INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: DANIEL O. GRAHAM

INTERVIEWER: Ted Gittinger

PLACE: General Graham's office, Washington, D.C.

Tape 1 of 1

G: All right, sir, go ahead.

DG: Let me tell you first my connections with the Vietnam affair. It probably started back in about 1959 when I first got assigned to strategic intelligence. At that time, the argument was about what we should do in Laos, which resulted in the agreements on Laos, so I was connected with that to a certain degree. And at that time, there was a colonel in army intelligence named [Joseph] McChristian, whose name will come up later on as I go through how I think things developed. I went from the job I was in then, which was an estimator on Soviet affairs--not Southeast Asian affairs, but Soviet affairs--in the office of the assistant chief of staff, intelligence for the army, out to the Central Intelligence Agency to be a staff member, the only military officer on the staff of the Office of National Estimates. I went out there in 1964, as a matter of fact, and the Vietnam situation I dealt with a bit out there. Then in early 1965, I went out to the Pacific in command of an intelligence battalion, and a great deal of my strength was immediately committed to Vietnam, so that my first entry into Vietnam was in 1965.

G: Excuse me. Were you assigned to CINCPAC, is that it?

DG: I was assigned to ARPAC, the U.S. Army, Pacific, but essentially taking my directives from CINCPAC. And my battalion helped to set up the U.S. intelligence apparatus in Vietnam. As a matter of fact, the most talented people that they had to help set that up were my battalion people out there on temporary duty working for then-Brigadier General McChristian, who had been assigned out there to be [William] Westmoreland's new intelligence chief. During that tour in the Pacific, my people--and I myself--were involved in the Vietnam affair to the extent that all of the reporting coming out of Vietnam was privy to me and to my people, and so I was pretty much aware of what was happening in terms of intelligence for the years 1965 and 1966.

In 1966 I was sent to the Army War College, and in 1967, then, General McChristian was relieved by General Davidson, who had been the fellow I'd been working with at U.S. Army, Pacific headquarters, General Phillip B. Davidson. He liked my work, so he demanded that I get out there as quickly as I could, which did me out of a month's leave when I got out of the War College. So I went immediately out to Vietnam and there I became the chief of current intelligence and estimates. I arrived as a lieutenant colonel, and Davidson had given me my choice as to whether I wished to be chief of current intelligence or [of] estimates, and I [had] said I would prefer estimates. But when I got there, Davidson had combined current intelligence and estimates and I wound up chief of the whole lot, but as a lieutenant colonel, which caused me some grief because some of the people who were in those shops were not lieutenant colonels but colonels.

Then I stayed on in that capacity from July 1967 through July of 1968, so that I was there during the Tet offensive. Subsequent to that, I returned to Washington and was assigned as a full colonel then, a rank that I achieved the very last day of December, December 31, 1967, once again out to the Central Intelligence Agency to the Office of National Estimates, where I stayed until I made brigadier general, and then they assigned me to DIA. Then I went back to CIA in 1972 as a major general at the request of [James] Schlesinger. After being deputy to the director of Central Intelligence for two years for community affairs, I was then transferred back to DIA to be the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, where I was chief of intelligence during the demise of the whole Vietnam affair. That's basic background to what I'm going to say about what happened in Vietnam.

Early on, I was out at CIA at the time of the fall of the [Ngo Dinh] Diem regime and was aghast at the U.S. complicity in the destruction of the only truly national figure that was available to us to help stem the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese activity which was the demise of Diem. Aghast in that the United States had apparently decided that because it was an imperfect democracy, and because Diem didn't do everything that the Americans wanted him to do in terms of internal affairs, we were willing to go along with his departure. As a matter of fact, it was clear to me as an intelligence officer that the Americans out there in Saigon and elsewhere in Vietnam were going around and openly saying, "Well, should we overthrow or should we not overthrow Diem?" And of course they got takers, people who would

prefer to absorb his power. And when Diem went down, what we introduced into Vietnam was a sort of Mexican politics, that is, a change of government by coup every sixty to ninety days, and that's exactly what we got. Meanwhile, the situation in Vietnam went to hell in a handcart and we encouraged very much the opposition to the South Vietnamese government.

