We did some we bought some things locally we did some local contracting guys would go to malls and stuff. I never left the compound I never saw any civilization the whole time I was

there other than down at r-sent. But there were actual malls where you could go in and buy flashlights and batteries and of course the guys were you couldn't give them enough stuff. And then the Americans people started sending everybody notebooks and paper now remember this is pre you know cell phones this is pre email. It was before Al Gore invented the internet and all we were getting was suntan lotion and notebooks. You know and envelopes so people could write and that kind of stuff. But contracting for tents we did the guy to come and clean out all the latrines take trash.

Interviewer: The shit sucking vans I think they were?

Skrodzk: Yeah shit suckers I tried to avoid using that but that's what we called them. That was and those guys paid unbelievable money paid unbelievable money to these guys for that you know. Then gave some guy two bucks a day to run a dumpster around you know.

Interviewer: Go figure.

Skrodzk: Yeah so we had to get rid of the trash somewhere you couldn't burry it you couldn't leave it we didn't trash up the place you know so we did a pretty good job on that. So there was a lot of local contracting that was done.

Interviewer: Okay so now you said that some stuff was purchased on the Saudi market.

Skrodzk: Right

Interviewer: Do you remember what was purchased?

Skrodzk: Just small stuff probably batteries and whatever you could find that somebody might need. Guys would go and especially when we first got there they would go drive into the mall and bring back things you know whatever it would be that we'd run out of.

Interviewer: Okay I think I remember reading something about someone buying a whole bunch of hose fittings for a ____ or something like that. Anything?

Skrodzk: Could have done that possibly yeah. I mean you know it's an industrialized somewhat country with an infrastructure so I'm sure a lot of that stuff was available. And if you went into the larger city you could find about any of those kind of things.

Interviewer: Actually another thing and do you remember how often the division used wells you know for water around?

Skrodzk: You know I don't even remember honestly where we got our ropy water from if it just came from trucks and then they purified it or of we dug it out of a well. I don't even remember to be honest with you because nobody ended up using it. I mean it was like showers and stuff that hardly ever worked and laundry we did contract for laundry that was screwed up. We was better off I washed all my own clothes the whole time you just got out there and washed it and hung it dry. It would dry in an hour you know so.

Interviewer: That's what happens when it's a hundred and yeah. Which reminds me what was your impression of Saudi Arabia when you stepped off your plane?

Skrodzk: Like I was walking around in a hundred degree weather with a hairdryer blowing in my face.

Interviewer: Yeah I've heard that. Let's see here question seven then how reliable and effective was fuel resupply and how was spare parts resupply?

Skrodzk: Spare parts became a problem because a lot of stuff had to come from the states. You know just because you've got a core they had to establish themselves and arsent had to establish. I mean I think for two or three nights Bigonus slept in a rental car.

Interviewer: Yes he did actually I think he got the car on like the second day he was there or something.

Skrodzk: Oh whatever it was yeah that's how it started. And my statement always was you had to invent or manufacture everything because there was nothing.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: You know I mean just there you are go out there in the middle of some field and figure it out. You know so that's how we operated and just gradually everything got better as we went through it. The fuel supply because of having the availability of fuel fuel was there so that wasn't an issue. It was more a matter of just transporting it. So we got all the fuel we needed. I don't ever remember being fuel being a problem.

Interviewer: But then on the transporting of fuel was there problems?

Skrodzk: Tankers just like this you know bringing it in and filling up your blivits and you could transport it out to the areas where you needed it. I don't know if they did any wet wing anywhere.

Interviewer: What do you mean by wet wing?

Skrodzk: Well that's when 130 has fuel in the wings then you can suck off of that. I can't remember whether we ever used any wet wing or not.

Interviewer: I haven't read anything about that so. Well of course I don't know everything.

Skrodzk: There supposable was some air drop done but it wouldn't be fuel you know that doesn't go over real good. Those blivits just kind of bounce around it's doable at a lower angle ____ they call it lower action.

Interviewer: Is that where it flies down by parachute?

Skrodzk: Yeah because my guys ended up there at arsent under a deputy General Guest who had been my discom commander. Then he moved and he was over there for that but so fuel yeah I don't think was a problem. As far as parts go just typically parts where you have certain issues where there would probably be if you would go back and read it the reports there may have been certain things that were hard to get. I always remember we had problems with forklift parts particularly.

Interviewer: Really

Skrodzk: Yeah just over in general kind of like a buck a ____ fork lift you always seemed to have something you couldn't get a part on it and it would be down. But that's kind of standard you know thing there.

Interviewer: Well the thing is that most of the spare part deficiencies I've read about have been on the aviation side. I haven't really heard anything on forklifts.

Skrodzk: Well yeah with trucks I mean you know it would just be a matter of the normal supply and I'm sure we had more of it because we're operating in a very harsh environment. And it was supply in general I'm talking about barrier material and body bags.

Interviewer: Yes

Skrodzk: We didn't know what we would be you know gas masks the suits the chemical suits you know the charcoal filter thing getting all of those in for everybody. Medical supplies everything was an issue we didn't have enough of it we had to go out and get it to us. Along with like ammo and stuff the important things water.

Interviewer: Okay so the question I think we might have touched on some of this earlier but it's how often did visual haul assets have to perform missions that should have been delegated to core? Theatre assets and how often could the 101st use

Skrodzk: So limited with its own divisional assets because really the division only had one truck company.

Interviewer: Yes they had Delta 426.

Skrodzk: They had Delta 426. So other than their own capability to haul their own stuff you know the 426 Delta Company I'm sure did its mission fine. But it was very limited in the number of vehicles that have compared to a truck battalion and stuff you know with the heavier equipment. They had some ____ platform trucks and probably five tons I don't remember all the stuff that they had.

Interviewer: Yeah I think it was like 46.

Skrodzk: Which you know at any given time ten of them are down or something and then yeah.

Interviewer: Okay so we already did ten eleven how did the reposition from Camp Eagle two to TAA Campbell go and what snag ups were there and what went right?

Skrodzk: Actually I thought it went pretty good. I mean once we got the order to move my biggest concern and it didn't seem to be anybody else's. I didn't know why the heck we didn't get whacked when went down there but nobody knew what was going to happen with the war. And I thought I can't believe we're making this move out in the open down this one road with everybody going here and we're not getting attacked. They just let us set up and hey I'm here you're there. Just right across the road is the Kuwait is the you know or whatever and I just it never. You know a little further from us was the headquarters you know we went out there it was the G3 and I the deputy discom or the G3 of the discom and the chief of staff. We took a trip out there to ____ and we scoped out this place because we

knew we were going to be moving out there before the core was going to move. And of course the core ended up getting the place we went to because it was a whole lot better and we got nothing.

Interviewer: Of course.

