

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Marine Reserve

Personal Experience

O H. 990

LOUIS WOLF

Interviewed

by

David Arms

on

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A This is an interview with Gunnery Sergeant Louis Wolf for the Youngstown State University Oral History Project, on the Marine Reserve, by David Arms, on February 24, 1976, at the Naval Reserve Center, at 10 00 a m

Sergeant, could you just give me a general background on your education and your family life?

W Yes I was schooled here in Youngstown I attended St. Brennan's Elementary School. From there I went to Ursuline High School From Ursuline High School, I went into the service. Of course, after the service, I attended what is now Youngstown State University, but was Youngstown College then, for one year Then I got my state bonus and went to Florida and then went back to college But I enlisted the first time in 1947 in the Naval Reserve I was in that for almost one year until I was eighteen, and then I joined the Marines and went on active duty

A Now, you joined the Naval Reserve here in Youngstown

W That is correct I was at the Mahoning Bank Building at the time We used to drill one night a week at South High School At the time the Marines did not have a reserve in Youngstown. While I was on active duty just prior to the Korean War, they developed the Marine Reserve. I was on active duty for four years I enlisted for three and got a Truman year, the fourth year

A A "Truman year" you called it?

W Yes. President Truman was there during the Korean War. He gave everybody an extra year in their enlistment which they called "Commands of the Government " After that, my four years of active duty were up and I was discharged Then I was out for five years. I reenlisted in the reserves It was right here in Youngstown, at this training center. Of course, it was the engineers

A Now, you said that you went to Youngstown College at the time.

W. Yes, sir

A Then you went to Florida?

W: Yes, I got my state bonus that everybody got who was in the Korean War

A I see

W I went to Florida on a vacation. When I came back here, I did not go back to

school, I went to work

A How many years did you finish at Youngstown College?

W. Just the one

A. Where are you employed at the present?

W I am an operating engineer I am heavy equipment operator and mechanic

A For who do you work?

W. Well, I work through the union, along with a lot of operating engineers Right now, I am employed in B&C Construction in Niles, Ohio

A How long have you been doing this?

W Actually, I started doing that in 1946, during the summer My father was a charter member of the organization, so that gave me a foot in the door Nobody could bump me because I knew my job and they had nobody else. I did it for a living Whenever the equipment would run, I was there.

A So you joined this reserve unit in Youngstown in, when was this now?

W: Yes, in 1958, I believe

A In 1958, after you came back from Korea, you did not rejoin the reserves right off?

W No, I was discharged out of Brooklyn Navy Yard and stayed out for five years

A You joined it back over at Youngstown in 1958, in the engineering unit?

W. Right I have been working there ever since, until such times they redesignated and closed this unit four years ago Then I had to join the New Castle, Pennsylvania unit.

A What did you do when you came to drill here at the center? Could you just give me an idea of what a typical drill was like?

W I was platoon sergeant of the heavy equipment section. I had all the truck drivers, and I had all the truck driver mechanics. I had all the equipment operators and the equipment mechanics and also had the welders, the sheet

metal men. There is always work for mechanics. There is always work for equipment operators. Now we took community projects, Little League ballfields, Girl Scout camps, lakes, and rod and gun club activities. We were always out in the field doing construction work, which we always worked for non-profit organizations. We did not take anything away from the community contractors. We only worked for people who could not afford it. At churches every now and then, we would put a parking lot in for them or an access road or something. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and Campfire Girls, of course, are all non-profit. We would spend that time in the field working on equipment or completing a project. For example, the Little League ball fields, we had activity in pretty near every one of them in a twenty-five mile area. We have done some work on them or developed or built them. This is where my platoon would spend their Saturdays and Sundays.

A When you went on active duty back during the Korean War, what were you assigned to then?

W Infantry

A You were in infantry?

W Yes, sir.

A Where did you serve?

W I went to Paris Island, of course, and completing that, I went to Camp LeJeune, North Carolina. I went to automotive mechanics and diesel school for sixteen weeks. When I completed that, I went on thirty-two days delay en route. I was scheduled to go to Norfolk, Virginia, and from there to Panama. I was going to Panama in duty and maintenance in a guard company, which was attached to the Second Division, and do the maintenance on the vehicles for the guard company. In between the time that I finished school and I got to Panama on a Navy installation, the Marines turned all our vehicles back to the Navy, and the Navy and the civilians did the repairs on them. So that put me right back in the infantry, right in the guard company again. I stayed in Panama for two and a half years, of course, as a guard. When I was a guard, I worked in the brig as an MP (military police).