G: Were there any figures in CIA who agreed with the deposition of Diem?

DG: Yes, as a matter of fact, I can recall the sort of caustic remarks that would arise in the Board of National Estimates about what are we going to do about this traditional Catholic. That as a very devout and practicing Catholic, Diem and his family were a sort of a red flag to the Buddhist part of Vietnam and therefore we should do something about it. But I do recall that the argument was almost evenly divided at CIA between those who said, "We cannot accomplish our aims in Vietnam without Diem," and those who said, "We cannot accomplish our aims with Diem." It was almost a fifty-fifty split.

Now, one of the fellows who became very key in the whole Vietnam affair, George Carver, I can recall him coming in after the fall of Diem and saying that one of the contenders for power was [Nguyen Van] Thieu, and he said, "The real problem with Thieu is once again a traditional Catholic is on the scene with all the drawbacks that involves." So I think the general liberal view against Catholics had something to do with the attitude that the U.S. government took both toward Diem and toward his successors. As it turned out, in the end Thieu did take over, and what this demonstrates to me is that we had

to find another Diem to run Vietnam. And he was indeed a traditionalist Catholic.

G: Could Diem have been sustained, do you think?

DG: Certainly he could have. Certainly he could have. If the U.S. view, what I consider the U.S. arrogance, and in this way I agree with old [Mike] Mansfield to a certain extent, the arrogant part of what we did in Vietnam was to say that we can cure a basic civil war and create some kind of an ideal democratic society at one and the same time. [That] was the fundamental arrogance of American policy in Vietnam. You cannot do that. Abraham Lincoln couldn't do that. Abraham Lincoln, faced with the Civil War, suspended the writ of habeas corpus, but anything they tried to do along those lines in Vietnam was considered to be so unpalatable that we turned on Diem. And Diem, as somebody said, I forget exactly who said it, was the last remaining Vietnamese nationalist in South Vietnam. And it took quite a while; we ran through what I think were eight different regimes before we got to Thieu, and Thieu was finally able to take the remnants and put them back together again.

Had we stuck with Diem, I think that that affair would have been over much more quickly. As a matter of fact, I believe Diem was winning the civil war at the time that we insisted on his overthrow. The trouble is, he was winning it without, you know, strict adherence to the view of Americans as to how a quote, "democratic," end quote, society ought to be run. A few Buddhists burned themselves in the street, and we allowed that not only to upset our common sense, but to

overthrow the best chance we had for ending that quickly and without a great commitment of American forces.

Now, after the overthrow of Diem, the North got very much more confident that they could do the job. I think this is the thing that brought on the Tonkin Gulf incident and eventually resulted in the requirement of the United States to deploy a lot of troops to Vietnam. Vietnam seems to me to be a concatenation of military and civilian mistakes the results of which, of course, have been disastrous.

But let me get into the area that I know the best, and I want to tell you exactly how I feel about the intelligence situation in Vietnam. When we first got ourselves involved militarily on any large scale, we relied entirely on what the Vietnamese themselves had come up with in regard to the total strength of the opposition and so forth. Now, the Vietnamese figures on the total strength of the opposition were of course seriously flavored by their political requirements. As I recall, the total strength was something like one hundred and nineteen thousand guerrillas and more or less regular forces of the VC-NVA. When we got into it with sufficient U.S. intelligence capabilities, it soon became obvious that that was too low a figure.