Skrodzk: We just got the desert but we went out there and it was like unbelievable because we were the only people on Tap Line Road for two or three days. We went out and come back and then once everything started going that way you couldn't get up and down that road to save your life I mean there were so many vehicles and accidents and stuff going on. And that was the only place to resupply and all you do is you just pull off the road and you're like when they attacked you just driving across. Reminds me of you know the great rush to the west when they went the wagon guys that's what it was like. But they were modern vehicles you know a convoy.

Interviewer: Okay now in specific any details that you remember about log base Romeo a little bit south of KKC.

Skrodzk: No who was that the second brigade set up for a while? They were going to throw them in the fight when it looked like something might happen there.

Interviewer: They kicked second brigade up a unit of second brigade up to 7th core I believe to around ____.

Skrodzk: A few yeah or whatever it was. Yeah I don't know anything about that Romeo.

Interviewer: Okay it was I guess something with a preposition prepackaged supplies now.

Skrodzk: I don't remember that one.

Interviewer: Adam's talked a lot about it. Anyways that's 11.

Skrodzk: Did you tell him you were going to talk to me?

Interviewer: No

Skrodzk: You should have.

Interviewer: What it was it was an interview that was done back in like 91 and they transcribed it not too long ago? Okay so 12 on mine.

Skrodzk: Oh I gotcha. Gotcha okay he was the ADCS.

Interviewer: Yes the next question

Skrodzk: He was in the meetings with all of us on the getting out of here. We had a daily meeting and that was like a drill in itself. Just four and five hours of yeah every day before we got out of here. I was almost glad to get on the plane.

Interviewer: Okay then what sort of stocks did the 101st have before the ground defensive?

Skrodzk: Well we had the million gallons of fuel.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: The ammo coming in and at that point a lot better posture on our ammo than we had started with of course. Probably plenty of water and you know probably you know I'd have to take a guess at a weeks worth of MREs or something like that on hand.

Interviewer: Yeah a good amount.

Skrodzk: Clearly you know what the units had that was there I'd say we were in pretty good shape going into it.

Interviewer: Okay

Skrodzk: You know with the bet on the com that the resupply would be there when you needed it.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: Fuel was surely there that wasn't going to be an issue.

Interviewer: Yeah okay now 13 this might be a new question I don't know but how were the discom fobs labs and or fleets tailored and what was the rationale behind this development of tailor?

Skrodzk: Well the tailoring was the way we did business. Okay so we would have done what normally was done was we habitually trained the A Company from the 426 went to the first brigade. The A Company from the medical battalion went to the first brigade. And that's who they were with whenever they went as a brigade taskforce.

Interviewer: Habitual task force?

Skrodzk: Yes and so Captain Humma Humma was used to dealing with colonel so and so. And that was his supply guy or that was his medical company commander or his whoever just like the artillery battalion would go with them whichever brigade. And so that's how that was sorted out, maintenance same thing. Then you had division troops which would support everybody in some sort of fashion.

Interviewer: So then would then the I guess the doctrinal standard it would be like A Company or whatever would be specialized in one thing and they would support everybody for the rest of the outfit?

Skrodzk: Yes so in other words the A Company in the supply and transportation battalion would have all the supplies all classes of supplies except for aviation maintenance.

Interviewer: Right and they would supply everybody.

Skrodzk: They would support everybody in the brigade with that stuff. So when you set up an FOB in there would be the brigade trains they call it. That's where those guys would operate out of and would do that. And then the maintenance guy would be in there fixing all the equipment, medics would set up

their medical aid station take care of the brigade medic which then would support the medics who were you know.

Interviewer: Okay but the nevertheless the habitual attachment

Skrodzk: The habitual attachments and that's what was so nice about it. If you had a heavier brigade going in if in case it was that way and I'm not saying it was but.

Interviewer: The first brigade was augmented.

Skrodzk: Okay if they were augmented with somebody then you might have had a bigger package or maybe with the ground transportation maybe one of my truck platoons might have gone with them with some stuff. Not mine but the 426 truck company might have then attached you know in that cases, that was the nice part about it.

Interviewer: Because he was your guy?

Skrodzk: Yeah now of course you could say the same thing these units in action that they have are. You've got the actual brigade commander his own forwards the forward battalion belongs to him.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: So he's got everybody anyway.

Interviewer: Yeah but that's not always.

Skrodzk: But he could be a medic manning that battalion and not a supply guy so that's kind of where all these were a little bit of a rub. But that was what was so good about our organization being the 101st and being that it was so tailorable to meet any situation. And then you didn't have the tyranny of the terrain as we called it because then you could fly and get over any obstacles and so on.

Interviewer: Okay and moving on to 14 again on mine. Logistically what were the disadvantages and advantages on the attack on what would become Fob Cobra?

Skrodzk: Well the advantages are you talking about during an attack?

Interviewer: However you want to address it.

Skrodzk: I don't know of any situation where if you're under attack there's an advantage. Because you're hanging out there in the middle of nowhere and you don't what kind of an enemy could come after you. I mean we were prepared for mass casualties you know we didn't know if he was going to use chemical stuff or not.

Interviewer: Thank God he didn't.

Skrodzk: I think General P opted those uniform if I remember right or the suit.

Interviewer: That sounds about right.

Skrodzk: Whereas 24th lived in it day and night the whole time they were out there period. Before they got going and

Interviewer: So did I think first ID also.

Skrodzk: Yeah which of course they are different animals being heavy units.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: I learned that when I went to 3rd ID it's a whole nother world. But from the lighter guys supposable lighter guys but. The only thing would be is you have pretty much eyes on what's going on out there because you've got a lot of systems in the division. You're rockets guys and you know your support assets from the attack battalions probably flying around resupply coming in. So those are all advantages that you know you could get because of the helicopter instead of it taking you five hours to drive 90 miles you could be there in you know an hour or whatever.

Interviewer: Like 40 something minutes.

Skrodzk: Whatever it took to get to there you know flying time wise. So you know that would be you know an advantage to it. And then once the longer you were there the more stuff was coming in the more you got built up the more barrier material you had the more stocks you had on hand the more capable you are to fix something. More ammunition that you could endure fight from there and then even go out from there and begin another leapfrog.

Interviewer: Okay going on a tangent you said being with the 30 was a totally different animal. Could you expand on how like the 101st differed from a heavy unit like the 30th?

Skrodzk: Well first of all I think they have a lot more capability to carry a lot more stuff than we would have. I mean yes you've got the helicopter and everything else but when a trooper gets on a helicopter it's not like him being in the back of a truck. Where you know you've got a lot of vehicles and built up trailers and all these kinds of things that the heavy units have. And they've got a lot more protection you know it's just the standard thing that anybody can read about. But you know with armored vehicles that you don't have you know the light thin skinned stuff. And of course helicopters even though they could get over the terrain and move about it's a pretty damn lethal division no doubt about it. I mean it's more lethal than people might suspect. It still has its drawbacks in terms of you know air being attacked I mean look what they did to us in Vietnam. I mean you know just fighting SA7s and machine guns and B40 rockets and you know things like that that you know can attack a helicopter and do some pretty good damage. You know so as far as that goes I think the heavy guys just have more stuff you know more capability to have things and their heavier on you know on terms of all of that it is different. But then on the other side they've got more maintenance.