A So all this schooling you went to for the Marine Corps, you never got to use it later on active duty?

W That is correct.

A You spent your entire time there in Panama, is that it all?

W No Then I came back to Brooklyn Navy Yard I spent my last year there From there I went to Bailin Navy Yard, and this is still the guard company.

A Right

W I was discharged out of St Auburn Hospital which is, you know, Brooklyn Navy Yard, and Bailin Navy Yard is actually where I did my duty I was discharged at Bailin

A Could you explain to me what you did during an average drill? You came here in the morning and you did what?

W When I came here in the morning, I would naturally hold muster with my people now I have worked as a squad leader, as a platoon sergeant, as an assistant platoon sergeant, which is right guide, a platoon leader, and it goes back to platoon sergeant again Now platoon leader takes an officer, but sometimes we were short of men Of course, the senior man in a platoon would have to have it Now there was people senior to me in the company, but they did not have the MOS (military occupational skill) or the background. They could not do the work that I was schooled to do which happens all the time That is the only reason that I was platoon leader. But when there was an officer available, an engineering officer was available, why, he took over the platoon, and I would be bumped back

Whenever there was a senior sergeant available, then I would be bumped back, which is fine because I felt it was all for the safety of the men and the equipment that I should be with the men when equipment was running. These kids are butchers, bakers, and candlestick makers They do not do this for a living and I do When I have a man running a bulldozer or a crane or something, I want to be there So that I can prevent accidents, or I want to teach them how to run the equipment It is not just like driving a truck We would have our muster call From then I would make book with a company Gunnery Sergeant, tell him who I had working where, in case they had to find me I would also tell them how many chaws I needed at certain places. And at noon-time they would send out box lunches At 4 30 we would come in for the final information If we had any clean up to do, we would do that

Sunday was the same way, unless there was an inspection We would have to prepare for that There were times when maybe they would come here to inspect, and we had our equipment out on the jobs working We worked that out with the commanding officer. What happened was that he wants to see the equipment, he wants to see it working, he wants to see the men doing the job they are being trained to do. He does not want them just standing up, spit and

shined, because engineers do not do that. They do that, but we did not. He wanted to see us in our MOS working. To see what happened.

A: After you talked with the sergeant there that was running it, did you go inspect the jobs? Is that it personally?

W: Yes, I stayed right on the jobs all day. I stayed right there. Of course, they would come to me first and show me the job which they would like to have done. I would assign particular equipment for that particular job. If it was an end loader or a shovel or a crane, why, I would send that. Usually I had a man that could run the equipment pretty good. I would send somebody green with him to break in. Then we would change around.

A: Now as far as the training was concerned, was it mostly on-the-job-type training or classroom?

W: No, it was on-the-job training. On the section we were out in the field all year round. Very seldom did we go in from the field other than inspections or something was up. But we were in the field all the time.

A: How would you train a man coming into the unit? Had he already had his boot camp? Is that it?

W: Yes, they went to boot camp. They went thirteen weeks and then they would go ITR, which is your extended infantry training. Some of them we would request to send to engineering school, and this worked out fine. They would come back with a little bit of knowledge. Some of the men when they came back, did not have any engineering, or when they got out of school or out of boot camp, in between classes and they could not make it. Therefore, we would train them. I would hold a class. Maybe when we went to drill, it was raining so doggone hard that we could not move or do anything. So I would hold classes in the shop and teach them what each lever was for and what a piece of equipment will do and what it will not do and all the safety precautions on it. At least once a year, I personally would hold class on shop safety, which I also do over here in New Castle. In fact, I had a class there. The lieutenant caught me, I was just coming down out of that class. I hold it on shop safety.

A: you just said that you sent them to school and everything. Was a man recruited right into the Marine Corps Reserve? Is that it?

W: Yes, absolutely.

A: Now, did you ever pick up anybody such as yourself that was not necessarily

recruited into the reserve?