But unfortunately early on, as we were working trying to correct that, the man in charge was General Joseph A. McChristian, and Joe McChristian is a pedantic soldier, and he attempted to correct the situation by using sort of standard order of battle techniques. Standard order of battle techniques say that an enemy battalion amounts to, say, eight hundred men, and if you discover another enemy battalion,

you add another eight hundred men to your order of battle and so forth. Joe McChristian, I can remember from the days when we were worrying about Laos and so forth, tended to estimate to the high side. His view was the standard military view that if there's any doubt as to whether you're faced by three companies or two companies, you always say three companies; if it's three thousand versus ten thousand men, you go to ten thousand, and so forth. So Joe began to increase the view of the total North Vietnamese and Viet Cong strength by leaps and bounds, so that while I was out in the Pacific commanding that intelligence battalion, every day the strength of the Viet Cong-NVA increased, because he kept finding new entities and assigning numbers of people to them. For a while that was very sensible, because I did believe that the original South Vietnamese figure was too low. Eventually I began to worry about it, because it kept increasing, increasing, increasing, increasing. And it was creating the impression that the strength was increasing out there, when in fact that had nothing to do with it; it was just a matter of re-evaluating strength that had been there all along, even if it were dead right, and I began to worry that it was not right.

G: What caused you to worry that?

DG: Well, what caused me to worry was that even before I left that battalion and went back to the War College, the actual trends in enemy strength were totally inconsistent with the kind of figures we were getting for desertions from the communists' ranks; defections, which we called Chieu Hoi, which were coming over to the South

Vietnamese side; [and] our estimates of the number of people who were infiltrating south. And racked up against the casualties that they were allegedly taking and the recruitment levels, their ability to recruit in South Vietnam, this began to make no sense to me. So that in 1967, when I went out to Vietnam and took over as chief of the current [intelligence] and estimates shop, I got the people in and I said, "Now, wait a minute. As intelligence estimators we really ought to solve this problem. It doesn't make any sense to me that the input-output analysis should be so wrong." In other words, what they're able to recruit and bring from the North, as opposed to the losses that we know they are taking, plus a lot of losses that we don't know for [sure], that it is very hard to put a handle on, like how many are getting malaria; how many they are losing on the trail coming south because of air strikes; how many are just deserting and going back to their village that we don't know anything about; and even the captured documents that were coming in. This doesn't make any sense that their strength could keep going up, up, up, up, up, while the input-output analysis would suggest that it should go down.

So shortly after I got there, I launched the estimates shop on an analysis of input-output and they came up with an analysis that said, "Let's forget how many they've got now. Let's see how many they've got now as compared to what they should have had a month before, given what we know about casualties and so forth." So they would do those calculations, and they'd go from that number back one more month and see what the input-output was and make another calculation, go back,

go back, go back, in an analytical process that was totally independent of how many you had when it started. And it turned out that the indication was that in the first quarter of 1966--the fall of 1967 is when we completed this study--whatever that figure was, it had to be a whole lot less than what they had in early 1966. Now, this is the thing that is called, in the jargon of today and in recent years, the crossover point. In other words, we calculated at what point did losses begin to exceed inputs. It had absolutely nothing to do with the end figure.

G: You're saying that the crossover point had been reached, in fact?

DG: Oh, yes. It was reached some time in early 1966. At that point, the total strength, guerrilla and other forces in Vietnam, had begun to decline. You could argue about the rate at which it had declined, but it was very difficult to argue that it hadn't declined. We took very conservative figures. For instance, we said that of the wounded--you know, you had a body count that said how many you had killed, and in World War II and so forth, for every person you killed there were at least three or four wounded. [In Vietnam] we only took a one-to-one basis, that you'd wounded one, not four. We did that because the kind of engagement you were in was short, sharp, and tended to be lethal. So we took a very low figure, one for one. Maybe [it was] too low, but we wanted to be conservative. Then we said that of the wounded, three-quarters of them came back to duty eventually, so in reducing absolute strength we only reduced by like .25 per man killed.

G: That seems awfully low in view of their medical support.

DG: Yes, and we were being deliberately low on it so that we wouldn't be blown out of the water, because had we gone with the high side of these things that would have indicated either that the Viet Cong had a tremendous strength in early 1966--like a million--or that they had a very low strength as of 1967. So we tried to be as conservative as possible on those matters.