Interviewer: Really now?

Skrodzk: Oh yeah keeping a tank running and a Bradley whatever they are using these days.

Interviewer: It's still a Bradley.

Skrodzk: You know it's

Interviewer: Except for the striker units but.

Skrodzk: Yeah or these VMV or whatever they call them. But yeah that's a lot of maintenance a lot of heavy trucks. But we had them too but most of the stuff was core assets. And kind of another point I just happened to think of the core assets are thin too. There's stuff there but when you really look at where the combat service support comes from it comes out of the reserves. And so all of the reserve units that were called up and ended up over there really did yeoman's work and grave registration, transportation units, MP units, civil affairs. I mean they had units of lawyers out of Chattanooga that were all civil affairs guys.

Interviewer: I'm sorry I just got the mental image of a bunch of guys in like a camouflaged suit with a brief case.

Skrodzk: Oh yeah we had ____ came in and were assigned to fill in the hole where you don't have a doctor on active duty because there aren't enough of them they've got to be at the hospital. They showed up and did their work so that was a big part of we didn't have the graves guys anymore or very few because I had them in my battalion we only had a few people. Could not have handled mortuary duties you know like you would need if you really had to have it in a real situation. Same with the hospital things I'm sure there were a lot of units that came in the 86th who ended up at that KKMC and did their stuff. And we worried about the removal of remains. General P was very concerned about treating people with dignity and what would happen if we had mass casualties and notification to be made and how the bodies would be treated and hours and hours and hours of research and briefings and getting stuff on hand and figuring out how to do it. And the same with the wounded so. And it all just kind of layered over you know the supply and maintenance and other issues.

Interviewer: Okay now 15 again on mine is what problems arose logistically during the assault in obtaining Cobra and what issues arose in sustaining Cobra?

Skrodzk: Probably just if there were problems it was getting enough water or you know supplements up to those guys it the longer they stayed there and you know kind of ran out of their rations that they took with them you know that would be the main thing. You know really didn't I'm sure they'd tell you they had some problems there but I think it probably went pretty good. I don't know what sergeant major would have said to answer that.

Interviewer: I don't recall if I asked him that question.

Skrodzk: It seemed to me they got pretty much more of the stuff. Now they didn't come back right away so you know their sitting around there wanting to get back and they're in the middle of nowhere and the wars over. And where we were was probably better than even you know because we're sitting off of Tap Line Road.

Interviewer: Right you can at least get stuff.

Skrodzk: Yeah and so if the weather is a sand storm and the truck can't get in there and nothing can fly up there than you aren't getting your water today or your mail or you know your supplements or your pound cake thing or whatever you wanted you know what you didn't get.

Interviewer: Pound cake is wonderful. The reason I ask this question is because I had read in ____ place it was either Viper or Cobra or both or something one of them ran out of fuel sometime during the offensive. Any ideas?

Skrodzk: Really don't remember it, it could have happened. And I'm not sure if I even remember if the helicopters were bedded down there with them or if it was the ground fuel that ran out or. I doubt the aviators ran out of fuel but it might have been a case where you know we couldn't get enough stuff up there quick enough you know for them. That might have been.

Interviewer: The thing is that you don't remember.

Skrodzk: It got cold at night you know.

Interviewer: Yes

Skrodzk: And I don't know what they were doing for staying warm but they weren't burning fuel so I don't know.

Interviewer: Well but the thing is if you don't remember oh yeah we ran out of fuel that means that it wasn't that big of a deal.

Skrodzk: Of course you have to remember it's been 18 years and things went pretty damn quick. Before you know it we were worried about redeploying just hoping we could get the hell out of there you know so.

Interviewer: And actually on a tangent did you have any experiences with native wild life that you remember?

Skrodzk: Other than I think I've got some pictures of some camels here.

Interviewer: Otherwise nothing okay.

Skrodzk: They had little some kind of desert chipmunks that would chew into your boxes in your room if you had something stashed away. Because you know you had a footlocker and stuff but you might have had a box of you know we built up when I went you took half of this crap with you because you didn't know when you were going to eat an orange again. So you took a box of stuff whatever you could take with you. I guess I didn't bring my pictures I had of camels. Yeah I don't remember anything in particular.

Interviewer: Okay alright then question 16. Please discuss the attachment of core ____ lift units to the divisions. It was the 12th I think one of the 12th aviation brigade.

Skrodzk: Oh excellent unit.

Interviewer: And I think it was someone from the 158th or the 159th I believe. It was some Shanook units that were attached to the division please discuss that.

Skrodzk: I'll first tell you about the 12th

Interviewer: Yes please do

Skrodzk: The ____ was outstanding came out of Germany had an excellent brigade commander fell in line did anything we asked them acted like they belonged to the 101st. They were first class from A to Z absolutely excellent. Now personally and this is personally I wouldn't give you two boots for core aviation. Okay just didn't think they were up to snuff like our guys were. We had an excellent aviation brigade under ____ a retired general who did a superb job was a great commander and had good people great pilots and good battalion commanders and everything else and they were superb. As well as our aviation maintenance you know ____ discom. And discom commander was and aviator Stewart Jerrell he wasn't a great ____ but he was an aviator.

Interviewer: Okay could you talk anymore about the 12th aviation? Because I know they were with you I just can't find anything?

Skrodzk: Really

Interviewer: Oh yeah and the thing is I've actually tried to contact them saying hey do you guys have anything and they just haven't got back to me.

Skrodzk: That's something to think about there the guy's name that was the no they came out of Germany and it's like they were this model unit. I mean their S4 guy came to meetings they got their supply with us they were in with us on everything. I'd have to go through this stuff here to see if I've got anything about them in here. Talking about once they were attached to us but I don't know I didn't have a chance to really look at some of this.

Interviewer: Okay well do you recall if there was any sort of a hassle deporting them when they were attached or?

Skrodzk: No they weren't a problem at all. No they were excellent.

Interviewer: High speed?

Skrodzk: High speed full drag they were real good. It's kind of amazing when you start reading now that you're talking about some of this stuff. Type 2 bag for graves registration I don't know what all this stuff is but. Support 47 allocated to the division.

Interviewer: Yeah see that

Skrodzk: That would have come from sorry I didn't open that when you were asking about it but here was another one sunray packs.

Interviewer: Oh like toothpaste and something?

Skrodzk: Yeah that became a big issue. Because of women with tampons. So there's a note on that, may be available in OEC whatever that mean I don't remember now. CSR whatever I can't remember.

Interviewer: Combat search and rescue?

Skrodzk: No that's something to do with resupply. OB Eco did you ever

Interviewer: Oh log base eco? Yeah I think that was 7 core.

Skrodzk: Seven cores area that's where all the boots were sitting and they wouldn't give

Interviewer: Yeah Charlie was 18 core.