W Oh, yes, we have what we call veterans. My assistant platoon sergeant today, Sergeant Thomas, is in the regulars that discharged and then heard about the reserves and decided to join. So he joined my unit when it was here in Youngstown. He became one of my operators. Of course, he came in as, I think, a corporal and worked his way up to staff sergeant. He was one of my tractor operators. He stayed with me. Usually a man was in my section for five and a half years. They could expect three months of boot camp, three months ITR and then five and a half years. At the end of five and a half years, I would lose them. There are a few people that would stick around, like Sergeant Thomas and Sergeant Statehill. They stay with me, Sergeant Kalenich. They are very valuable to me because they are my instructors. There are times when I had three pieces of equipment working on the three different jobs. I could not cover all three of them, so then I would instruct these two other gentlemen what I wanted done.

A Now, as the head of this particular platoon, who did you work for directly? What was your chain of command?

W. For the commanding officer.

A You worked directly for him?

W. Through the chain of command, I worked directly for the commanding officer.

A. Who was next in the chain as far as you were concerned?

W When I was platoon sergeant, my platoon leader. When I was just a section leader, then my platoon sergeant. As a platoon leader, I worked directly with the company gunnery sergeant, the first sergeant, for the commanding officer. For example, when we went to Puerto Rico, we went down there to work, and I did not have an officer. I was platoon leader and platoon sergeant. I handled the whole platoon, as far as running equipment. We had forty men or two weeks on equipment. It was a big responsibility and a big job. I was busy. Every night we would have a meeting with all the platoon officers. You see, the way it works now, I have equipment, say I have trucks, too. There are other platoon leaders that have another project. Maybe they have to build a bridge, maybe they have some brush to clear. They would come to me and say, "Gunny, I need two trucks or a jeep," or, "I have some material to move. What do you suggest? Or just send me three trucks." Fine. I had dump trucks and end loaders. They would say, "Well, I have some cleaning up to do. Send me two dump trucks." Then I would have to send them two dump trucks. But they would come to me

and request a particular type of equipment pertaining to their job. Now if they did not have a job that pertained to their platoon, why, then I had other projects that I had to do. I am not trying to say that the service platoon did this part by themselves. There are four platoons in a company. All four of them worked on all these projects.

For example, we went to the Boy Scout Camp down in Lisbon. We booked them. We filled in an old stagnant lake. We built them a new lake. While we were there, the other platoons came in and they put new roofs on the mess hall, new floors in the cabins. They did some wiring. They did some repairs in the restrooms, all this kind of thing.

A. When was this done?

W. This was done five or six years ago in Lisbon at the Boy Scout Camp. At one time Sergeant Richardson was my platoon leader. He was a platoon sergeant and a platoon leader. And when he went to New Castle, he took over supply.

A. How did you get your assignments on doing which specific jobs? Did somebody just come and say, "Look, I want this job done."

W. No, men on the street that had a project, for example the Boy Scout Camp, they would come up and make contact with Captain Spickerman, who was I & I engineering officer. He was commanding officer of the regulars here. He in turn had a list of maybe forty or fifty people that wanted projects done. Of course, through process of elimination in non-profit organizations, he would go down the list and go to the jobs that we could handle. Then he would, in turn, turn over to the commanding officer. It would come down to somebody, maybe one of the other engineering officers that would say, would know something more about it than I did and say, "Hey, we need two dozers over here. Send the two dozers." Usually they would let me see the job, and we would work it out with them and tell them what we would need and what we did not need or if we could handle it with the equipment that we had.

A. Now, this equipment, was it an allowance-type thing, or did you request it or something like that?

W. No, we were assigned.

A. You were assigned.

W. We were assigned x number pieces of equipment, yes.

A. Where did this equipment come from? Do you remember?

W Yes Barstow, California When we dissolved, it went to Albany, Georgia

A Who was responsible for maintaining the equipment?

W I was

A How was this done? Did you have a scheduled maintenance?

W Oh, yes In the military, you have a week lease, a quarter lease, and annuals that have to be pulled on all this equipment It has to be done within two or three days of this expiration date, regardless of where it is at or what is done with the exception of greasing Now there are certain requirements that it has to be greased ever eight hours. Of course, this is the operator that is assigned to that particular equipment and his responsibility It is the records man's responsibility to see to it that the records are brought in and that is done In other words, he has a record, he knows what piece of equipment is coming up for an annual, for a quarterly, et cetera

A Now, did you accomplish this maintenance that was scheduled or did the regulars take care of it? How was this done?