G: Let me interrupt you a second, sir. You have undoubtedly heard the stories of Secretary [Robert] McNamara, for example, being confronted with a set of figures and responding to it by saying, "Well, then they're all dead. If these figures are correct, we've killed them all."

DG: That's sort of the thing that Mike Wallace came up with in his show ["The Uncounted Enemy"], you know. One of the things about that Mike Wallace show is I wouldn't even have spoken to the man, knowing his bent, if it hadn't been for the fact that Westmoreland had already spoken to him and had called me up and told me that he thought he was in trouble and would I help him. So when Mike Wallace called, I said, "Yes, I'll help, but I want your assurance that one piece of information will go into this show after editing." And at first he argued that he couldn't do that, and I said, "Well, then, I won't appear," and then he relented. He said, "All right, what is it that you want on the show?" I said, "One thing. That is that the big argument about how many Viet Cong there were was between the MACV figures of about three hundred thousand and one man's opinion out at CIA, Samuel Adams, that it was six hundred thousand. In fact, in the first two

days of the Tet offensive, when we knew that they had committed everything they could scrape up, that the largest figure that anybody's ever come up with is eighty-five thousand troops attacking. That means that if there was anything wrong with the MACV figure of three hundred thousand, it was too high, and that six hundred thousand was simply out of the question." He agreed to put that in the show. Of course, he totally reneged on it; he didn't--

G: Have you seen the latest TV Guide?

DG: No, but I have talked to those people on TV Guide--

G: It's out.

DG: I understand they took them apart.

G: It's out. Yes, they did take them apart.

DG: Good, good. I haven't seen that; I'm delighted you told me, because I haven't seen it. Is it this week's TV Guide?

G: And I believe they call it "Anatomy of a Smear."

DG: Oh, great. Well, I'll tell you, those people did a good job on it. They tracked down all these people that allegedly were willing to accuse Westmoreland, and they weren't willing to accuse Westmoreland. Well, I shall be looking for that.

But at any rate, those are the facts. Now, we knew that they were scraping the bottom of the barrel, because they were picking up people who had serious wounds that still had the stitches in them, and we were capturing them or killing them. I think the intelligence failure was on the part of the North Vietnamese, who had been listening to their recruiters and enthusiasts in the South saying that the

cities will rise against Thieu and the Americans, and so forth, and it just didn't happen.

G: Are you saying there were some North Vietnamese David Halberstams out there?

DG: You betcha there were. Well, not quite so guilty, because these guys' support depended upon sending very good reports back to Hanoi as to how many people they'd recruited into various kinds of outfits and so forth, and it turned out to be baloney. But I'm afraid that the North Vietnamese, because they knew, whether our side would accept it or not, that the kind of figures that my shop had produced about the attrition of the Viet Cong side was really true. They were going downhill and they had to do something desperate; they did it at Tet. The Tet offensive, they threw everything they had with the hope of creating what they had said they were going to create, [which] was a general uprising, and it simply didn't occur. They fell flat on their ass in every place except Hue and were racked up in great numbers.

Now, I remember one of your questions was, was it only against Hue that the NVA was committed? Not so. A whole NVA division was committed against Quang Tri, and the ARVN division up there, without any help from the Americans to speak of, racked them up. And they had them stacked up in a great pile in the city center of Quang Tri and had a great victory march around them, you know, the second day of the Tet offensive. Those were all NVA regulars.

What had happened to a number of the NVA regular outfits that came down is that they, being more regular than the Viet Cong, exposed

their positions and so forth. They were attacked by the 4th Division up in the Highlands and didn't get into the fight as much as they should. The only NVA division that had recently come down and did make its weight felt effectively was that one that came down through the A Shau Valley and went over to Hue. Now, that one made its mark and did get into Hue. They could have been gotten out of Hue very quickly had we been willing to wreck a lot of national monuments and so forth that are in Hue, but we went at it the hard way and winkled them out and it took a while.