Skrodzk: Hell fires 3000, 3500 in the reserve at ____ base bravo. Probably a lot of stuff in here.

Interviewer: But its notes so it probably would mean a lot more to you than it would to me.

Skrodzk: Yeah no no I was just saying when I think about some of this stuff it brings to light some of the things.

Interviewer: And again it was

Skrodzk: You obviously kind of get a picture of how much stuff there was and the magnitude of this whole thing was incredible.

Interviewer: Oh yes and what you said earlier that general said it was a log war yes it was a log war and it's important for that to be looked at because it's just so

Skrodzk: I appreciate you doing what you're doing writing a paper that's pretty nice.

Interviewer: But the reason I ask this question about core is assigning core with you is because I think it was something like two ____ of Shanooks were

Skrodzk: Yeah that's just the note that I had there so. Yeah I mean in that remembering different details I just give you my own take from the couple of years the four years that I was in that game of being in the discom and the two years in the division headquarters. I just never really was comfortable with 18th airborne core aviation they just weren't the same guys that we had. And it doesn't mean they didn't do their job and they weren't great pilots and some of them probably served in the 101st and you know all of that I'm sure of it. But you know it's just like two guys below you and two guys above you are all screwed up and you're not. But so if they worked out or didn't it's what we had to augment us. It would have meant that we obviously need them and that's how they do theirs because it's just like the brigade commander gets the pieces from around the division. He's also worried that if the division is going to get assets that the core has.

Interviewer: And again these units were attached.

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: I don't know what they did nothing of that is out there.

Skrodzk: Yeah see that's well I don't know I might have had some notes here on what they did because it's funny you asked that and I had an issue about those CS47s in here. So while you're talking let me

Interviewer: It's like you know I think they might have been attached to discom you know to help with the lifts up to Cobra because I think there was

Skrodzk: Yeah here it says 45 aircraft allocated to the division.

Interviewer: So isn't that pretty much doubling the

Skrodzk: Oh yeah I don't know how many were in the

Interviewer: I think it was 45

Skrodzk: Is that what the Shanook battalion had?

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: Probably because obviously you weren't Shanooking anything from the 24th division and the 82nd was riding a bus up there so.

Interviewer: And who cares about the French.

Skrodzk: And we were the leaders in the attack. Yeah that's right nobody cared about the French still don't.

Interviewer: The funny thing is evidently the French did not want to take orders from Schwarzkopf but they agreed to work in the deep desert.

Skrodzk: I should have brought my I've got a pack of rations that they had still wrapped up.

Interviewer: Any good?

Skrodzk: Yeah they had some pretty good stuff yeah. It was their version of MREs you know.

Interviewer: Okay

Skrodzk: You know it's always second thought with the French it's always march or die with the French Foreign Legion. Something about 130s picking up some Humvees somewhere that could have been just regular resupply.

Interviewer: Actually wasn't the division switching from ____ to Humvees during the deployment?

Skrodzk: Yes probably no I think we already had them.

Interviewer: Did you

Skrodzk: Yeah I don't think we had any _____ because I remember as a battalion commander having them which was two years before.

Interviewer: Humvee?

Skrodzk: Yeah I'm pretty sure we didn't have any. They may have been we were when I left 3rd ID we didn't have any yet but then came here and I think we got them then. Five ton cargo trucks still due in I don't know what that means if that's something loaded or we were waiting for some five tons or we didn't have.

Interviewer: Is there a date near that note?

Skrodzk: Seventeen February Sunday short ammo transport dry fuel CH47 105 moved to Long Base Charlie.

Interviewer: Yeah Charlie was again it was the 18th core broad base.

Skrodzk: Okay 63 pallets, batteries, short across the board so that would be vehicle radio batteries. Third set still due in BDUs I guess we only had two sets. DCUs boots still due in so you could see here we were getting ready to go to war and didn't have the stuff. Dust real, gasses, helium, sunray packs, system PT, long base Charlie, something about that ammo again Petter MSR.

Interviewer: I think there was supposed to be a core MSR you know the __ service right up to _____. That's what the French were supposed to roll up well the French and the 82nd were supposed to roll up.

Skrodzk: Ammo draw the divisions let's see pre division ATP. The division ammo officer was single push of ammo up to the ASPs. Then we were using a float on the CH47 that was the 17th. So stuff was you know the system was in place you know by then I mean obviously. The things that are supposed to happen kind of were happening. I've got a headcount here something 17 mag toes and mortars, type two bags for graves. These guys were always dropping _____.

Interviewer: Yeah sling loads getting messed up yeah.

Skrodzk: God that used to make me mad.

Interviewer: Do you remember how often it was or how damaged they would be?

Skrodzk: Well once you dropped one they were pretty much screwed up.

Interviewer: That makes sense.

Skrodzk: They'd issue a float and send it back to wherever back to the states to get it fixed because it wasn't nothing in country to fix it. So that was you know I don't know if they wrote them off or I don't even remember.

Interviewer: I don't know I haven't heard anything about that.

Skrodzk: Well you wanted to have you know your pieces up.

Interviewer: Of course and the thing when we went in when the 101st went in we had the full complement of 105s so obviously we were getting stuff from

Skrodzk: We also had 155 wasn't attached to it it was from the 18th airborne core. They tried to send it here when I was Garrison Commander and we couldn't take them here because we didn't have anywhere to put them.

Interviewer: It was Charlie I think the 8th.

Skrodzk: Yeah and I don't know if they were actually with us or they just showed up for war or.

Interviewer: I think they were actually with us they might have just been in the TAA. I don't know if they were really located up.

Skrodzk: Yeah I can't remember now but

Interviewer: But I'm pretty sure that we eventually got you know all the 58th.

Skrodzk: Right yeah I had a good working relationship with the core G4 and their staff.

Interviewer: Any details on that or just

Skrodzk: He was a good guy I'll tell you that. I don't even remember his name now but he was a heck of a guy and he was easy to work with. And they'd take care of is the best they could but it was always the fair share situation you know between the units he was supporting. So for every guy like me that was beating him up somebody else was in another division you know for everything. I knew the G3 that was the G3 of the 24th because he and I had been in 3rd ID together. He was a loose cannon worked for _____. I'm trying to see if I can find anything on that 12th keg.

Interviewer: Yeah it was the 12th and I think it was yeah there were two Shanook I want to say it was 5th.

Skrodzk: Now these 12 keg was an aviation not a Shanook.

Interviewer: Yeah it was the whole thing they had a Shanook battalion then.

Skrodzk: Right and if I remember they have been a little bit smaller than us.

Interviewer: I think that they might have had 16

Skrodzk: Maybe they had I don't know.

Interviewer: But again there was another Shanook unit I want to say it was like 2nd of the 159th I think maybe 3rd of the 159th I don't remember. But again haven't I don't know anything of them except they existed and they did something with the 101st.