W The reserves did it They were I & I, which is instructor and inspector If we say, for example, to overhaul an engine that was wore out, and my people cannot overhaul an engine in two days a month So, if we tore it down and had it all torn down, we make a list of the parts that we need That gave the I & I a chance to order them and get them through the system and get them back for the next drill or the drill after or whenever they came in, and my people put it back together If I tear it down or it breaks while I & I is using it and they tear it down, my people are not learning anything I fell as though my mechanics should complete the job if it takes six months or eight months That is his MOS, this is his prime target. He is here to learn to be a mechanic, so therefore, he should tear it down Now, if he tears it half down and somebody else puts it together, he has no idea But it does not always work that way Sometimes we were being pressed for jobs We would tear it down, and the I & I would put it back together This, I say is wrong, but it is not for me to judge I feel as though if my people start a project and if it takes ten years, they should be able to finish it

A. Was there a good relationship between the I & I staff and the drilling reserves? How did they actually work?

W Well, it depends on which particular year because they change about every two to three years. In heavy equipment section, we never had too much trouble Master Sergeant Blocker was here He was a peach, he would work with us He

liked the reserves and he would teach us. He was excellent. There has been some other people in there who were just as good. I just cannot remember their names right off-hand. The relationship working with my section was real good. Now some of the other sections had problems. Some of the other I & I commanding officers we had problems with. They did not think that there should be reserves. This is probably one of the reasons why they dissolved them, because the last commanding officer they had, I understand, requested to do away with it because there was no count. I did not hear that officially, I do not know.

But any way, in New Castle we had a pretty good relationship. Their commanding officers on them wanted everything to look spit and polished. So he got us to do all the work to keep them that way. This I do not appreciate. If you got equipment, it has got to work, not just sit there for inspections all the time. In New Castle, we go through one inspection after the other. It is nothing

A: Over in this service company that you are assigned to, what kind of a different job do they do?

W: Well, actually, they are the support of the battalion. Now I have the motor transport, drivers, and mechanics in New Castle, which is nothing. I have stake-body trucks and trucks with canvas on them. I have no dump trucks. Now, we would like to go out and do projects for the community. I cannot even haul garbage because it does not dump. Do you know what I mean? I cannot do anything for the community. Any unit there at this particular time could do something for his community is to in line with the MOS now that they are trained in the Marine Corps to do is the photography section. They go out and take pictures for the community, develop them, and show them the pictures. Now, I drive, I cannot even drive through the community because my drivers are assigned to drive. Like I say, they cannot haul anything. When I had dump trucks, we could even haul snow. We put our grater to work and helped the city of Youngstown clean streets. Now that man was being trained to do his job in the Marine Corps.

As to community projects, we have gone out and helped a woman that owned a trailer. Her son was killed while he served in Vietnam. We put the skirting on the trailer. Now that is nobody's MOS, but is a community project, which is good, a good relationship. Well, we were in New Castle, we built an obstacle course for one of the high schools. This is nobody's MOS. This is not what they are trained in the Marines to do. This is engineer's work, but it was a good community relationship.

If they had disbanded headquarters of service in New Castle and brought those people here to Youngstown, then we would be working at our MOS, our job that we are doing in the Marines. We would be doing something for the community. This is why I say they eliminated the Youngstown unit, which were

engineers. There were 150 men. So to close this one, we went over there, and there were 300 men. There were two units in Akron. One was artillery, one was infantry. They closed the artillery unit. They both drilled at the same training center. The Marines owned the training center there. To eliminate artillery and sent all the guns to LeJeune. Then they had 300 men in the infantry.

This installation right here is not owned by the government. It is owned by the city of Youngstown. The government owns the building. They are paying rent on it. The Marines own the one in New Castle. They could have sold that one and come over here. The Navy lost money by the Marines moving out, although all of the money has come out of the Navy. Three units are drilling here. All you have now is the Navy and the Sea Bees. So your bills are high. The way I look at it, if you close this one getting back to the city of Youngstown and they close the one in New Castle, we could all go out to the air base, which the government owns that one, not the property but the buildings. They are paying rent there again. So you got three and the one in Akron, of course, the government owns. They could see that one, and they could drill different weekends.