But other than that, it was a disaster. The big mistake was made, in my view, by General Westmoreland. First, he treated it right and then he treated it wrong. Early on, the J-2, General Phil Davidson, and a marine general, who unfortunately is dead now, but one hell of a fine general, [John] Chaisson--Chaisson and Davidson went to Westmoreland and said, "The VC-NVA have really screwed themselves. Not only have they lost a whole lot of their combat elements, they have flushed out, for the general uprising, a lot of their hidden cadres that they had inside the cities," and so they were being scarfed up right and left. They had them out in the middle of--one of my lieutenants, on the first day of Tet, came in and told me, "You know, I went by a guy who was standing out in the middle of Cong Le Boulevard with a bullhorn, telling everybody not to go to work, 'Go back to your homes because the revolution has occurred and the government's been overthrown.' And the White Mice [South Vietnamese National Police] just came up and grabbed this guy and carried him

off." And this was happening all over Vietnam, flushing these cadres out of the cities.

G: Excuse me. Did he call them White Mice or Mickey Mice? We always called them Mickey Mice.

DG: Well, he called them White Mice. The White Mice just scarfed this guy up, and everybody was just driving by with their jeeps going to work, you know. [It was] no big deal in Saigon because of the Tet offensive, really, except down at the Embassy. That dust-up was going on down there, but the rest of the people didn't even know it was going on and they just went to work.

So in reality they had taken a terrible licking, and Davidson and Chaisson told Westmoreland, "Look, the thing to do now is to let the people back home know that the Viet Cong have really screwed up, and tell them we don't need more troops." And early on, Westmoreland did. If you look at the record, you'll find that Westmoreland cancelled out the deployment of an armored reconnaissance regiment which was then at Fort Lewis ready to depart for Vietnam. He said, "I don't need them," you know, "The Viet Cong have screwed themselves up; I don't need them."

But that only lasted for a while. Within a few weeks, the planners, the J-5--his name was Brownfield [?] I think--and others had come in and said, "Oh, this gives us a chance to ask for the total number of troops that we always thought we needed," which was seven hundred thousand.

G: Was it seven hundred thousand?

DG: Well, it was two hundred thousand over and above what we had, two hundred and twenty thousand, okay?

G: Okay.

DG: And the army had said way back before we ever got into Vietnam it would take seven hundred thousand troops, and they said here was a chance to ask for them.

G: What was he going to do with the extra troops, do you think?

DG: Well, I'll say this much for Westmoreland: he would not turn on the intelligence guys, and we were saying, "Jesus, the VC are in terrible shape." We could read the communications along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and it was perfectly obvious that they were having one terrible time, because people from South Vietnam were going to go back up that trail come hell or high water. All discipline had broken down and they were going back up the trail. Even some of the people who were operating the radio stations along the trail had bugged out. You got people on who didn't observe the proper security, you know, and we found out the damn NVA types were bugging out and going back up the trail.

G: You mean they were broadcasting in the clear? Is that what you're saying?

DG: Yes. Well, they were trying to keep it, but they didn't really know how to do it, because their normal guys had joined the groups headed back to Hanoi or back to North Vietnam. They were desperate, and they were putting out orders to shoot people, you know, to try to keep them from going back up the trail.

So this and other indications--then we got a huge increase in high-ranking VC-NVA people defecting, including division commanders, battalion commanders, big political wheels from the VC-NVA saying, "We're defecting." Huge numbers. So as far as we were concerned in intelligence, we really had whipped them.

G: That's the first message that Westmoreland put out, I believe.

DG: That's right, and if he'd have stuck with it, he'd have been much better off. But you've got to remember something about Westmoreland: this guy is a man with a million-dollar character, but no genius. He's one of the nicest fellows I've ever met, but goddamn it, he blew it. And finally he yielded not only to his own planners, but to the determination of Bus [Earle] Wheeler and some other people back in the JCS that they needed an excuse to activate the reserves. And so they jumped on this two hundred thousand request, and the first thing you know that got escalated in the political arena to the point where it actually forced LBJ to do what he did. In my view, that's what happened.