Skrodzk: That's weird

Interviewer: Oh I know

Skrodzk: I'd have to look back in here and see if I could find out when they were attached. It looks like we hung around 18,000 yeah I'm seeing 1811 or 19, 17999 that kind of thing.

Interviewer: Yeah people have got to go home for stuff like family emergencies.

Skrodzk: Right

Interviewer: But like we discussed earlier the division was at greater than 100 percent strength so they could be replaced.

Skrodzk: Water trucks it's amazing

Interviewer: What?

Skrodzk: All this stuff it's the 508th attached now okay this is on the 25th of February.

Interviewer: Oh but that was the entire 5th 8th right.

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: Okay

Skrodzk: Must be out of the log stamped data. EH60s no data yet must have not taken those somewhere. PSR77 cables that was an issue.

Interviewer: When I was in the ROTC the supply sergeant had me ask the captain for a prick 03.

Skrodzk: One of those ten feet of shore line.

Interviewer: A box of grid squares, ammo fluid oh yeah.

Skrodzk: Four hubs three needed I mean it was like never ending stuff you just couldn't get away from it. And of course for everybody ammo for CH47 to viper.

Interviewer: Yes

Skrodzk: 2050 cases something 861 30s, 1500 gallons of fuel ____ aviation might have still had some _____. The 29th aviation said they had _____.

Interviewer: The 29th aviation?

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: What was the 29th aviation?

Skrodzk: I don't know maybe they were the 7th core or something. I'll have to look.

Interviewer: I mean I haven't paid much attention to the sub units of the 7th core.

Skrodzk: Just trying to see now you have ____ trucks too.

Interviewer: Yeah refrigeration any details on them?

Skrodzk: What were the dates of the war?

Interviewer: Um the ground war? 24th February to 28 February.

Skrodzk: Okay so this stuff here is in the war.

Interviewer: The air war started the 7th of January and that was around the time the division started moving out to TA Campbell.

Skrodzk: Yeah here's some stuff about first of the 101 an apache at Cobra still down.

Interviewer: I wonder what happened.

Skrodzk: Oh it just could be a maintenance problem one was in an AH1 dropped from the ____ this stuff happens all the time.

Interviewer: And the thing is I remember reading a lot how the 101st was really really serious about the maintenance you know always doing it specifically banking it up so.

Skrodzk: Oh yeah for sure. See now I'm into core issues this is coming back. Let me look back here just to see if I have anything on that

Interviewer: What you want it's all good I'm quite content with whatever. This is I mean this is all wonderful so if you want to take some time looking for something awesome I no complaints take your time.

Skrodzk: What was interesting was how early we knew about what was going to happen.

Interviewer: Really

Skrodzk: Yeah like before Christmas probably around Thanksgiving. But only the leadership knew.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: I don't even remember do you have when they were assigned the 12th keg? Did they join us up at the ____ or did they come in before?

Interviewer: Well before actually the 12th was with us even when we were up in the covering force area.

Skrodzk: Yeah okay

Interviewer: I think they were operating out of FOB Bastogne maybe.

Skrodzk: Out of Bastogne that was the first FOB.

Interviewer: Well anything really about FOB Bastogne or Oasis?

Skrodzk: Yeah but then it was just the start of everything and trying to keep those guys happy while they were up there and the ADC was positioned with them. So General Shelton was probably never happy that we could never get him enough stuff and it's not a hit on him because he's one great guy.

Interviewer: Right but it's just the fact that you know.

Skrodzk: Yeah it was this you know getting everything going while all the other pieces are fitting together and of course they probably wanted five. Here's an example that just kind of just tells you they left the finance officer back as guarding the base camp when we went forward he didn't go. So whatever people they decided for whatever reason to leave back with him that we didn't need you know when we went forward. He came to me with a list of ammo he wanted and I said this is more crap than we've got in the division was kind of like my line to him. So you know he wanted probably hell firing missiles or something and he didn't have a helicopter. You know so

Interviewer: Need 20 million rounds of ammunition.

Skrodzk: Yeah it was unbelievable task force tant.

Interviewer: Tant?

Skrodzk: Yeah Hue Tant I think that was his name Hue he ended up making general but there's only like one finance general in the army or something. Let's see I can't believe I wouldn't have anything on those guys I'll probably think of it after I leave you. The name of the commander you know or something because he was a good guy. He ended up making general and

Interviewer: You know of course things I have a whole bunch of books that

Skrodzk: I tell you how will know is Adams will know who he is.

Interviewer: I mean the thing is I have a whole bunch of books that have all these people's names and stuff. And if I had brought them this you know.

Skrodzk: Yeah but I do remember them being a first class outfit in every respect. They were no trouble their guys didn't screw anything up they fell in line with everything you know they took what we gave them like everybody else. It was like having just any good old unit that belonged to the 101st.

Interviewer: Are there usually problems when units are attached like that?

Skrodzk: Well there could be. I mean you know it just depends on what you get. Sometimes you get some rag bags and other times you don't. _____ I don't even know when that was but I know it had to be early on. But Japanese cars I could talk all day just on that.

Interviewer: Yeah well by all means fire away.

Skrodzk: Japanese war effort they gave us 700 vehicles. The 24th tried to take them home with them of course he had to turn them in. I don't know what they were going to do with them when they got them back spray paint them or something. There was a big fight over who got those.

Interviewer: Talk about it by all means.

Skrodzk: See it was just basically you only had enough to go around. I don't remember how many we got in the division out of the 700 that came into country but.

Interviewer: I could probably find out. I don't recall.

Skrodzk: I mean like each staff guy had one and each brigade had two or three and so many you know that kind of thing.

Interviewer: Yeah but it was they were just there for a little bit of extra set of wheels.

Skrodzk: Yeah to have something and like when we went up to drive up to ____ before the war started we used that. Or you could drive around in you know the city areas and stuff you had a vehicle to use that didn't tie up your you know guys could take a run to core or to arsent with it or you know that kind of stuff. That was what it was for.

Interviewer: And do you remember if they used regular motor gas?

Skrodzk: They used regular gas in those things.

Interviewer: Okay was that

Skrodzk: It was like a Mitsubishi

Interviewer: Four by four?

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: Was that any hassle on logistics or was it just oh well.

Skrodzk: They ran fine we didn't have any problems with them. In fact the one I had was pretty good you know it had big chrome bumpers on it we had to sort of camouflage it up a little bit when we got up. In fact we didn't take them with us we left them we didn't take them into the war. I see an older Jap car still tied up in litigation no word yet I don't know what that meant. Must have meant something about this could be a coming back note or a 17th of October it couldn't be. Cots due

Interviewer: Oh so you guys still didn't have cots even while the division was fully deployed by then and you still didn't have cots.

Skrodzk: Water and fuel Bastogne 240th QM one million gallons. We ordered ammo class A's ____ that's the troop issue. Supply activity Bastogne 75 smith's I forgot what those are.