I drilled a weekend training center in Los Alamitas, California when I was out there. This base on Saturday and Sunday was wide open. The PX was open; the gas station was open, the clubs, the movies, everything. When a man went there to drill, he got three meals a day, a different breakfast, dinner and supper on Saturday and breakfast and dinner on Sunday. After 4:30, of course, you went home. But the mess hall was open, the cooks worked. Everything worked. Monday and Tuesday it was closed, and the I & I was off. This was an air station. I was in a crash and survival crew there. It was beautiful. Every weekend it was a different unit drilling. This way you only had to have one base instead of a whole bunch of little ones in the surrounding area. I drove 37 miles one way to get to this training center, which I did not mind. I am in the unit because I want to be.

A When the Marine Corps was assigned to the Naval Reserve Center in Youngstown, what was the relationship between the Navy and the Marine Corps there? Do you know? Did you drill the same weekend or different weekends?

W Very seldom. Only if maybe our leaders or the new leaders would say that we are going to inspect this particular weekend and did not ask us what weekend we were drilling. There were times that we drilled on the same weekend. The only problem that we had was the parking problem because of the parking lot and the equipment that we could not get in and out and around. But if we had the inspection, we worked good together. Nobody interfered. There were units there. They had their own cooks, we had our own cooks or bag lunches or hot chow or whatever it was. There was no problem.

A How did you get your chow? You say that you had bag lunches or hot lunches, and you had cooks and everything Did the cooks fix it for you?

W In Youngstown here we did not have any cooks The Navy had cooks But we did not eat with the Navy. We had a catering service The I & I, the commanding officer, would put our bids with different people that wanted to cater on the food Of course, the low bidder would get it He would put down what nourishment and everything that he had to have They would either bring it in and we would serve it, or we had bag lunches Nine times out of ten, we were out on the field and we had the bag lunches

A. So, all you got was one meal a day. Is that it?

W Well, here, yes, one meal a day

A I see When you say bag lunches and things like this, what did they normally consist of?

W. Three sandwiches, a fruit and dessert, and milk

A You say that your drill started at about 8 00 in the morning?

W 7 30

A 7 30. And then you took how long for lunch?

W An hour.

A And hour And then you secured about 5.00 in the afternoon

W Yes, sir

A This was on a Saturday and a Sunday, one time a month?

W. Right

A Did you meet with any of the reservists later, at other times than drill?

W We used to have a meeting, I think it was Wednesday or Thursday prior to drill here at the training center Then we used to have to come in, maybe sometimes 6:30 in the morning before drill, and have a meeting with all staff and officers to discuss the plan of the week Afterwards, naturally, we would got to the local VFW or wherever, and have a beer, if that is what you were referring to.

A Yes, yes Now, during these planning meetings, for example, you say that you came out on Thursday Was this an extra drill?

W No, it was a freebie

A You did not get paid for that?

W. No, sir

A Speaking of pay, how did you get paid for your participation in the reserves?

W We used to get paid every three months by check. Now just before we left over here, it was every month It is every month now

A Does it come to your home?

W No, in New Castle, now, we have a pay master He comes around and pays us We sign the pay roll, and he gives us our check.

A In relation to other Marine reservists, do you get together socially other than that?

W Yes, oh, yes We have a Christmas party of all staff and officers This year we went to Trogio's in New Castle Next year it will be Neal's, and last year it was Neal's Anybody that wants to come pays their own way We have a social hour and a dinner to whatever you want, husband and wife deal Plus, that is usually the first Sunday in December Plus, we have the Marine Corps birthday ball which is the Saturday closest to November 10 In fact, we have it in one of the local halls, and that is for the entire community, husband and wife deal It is a dinner dance We have more social between the staff and officers at New Castle than we had here in Youngstown because we are more or less out of town, and a lot of us stay there over night Here in Youngstown, nobody stays here

A. You say that you stayed over there like Saturday nights in New Castle?

W Yes

A What do you do on a Saturday night? Do just a bunch of you get together? What happens?

W. We would go to the local pub, sit and have a few beers and watch the go-go girls Go out to dinner sometimes. Sometimes we would have a late meeting Sometimes you would just go across the street to the airport tavern and sit and

eat a steak sandwich and drink beer

A When you go on your training duty, do you get to go out and have a few beers with the guys quite a bit?

W Yes, well now the officers had the officer's club, and the staff had the staff club and the enlisted man had the enlisted man's club. So all the staff would get together and go to the club and have supper. They would sit around and drink a few beers and tell sea stories.

A. So you say that there is a strong comraderie amongst the staff members?

W The staff are tight. The staff are real close with one or two exceptions, maybe three. We have a pretty big staff group now. For years now, say for example in Youngstown, there are fifteen on the staff. We would get together and go to the club every night. We would go there for supper, we would go there to sit down and have a few drinks or something. Then we had a kitty deal where everybody throws in two or three dollars and sit and drink and dance if they so desire. I think there were five of them that did not drink at all. Five staff would not drink anything but Cokes. We were real tight. Now that the group over there has gotten much bigger, of course, the younger kids go their way. But the old timers were real tight. They would do anything for each other, they were real close.

A Now, do you meet any of these particular guys other than having a few beers after drill or something like this? Any of them who live in the Youngstown area, are they your close friends or anything like this? Do you mainly keep them with the Marines?

W With reserves, yes. Only because we live so far away from each other. I live in Youngstown. One lives in Greenville. Another lives in Calcutta, East Palestine, Livepool, Butler; you know, we are pretty well scattered out.

A. So really, the only time you get together is at a Marine function of some kind on a weekend or other.

W That is right.

A Now you mentioned some of the younger guys and everything. Is there a division, do you think, in the Marine Reserve at the present time between the younger guys and the old timers?

W No, I do not. I think that the younger fellow feel as though, in the staff group I am speaking about, they have not been accepted yet or possibly that they think,

"Gee, here I am on the staff and look at that I do not know him over there He has been on the staff for so many years " We are trying to give them a responsibility because we are not going to be around too much longer, and they have to take the bull by the horns, they have to be the boss We are trying to instruct these people We are trying to give them more and more responsibility They are good people, they are, or they would not be staff. No, we have a good relationship. I think that they just feel a little bit scared because all of us old timers are great big hollers Where the new breed of many today does not holler, and maybe they get more done They are educated too, more so than the old timers

A Do you think that not the staff members but the enlisted men, the newcomers, are they the same breed of Marine?

W The newcomers that are coming into the Marine Corps today, I am speaking of February 24, 1976, are in it because they want to be There is no draft, there is nothing The men that are in there and had been in there three, four, or five years, cannot wait to get out because they went in to miss the draft They did not want to go to Vietnam So they went to the reserves They did not have to go to the service then So they went to the reserves Now they cannot wait to get out We have had a lot of educated people there People that are going to college that wanted to finish college and went to the reserves to beat the draft The kids that come in here today, I have two examples from Calcutta in my platoon [They] are excellent men I mean real good, intelligent and real hard workers They are good people, squared away, clean, decent, nice people The man that comes in the Marine Corps today comes in because he wants to be a Marine, not for an easy way out

A Would you think that there is a shift back from after the Vietnam thing?

W Yes, I do; I really do It is going to take a while. When Vietnam was going on, the recruiter would take anybody that could walk, regardless of his mentality Today there is screening It is going to take a little while, but I think it will be better.

A There again, do you see a big change in the Marine Corps? Have you seen a big change in the Marine Corps?

W Yes

A In what areas would you say this change has happened?

W Personnel, yes, sir I think that the Vietnam War ruined not just the Marine

Corps but all the services I think too many people got in who wrote to their congressman and raised too much heck with the instructors I went through the old Marine Corps, and I learned that when the man said, "Do not scratch," he meant do not scratch, and that was it There was a reason for it then Today in a Marine, "Do not hit me, you do not holler at me I will go see the commanding office I will write my congressman," and this that and the other thing There is too much politics in it, which does not win wars

The Marines are billboard Marines, but when they need us, we are there And we are trained to do the job

A How about in the discipline area and in the training? Have you seen a change?

W Discipline is what I am speaking of In the training area, I have not seen any change We still train the same way to do the same things If you are going to run a bull dozer, if you are going to drive a truck, or if you are going to pound a typewriter, if the training is there, it is good In fact, it is getting better all the time

A. When I say discipline, are the punishments the same now as they were before?

W No, punishments are too easy

A Do you think this might lead as to why they feel they can get away with more?

W Yes Too much discrimination, too

A; In what areas do you see that?