Interviewer: I'm thinking they are the semi or semi mounted battle tanks. That was with the B.G. Adams interview he mentioned that smithies were

Skrodzk: If you'd have gotten me in 91 or 2 I could have done a little better for you probably but.

Interviewer: Unfortunately I was in 2nd grade. I don't mean to make you feel old.

Skrodzk: Yeah I know. Yeah this stuff is earlier it has something about the 12th.

Interviewer: Again take your time it's all good.

Skrodzk: When did you say they got in country?

Interviewer: The 12th?

Skrodzk: Yes

Interviewer: I want to say October or I want to say October is when they arrived in country and they were attached to the 101 around then.

Skrodzk: See we had a budget we had to stay within and I'm seeing something here I don't know what the date is but it had to be early on. We had these ordering officers where as long as you could stay in budget nonexpendable items like requested through the DMA for normal supply refill. If not available in supply request you go to the comptroller or the G4 which was the guy I had for local purchase. If approved for the division will be either purchased for all or individually. All nonexpendable items will be controlled in com four it says all that kind of crap.

Interviewer: Then do you remember how this budget worked or?

Skrodzk: Well that was driven by force com. Just like we had a regular budget like we always did which the whole thing was stupid. We'd want to go buy something and I remember my guy getting chewed out by the chief because he went and bought it was light sets one of them on one occasion. You know and he just happened to have got him mad or something over they were trying to control the spending. And he ended up ordering these light sets and it was like well I thought you said to get them, no I didn't, and you know we went back and forth.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: Just crap like that always happened. I don't know why I've still got this crap like this I guess because you were going to come along some day.

Interviewer: Yeah

Skrodzk: See when they were out there on that Bastogne there would be a daily log bird you know that would come out there.

Interviewer: Yes a 47?

Skrodzk: Yeah something like that.

Interviewer: And it would go to Bastogne with just with fuel what just stuff.

Skrodzk: Whatever you could put on it that would go.

Interviewer: Okay

Skrodzk: Then anything going that way if somebody went up there they'd take stuff. So if the general was flying up there they'd probably throw something on there with him and you know however if not him.

Interviewer: The thing is I have read stuff like the mail especially oh are you going this way can you take this bag of mail. Yeah and I'm surprised the mail was that half hazard.

Skrodzk: Well it got to be there's nobody to handle mail. See there is no mail people.

Interviewer: And another stuff there's memos.

Skrodzk: The G1 had a hard enough time keeping up with how many people we had. He was always getting reamed for that and mail you know and where the replacements were and you know that kind of stuff.

Interviewer: Yeah well the thing is I remember I have some memos somewhere that's like hey you know everybody sent us some people to deal with mail. Because it's like you know you're dealing with hundreds of pounds of mail at least.

Skrodzk: In ____ that's a maintenance town it's overflowing see there's laundry service at the FOB. I mean that would be where they'd fly stuff back we'd take it down to somewhere wherever the hell from the base camp and get it back to a guy. Wonder why that didn't work.

Interviewer: And one thing is I remember reading that you know that memo detailing the laundry policy and it's like yeah you submit your laundry on a Wednesday and you'll get it back like a week or two later. But you only have two uniforms.

Skrodzk: Exactly I tried it once and they screwed it up and lost something of mine or whatever and I just started washing my own stuff.

Interviewer: I think Sergeant Nichols said that you would that you could wash clothes in a MRE bag or something like that. How did you wash yours?

Skrodzk: Just in a damn pail or something whatever or in the sink for me know I was inside so I could do that. But if he was out there in the middle of wherever he was you'd have to do whatever guys did to wash their stuff.

Interviewer: Yeah so looking at this stuff in this picture is mail even that stuff way back there?

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: That's a lot of stuff.

Skrodzk: Showers go to showers trucks bed liner ____ water.

Interviewer: Just problems problems problems.

Skrodzk: You asked earlier the difference in some things personally for me it was a whole lot more dangerous personally it was the worst working conditions I had or the hardest job I ever had.

Interviewer: I've heard that a lot yes.

Skrodzk: Pulling this one off with these guys.

Interviewer: Well maybe it's because you didn't have many problems with them so

Skrodzk: Yeah I mean they would have got the same amount of stuff from us that everybody else got. Emmitt was it Colonel Emmitt or was that his first name? I think that was his first name. If you could find out his name he's probably somewhere around you could talk to him.

Interviewer: That's not a bad idea. And that actually would be somebody from that unit.

Skrodzk: He was a good guy and he made general also.

Interviewer: I will have to track him down because I mean again they were with us for essentially the entire war.

Skrodzk: Yes

Interviewer: Like for the ground offensive they were they were a core thing except for the Shanook thing. Then I think about at the same time they chopped a 5th of the 8th I think it was the 12th for the remaining two days.

Skrodzk: Shower drain Saudi water truck that was early on ___ sand bags, water tankers, hell fires, shower and wash basins, masks, tent floors, 10 by 20 tents, shower heads, toilets geeze sand bags, burlap.

Interviewer: Are those just listings of all the problematic things?

Skrodzk: Yes just things that we were working on daily you know.

Interviewer: Well do you think we should continue on?

Skrodzk: Yeah sure sorry.

Interviewer: Oh it's all good again it's completely fine still great stuff. We will move to 17 on mine which is how were the forces in AOBO supplied how effective was the resupply and were there any problems that arose?

Skrodzk: Well I was just talking about some of that same stuff. I mean are you talking about every day before we went up. Yeah it was a day to day as I've kind of mentioned on a lot of it is we went six or eight weeks just eating MREs and we finally started to get a few t-rats in. And then finally started to get b-rations went through a-rations.

Interviewer: When did you guys start to get that stuff in?

Skrodzk: Well I don't know probably around Thanksgiving time or something. When I look on here you can see the menu for Thanksgiving supposedly for some people.

Interviewer: Wow how was it?

Skrodzk: It was alright I guess I can't say it was all that great.

Interviewer: But it was better than MREs?

Skrodzk: Yeah sure well anytime you can get any b-rations or any A's you know even though it takes a lot of water to prepare that stuff it's going to be better you know that you have. So resupply was really making the basecamp as comfortable as you could. Getting cots, getting showers up, getting latrines up, getting trash dumped, water running somewhere, water to people, supplements, food that you could eat the cooks doing their thing. That would be more of and then everything was going out to the covering force to take care of them and I saw a note in here where I said something about the only ammo was going for whatever was up there that needed ammo. Not sending a bunch of junk up there because they were just basically hot bedding when units rolled through there. And then once every month the division headquarters went out for a week and stayed out and went back to the basecamp. So we kind of stayed out of stuff you know ourselves with our own field crap and everything else.

Interviewer: Okay but when 3rd brigade air assault opted up to ___ River Valley how were they supplied when they were up there and how did that go?

Skrodzk: Same thing by helicopter trucked from the core.

Interviewer: Okay do you remember when trucks first reached them or just sometime?

Skrodzk: Yeah it would have been probably within the first 24 hours I think the convoy must have made it up there or the next day. Depending on what time they left or close in there.