W In the men

A In the men?

W That is right

A In other words, one man from another, or racial discrimination?

W Racial

A Racial?

W Yes, sir

A Could you just give me an idea of what you are speaking?

W Well, I do not want to seem prejudice, but I see it happening where a colored man, for example, would do something. The lieutenant would say, "I do not want any troubles, I do not want any trouble." It has gotten to the point where the colored man has gotten away with more so that I believe the white man is underprivileged now, so to speak. I see it happen, like LeJeune, for example. I saw fifty of them go over to the special services to rent bicycles. You do not rent bicycles. You give them your driver's license, and then you check out bicycles. They surround the circle, and they were just going to hold that base up. The MP's came out and just made them move on. Nothing happened to any of them. If I worked there, I would have corralled them all up and lock them up. When I got ready, I would have brought each man in to decide what. This is not being done. This is my own personal opinion. There are more intelligent and peaceful people in criminology that know how to handle this. I think that there are too many of them getting away with it. I think that there are too many white people getting away with things, too. They got three briggs down at LeJeune, and they are full with people waiting to get in. There is just something wrong.

A Well, now, do you think that this is just the Marine Corps, or the American society?

W Oh, I think it is the American society. Oh, yes, I think there are people that are walking the streets that should be in jail. There again, the community, the county, the city, the state, what have you, did not have the money to lock all these people up and feed them.

A Getting back to something, why did you join the Marine Corps to start with?

W. Because of the tradition and the advertisement you might say, and the caliber of men that it handles. Looking and studying these things, I felt it was the best, the roughest and toughest and that is where I want to go.

A Let me go back even further. Why did you join the naval reserves to start with?

W. Because it was the only thing available. It was the only thing in Youngstown at the time. It sounded like a good deal. You come to a meeting one weekend, I mean one night a week. Every three months you get a check for \$13 a month, at that time. Whatever it was, I was there, a seaman apprentice. While I was in there, I went aboard the USS Rochester and shipped out of Philadelphia Navy Yard and went to Kingston, Jamaica for two weeks and came back. That was in the winter time. That was a beautiful trip with the sunshine. It was in February, in fact. That was 30 years ago.

A In your relationship with the Marines, what would you say the average reason is

a fellow is in the Marine Corps Reserve? Why does he participate in the Marine Corps Reserve? Is it for the money? Is it patriotic? Is it because he wants to do something? Is it to get away from his wife or what?

W Now, you asked me about Marine Corps Reserve or any reserve?

A Well, I would say the Marine Corps Reserve

W. Alright, the Marine Corps Reserve He wants to get in the reserve, firstly, to get away from Vietnam. He did that at one time Now that the Vietnam War is over, he is not quite sure about the regulars Yet again, he could go into the reserves and pick up a few extra dollars per month He picked the Marines because he thought it was going to make a man out of him. Now I have a son in high school, a senior, I have a son at the junior high school. They recruit for me Then I will pick these kids up and take them over to the commanding officer to look to see what the Marines are like He tells me, "Dad, I am not going into the Marines If I go some place, I am going to the Navy The Marines are too rough." Now, two of his friends have enlisted and went on active duty, and he says, "They want to be rough and tough, and they want the Marines to make a man out of them " Well, this is why I am saying the people come into the Marines today Now, I do have people that come into the reserves After their first six months, they decide that there is not work here, they know what the Marines are all about; I like it, I am going on active duty Then they would transfer and go on active duty for two, four, or six years

A o you think this is any different from any other reserve?

W No, I believe it is all about the same

A You think it is all about the same?

W The only thing is that a man who would go into the Navy, the Air Force, or the Army, they give you more money to work with They give a little more schooling that is available. The only thing they do not have is the discipline that we have

A. Why are you staying in the Marine Corps Reserve? How many years do you have in?

W. Twenty-three and a half

A Why do you think you stay?

W I stayed because I like it. I have a good rate, a good job I am right to the point

now where I am really enjoying it. Now, I enjoyed it before, but I mean, I do not have to make formations any more. Nobody looks for me. I have people working in five different areas. If somebody is looking for me, why, he just left, he just left. I could be down at PX, which I spend most of my time at anyway. I am right to the point now where I really am enjoying it. I can go to the clubs. I make good money. In fact, if they would accept me, I would go on active duty tomorrow morning. I do not even think they will accept a sergeant, though. Of course, my age too. But if I could go in as a gunnery sergeant in the regulars today, I would go.

A How does your family feel about that? You just mentioned about your two boys

W My wife loves it. I will tell you how my wife loves it. At Thanksgiving, the boss called up and said that there was no work until the following Monday because the bosses were getting ready to go down to Florida golfing. My wife and I went over to my mother's for Thanksgiving dinner. I asked her, "Where would you like to go for dinner tomorrow?" She said, "Let's go to Riverview." Riverview is a restaurant off the base. They have fresh seafood. I said, "Fine. Let's go." So Friday morning we left and went to LeJeune for a week. We went to the Marine base. We stayed at the hostess's house and we had a vacation on the base.

My wife had been down there twice with me when I went to summer camp. Her and the family were living in a hostess house for two weeks. I would stay there and, of course, do my job in the day time and what not. They just love it. They had the beach, the ocean, and the indoor swimming pool in the hostess house with maid service and a restaurant in there. It was really fabulous. Twice they were down there. Of course, now the boys are older and they are not interested.

At Thanksgiving time, my wife and I just took off. We went and spent a week down there and everything. We had a ball. Everybody I tell this to says, "Holy mackerel, you went to a Marine base?" I said, "Hey, look, you are in the regulars. You can go any time you want to. You live there. Not me. My wife enjoys it. I love it." I took her all the places that I would go when I was down there and she was not with me, to the clubs, to the bingo parlors, to the Islander, different motels where we would eat. The Riverview is a fabulous sea food place. I took her and introduced her to the girls in the PX that I would get to know and would talk to, and a couple of retired Marines that I know down there. I just really enjoyed it. We just took a nice, slow drive down and back. It was beautiful weather.

My wife loves the marines; she really does. My sons have learned to accept it; they are athletes in football, and they are not interested in the military at all. They want to go on to college and do their thing. My daughter loves the Marines. Of course, she is married and has two daughters. I have two granddaughters. Her husband is not military-wise. He did not come from a

military family, so

A Is there anything that you want to add that I might not have asked you about or anything?

W Well, I would like to see the Marine Corps do something in the reserve programs that would benefit the community. After all, the government is supported by the people. The people pay their taxes to support it. I, in turn, pay taxes on my government pay and I also pay taxes on my civilian job in order to do this. I think that the people should be able to see their government funds doing something rather than just training kids to fight,

For example, the engineers when we had them back in Youngstown. Naturally, there are engineers some place in the country, and maybe the Marine Corps feels that we only need three or four units throughout the country, which is sufficient. My personal opinion is that I think engineers should be brought back into Youngstown. I think the Marine Corps Reserves should be brought back into Youngstown because it is a bigger metropolitan city than New Castle, therefore, the recruiting would be greater here than in New Castle. They are on the outskirts of New Castle there, which is hard to recruit. We have no Marines in Youngstown, and Youngstown is 167,720 people. It is much more than the 23,000 they have in New Castle. I would like to see engineers, naturally, I am partial to the engineers.

But if there were more engineers, who could do something for the community? We cannot do it; we do not have the equipment to do it with. In fact, they are going to get rid of our vehicles in New Castle. They are redesignated. They are doing away with motor transport, and they are going to put in a postal platoon and an exchange platoon, which is PX, which the need them in a time of war when we go over seas and set up. If you go to LeJeune today and everybody that was in the PX at one time, they put them into supply. Of course, they do have a few people in the postal platoon today.

A If they do away with the motor transport, what will you end up doing over there? Do you know?

W Well, I will go with the PX platoon. I spend all my time with the PX any way. I was like one.

A I mean, you can transfer over to a PX platoon, even though your MOS is not the same?

W Right, yes. I will have to retrain. My MOS when I was here in Youngstown was engineers, but I had to retrain because I had nothing but motor transport over there. I did not have a motor transport over here. But the motor transport

section was in my platoon

A I see Even though you are a gunnery sergeant, you can transfer over
Gunnery sergeant transfers to what E rating?

W Seven No, we do not change our rate E seven

A You stay at E seven?

W Yes.

A You can retrain E seven?

W Right I will retrain and do the job that is required of an e seven in that particular
platoon.

A I see Okay Well, thank you very much.

End of Interview