Interviewer: But then the resupply went more or less smoothly?

Skrodzk: Yeah I would say so I guess. I'm sure they you know I'll see the brigade commander next week and I'll ask him what his recollection of it was.

Interviewer: The funny thing is I sent him an email not too long ago.

Skrodzk: Clark?

Interviewer: Yeah hoping that he would get back to me and I

Skrodzk: You didn't hear anything?

Interviewer: No but

Skrodzk: En Clark at something or other?

Interviewer: No actually it was the army.mill address or whatever it was.

Skrodzk: Yeah he's not on active duty anymore that's why he's retired.

Interviewer: Yeah okay well a similar related question. Do you have any memories of the ____ that came in the big sandstorm that came in I think it was

Skrodzk: Right before the ground war started?

Interviewer: That or I think it was G plus one you know the second day defensive maybe?

Skrodzk: Yeah there was one that yeah it hit well it pretty much puts everything at a stop still. You still stop when you're flying helicopters around and you can't even see from here to across the room once those things start blowing in. It's just fine particles of sand everywhere it's horrible.

Interviewer: Everything stopped

Skrodzk: Yeah well it's just like I remember right before we redeployed out of there to go back to the basecamp after we sat around for a while there waiting to get our turn to go back. And then get to the port and all that stuff we got hit with a rain storm and you would have thought you were on the north Atlantic. I mean it blew sideways I'm looking at here temperatures in the daytime of 72 during the day so it got pretty miserable at night and cold. I couldn't put enough blankets on to stay warm and it filled up holes trucks were down there we lost equipment. I mean guys were all full of mud and dirt and all our camouflage nets were blown down.

Interviewer: Really

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: Oh wow

Skrodzk: Yeah the weather is really strange there you know.

Interviewer: Yeah okay again so there were no real problems supporting 3rd brigade?

Skrodzk: Not that I know of now that's my take as the supply guy.

Interviewer: I mean the thing is I don't think I remember anything really major I think they might have been running low on rations but

Skrodzk: I'm sure they probably were yeah.

Interviewer: But nothing okay. So the next question would be how did the movement to FOB Viper go and what were the problems there? That's was the 2nd brigade went out to.

Skrodzk: Yeah I don't remember anything that stands out supply wise as a problem. I'm sure they might have something to say. Have you talked to Purdon? He's here now.

Interviewer: He is I'm just I'm not sure if he doesn't like civilians or academics or if he just doesn't like me. He told me to do my homework and I don't know.

Skrodzk: Really

Interviewer: Oh yeah I don't know what's going on he kind of scares me.

Skrodzk: Okay

Interviewer: Yeah I suppose I could ask him but again this is due in 15 days so the pressure is on.

Skrodzk: Right

Interviewer: Now moving to 19 at the time of cease fire how were the stocks in the 101?

Skrodzk: Pretty good like I say ammo was still coming in. Fuel was coming in it was more of an internal supply issue at that point to get everything to everybody where you needed it. And you know like you say issues here or there that might have come up that I really don't remember about. Somebody was out didn't get their water for a day or something you know surely didn't need any ammo.

Interviewer: Right

Skrodzk: And some rations getting some of those supplements up and mail or whatever because nobody really knew how soon or whatever we were going to come back. And I know the 24th pretty much made a race for the fort. They left everything in place laying in the desert and we did our right thing and we brought stuff back. And so it could be retrograded you know. And we weren't allowed to leave everything just lying in the desert. I saw some notes in here and I'm remembering it now about getting all the wire up and all the other stuff that was everywhere so we did our job on that which was not easy.

Interviewer: And all that stuff had to be cleaned too.

Skrodzk: Well it's pretty bad when the customs guys are tougher than the Iraqis'.

Interviewer: Ouch

Skrodzk: Yeah that took a lot it took a lot to get past the customs. And then they'd clean these helicopters out then after we'd get back they'd still get a 55 gallon drum of dust and dirt out of them you know. Yeah that stuff was everywhere.

Interviewer: Okay so then generally the ground defensive logistics were fine.

Skrodzk: Yeah I think so yeah. Again we never got tested to see if it went the 20 days of war or 30 days of war what would have happened. How we would have been able to continue to resupply everybody. With 100 hours basically four days you know then everything stopped. Then it was just a matter of keeping people alive until they could redeploy and drive back and you know close back into the fort or base camp.

Interviewer: Well then do you have an opinion as to how well it could have gone on if it needed to go on?

Skrodzk: Yeah I think as I had mentioned just a bit ago I think that everything was in place for that to happen in any throughput or resupply from core or out of our own stocks we could have continued to take care of everything. Now I can't tell you because I don't remember exactly how many days of fighting and how do you depict the day of fighting. You know it's always been an argument in the world of ammo like what's your basic load would it take you know if you had to fire 10,000 rounds out of the tube then that's different than the day when you fire 100. You know so if we would have had to fight and continue to do that I'm sure there may have been some issues but I really don't think so. It's like I got interviewed when they started the Iraq war and the guy was by and damned there on channel 2, 4, or 5 whatever the guys that I talked to say that you know they were going to have problems logistically. And I said no the longer the war goes on the better it's gotten because you've got port you've already gone in you've established everything you started the attack all the it's all there it's all laid out. And when they went to war they knew they had the stuff they needed and it's a matter of getting it to them you know. They're all right there in the city of Bagdad anyway so yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah okay then 20 what sort of things did you learn about the 101st logistical capabilities as a result of the war?

Skrodzk: Well I learned that if you have a disciplined unit you're going to do much better at anything that you do than one that's not disciplined. And I think that we did things the right way and we made do with what we had. And I think people got along there were arguments but those were over our heads you know about boots, cots you know things like that that we needed uniforms. But when it came to getting you know the right stuff I think we had a superb core staff and you know people but there that you couldn't beat. You know and General Luck you know he's in town here.

Interviewer: I didn't know that.

Skrodzk: Yeah he lives in town here. He's probably gone somewhere all the time to Afghanistan or something but. Anyway yeah I'd say that it's a pretty darn good organization and I was proud of the fact that I was with the 101st because from some of the things I saw in the other units we were a lot better.

Interviewer: Really

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: Would you care to express

Skrodzk: No just that the stuff with steeling the cots and the port____ and getting there faster and trying to take the Japanese vehicles and dumping your stuff in the desert. You know those kinds of things that we didn't really do and a little bit of hording on some of the coscom units shouldn't have been done. The boots ____ find an old mill van of boots and we've got guys that don't have any who's he holding them for. That kind of stuff.

Interviewer: Yeah I remember I think Sergeant Nicholas told me that the desert boots were coming into port

Skrodzk: That's what I'm talking about.

Interviewer: Yeah they asked if you wanted to get the desert boots and I'm like no.

Skrodzk: Yeah exactly

Interviewer: The last actual question I have is what issues do you think need to be addressed in historiography for the Gulf War both for the 101st and the entire conflict. You know what issues need to be raised what questions need to be asked what needs to be focused on?

Skrodzk: One is preparedness for war in my opinion in terms of the supplies particularly from my standpoint availability of just those things we were talking about. Stocks and supplies and things you need to wage war and the availability of those items. We don't have a real industrial base anymore now they may be a whole lot better off because we're involved in these wars and have got 100,000 guys fighting around the world now that we didn't have. But when you've got a force of what did they have 500,000 over there? Easily counting all of those reservist and everybody else they dragged over there that didn't do anything the whole time they were there probably. But it was like you know we would go to meetings in late December with guys in 7th core and they would argue about getting stuff and I'm going wait a minute you got here when. We've been here since August you know kind of thing and you know you just look at things a little bit differently. But I think we I was a little disappointed in our hierarchy in AMC and some other people with the supplies and the pre-positioned stocks and the ammo available and stuff like that. I think we could have been better off.

Interviewer: Yeah I mean

Skrodzk: I mean we made it work but if we would have been fighting 300,000 Chinese you know I'm not so sure how things would have turned out.

Interviewer: If ____ had gone south you know.

Skrodzk: I mean if he hadn't buried these guys in the desert we bombed them to death for two months straight to where they have no will to fight you know who could predict that. The other one was that I really saw a significant change in the attitude of the American people toward troopers from Vietnam.

Interviewer: Yes

Skrodzk: Because I witnessed that and it was really heartfelt and it's still going on today. So finally they don't blame the soldier or the sailor or marine or airman for what's going on in the world and they support them. Which is a big deal from the way it was in the 70's.

Interviewer: Well the thing about that is for one of my other classes I had to read a book covering Japan and the aftermath of World War II and I'm reading and a lot of the stuff Japanese citizens did to you know their veterans is like an exact mirror of you know how you guys were treated after Vietnam.

Skrodzk: Really

Interviewer: Yeah it's fascinating.

Skrodzk: Of course there was a little different situation I mean they took a country into ruin as did the German soldier who followed a stupid leader and the Nazi's verses the Japanese you know. So unlike what we were doing although I was called a baby killer when I came back into San Francisco.

Interviewer: But getting back to the Gulf now on top of pre-positioning can you think of how what sort of pre-positioning force the 101st would need if there

Skrodzk: Well obviously for its key weapon systems you'd want to have the availability to get the stuff because if you're going to send them on a continuance which we didn't know if the war was going to continue so things turned out a whole lot differently than what could have as I keep saying. So if there was an attack in the recovery force area who would you have kept the guys alive that were there the first guys that went in there the 82nd who can't that don't have enough with them to survive that situation and then to pile people on top of them. So we were given you know six months or whatever five months to get ourselves ready for it you know so. You gradually could build it up so as a result I know they've gotten more ____ made some changes to a lot of things. And I'm hoping that the pre-positioning and the stocks and things are there but they're not. You heard our illustrious secretary of defense say you go to war with the stuff you brought you know which was a poor answer he made. But you know about the Humvees but in an essence it's the way it is. You know there's not much you can do you can't stop in the middle of it and say well we're going to go

Interviewer: Time out time out

Skrodzk: Yeah get a bunch of metal plating and everything we need now because you've a little bit different situation that you didn't have before. I hope that those things would be a little better thought out now and would be ready for if we had a contingent but I think the worlds changed so much that I don't see that happening. I don't see us getting into a land war with Russia or China or somebody like that so really it's a little different now that we've got better aircraft. It was a different kind of a deal. You know and for guys who were like me twenty years of preparing for Europe to deploy and have all the stuff and fall in on pre-positioned stocks and or equipment and have everything to fight with you would have thought it would have been a lot better off than it was. And then the Southwest Asia thing with Diego Garcia and all of that supposedly I thought would be well at hand but it just wasn't.

Interviewer: Well then on that concerning the re-forward exercises and you know did the 101st have warehouses or whatever of stuff in Germany where they

Skrodzk: No they're not sent for just anybody in particular they're for whoever was sent over there and usually was the first division that went from Fort Riley that usually did the forging of. The 101st did one but they were the guys who would you know return the forces to Europe that's what re-forging is. They were kind of one of the units that came out of there so that's sort of why they tagged them to be somebody going. But if you're going to send the 10th mountain somewhere they've got to know that they can marry up with some stuff because they don't have it at Fort Drum just like out here you know what are you going to do you've got to have it. And you know you can't take it with you it's got to go over by ship because there isn't enough aircraft in the world to get everybody there with it so.

Interviewer: Yeah and the thing about it even like the deployment to deploy I think it's like the DRB taskforce it was like a couple hundred 141 ____.

Skrodzk: Oh yeah C5s

Interviewer: Oh yeah

Skrodzk: I went to the armed forces staff college with a guy that was commanding a C5 wing out of ____.

Interviewer: Do you know if he wrote a monograph?

Skrodzk: No

Interviewer: Okay because when I was at ____ I read a monograph it was like commanding a C5 squadron in the Gulf War and it was I did a war college paper on.

Skrodzk: Yeah he probably did.

Interviewer: I of course don't recall his name.

Skrodzk: I can't think of his name now either. I can picture the guy but I can't think of his name he probably did.

Interviewer: Did you write a did you write anything for ____ or anything? No okay I thought I'd ask.

Skrodzk: No I wrote a thing on how to do a company command change of command years ago between commands you know they used it in infantry school for the army magazine and they used in the infantry school. But now I didn't

Interviewer: Okay now you had mentioned Diego Garcia and ____ was there how did that work in relation?

Skrodzk: Nothing

Interviewer: Really just nothing.

Skrodzk: No

Interviewer: Yeah that is disappointing because they're supposed to be I thought they were supposed to be

Skrodzk: Well you know you get these guys that come in from AMC whoever the general was I don't even remember some ____ guy and I don't even remember now who he is. But we'd go there in a meeting and Adams would have to hold me back because I'd be saying come on you guys are the ones you don't know where the ammo is or what depot it's coming out of or it would be somewhere in some port or sitting by an ____ or wherever it might have been I don't know where they kept the stuff. It was just disappointing.

Interviewer: And now right actually shipping the shipping everything over the 101st needed I think it was ten ships I don't remember but it was about ten ships. Do you know if it had been planned that there needed to be less? We just went over or anything on that?

Skrodzk: No I don't I can't remember anything now this guy Dilly might be able to tell you that stuff.

Interviewer: And he was what did you say?

Skrodzk: He was the division transportation officer.

Interviewer: Yeah DTO. Alright and then well that's really all the questions I have. Do you have anything else that you can think of that you want to ask and then answer?

Skrodzk: No and I'll tell you what I'll do is if I think of some stuff I'll just send you an email how is that?

Interviewer: That works perfectly.

Skrodzk: Yeah

Interviewer: Okay well then thank you very much it was wonderful.

Skrodzk: I hope it was.

Interviewer: Oh yes very very very nice.