On top of it, a certain panic took place out at CIA. They became scared that this one individual, Sam Adams, had been right. And George Carver, in an action which is rather atypical of Carver--Carver's a pretty tough guy, normally--could tell the assembled Wise Men that maybe there were as many as six hundred thousand there. Why he would do that in the face of the obvious lack of strength in the Tet attack is beyond me, I think just a lapsus mentis on his part.

But those things combined to cause what was an absolute debacle for the VC-NVA out in country to turn into a political advantage in Washington and elsewhere. The intelligence guys almost cried the day that LBJ said, "All right, we're going to cease bombing up to such-and-such a point, and I'm not going to run," and so forth.

G: Do you remember where you were when you heard that speech?

DG: Sure, I was in headquarters, MACV, in my intelligence job. And boy, it wasn't maybe forty-eight hours after that that we saw that they'd got the Ho Chi Minh Trail under control again, and they'd turned these people around and sent them back. That was sad, I will say, because it was the only chance that we had to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory, and that's what we did.

G: That's an interesting phrase; I seem to have heard it somewhere.

DG: It was a sad day.

G: Who were you with when that speech was made? Do you remember the circumstances?

DG: Well, you know our times were a little screwed up out there.

G: Yes. It would have been sometime early in the morning, I think.

DG: It was early in the morning. I think it was reported to me about seven o'clock in the morning when I came in, by one of my light colonels there. He said, "God, do you know what's happened?" I said, "No, what?" And he told me. I think it was Gene Joyce, Lieutenant Colonel Gene Joyce [?]. He was a classmate of mine out of West Point. God, I damn near cried. Because I thought, "Jesus, all the hard work of all these guys, fighting with one arm tied up behind their back,

[who] have finally whipped these bastards, and somebody gives it away." Very sad.

G: Why do you think the North Vietnamese accepted the offer for negotiations so quickly?

DG: At that point? Well, it's very simple, they knew their ass had been whipped in South Vietnam. They knew it. And I think what they figured was, "The only way we're going to be able to restore our capabilities and get back into the action is to accept what the Americans are saying now and talk a while, till we can get things settled down in Vietnam." [That was] smart, to me. I mean, that was a very smart move on their part. And they did it, and I don't blame them a bit. I think it was very clever of them.

By the way, we have found out since that [Vo Nguyen] Giap, being a good military man, had been against the Tet offensive. He said, "It won't work, it won't work, it won't work." Well, Giap is finally gone; he was thrown out.

G: Yes, just a couple of weeks ago, I think.

DG: He was thrown out of the top echelons. But we found out later on--and there were some that suspected it at the time--that Giap said, "No, this won't go." From a military point of view he was dead right, but he was wrong from a political point of view because it did work politically. But it only worked politically because we had so many people willing to buy the proposition that somehow the U.S. and allied side had gotten whipped at Tet.

I remember after Tet, about a few weeks after, not the New York Times, not the Washington Post, but the Stars and Stripes came out with an issue. I went and picked it up while I was eating breakfast at Tan Son Nhut, where my quarters were, and it said, "Battered Tan Son Nhut Shelled Again." There was a fellow named Sweet [?] who was running Stars and Stripes out of Tokyo at the time, and I got him on the phone and I said, "What in God's name are you doing? I don't know whether this headline ever hit my wife, but she'd be most distressed." The fact of the matter was that at that time, if you wanted to find out where any shell had ever hit in Tan Son Nhut, you had to get one of the air police guys to go guide you to show you: "See that hole over there? That's where a shell hit." "Battered Tan Son Nhut," indeed. Sure, every now and then they'd get off and they'd poop a few rockets or mortar shells into Tan Son Nhut, and a couple of times they actually hit an airplane. One time they put a rocket round right into the top of not the military, but the civilian--

G: The terminal?

DG: --terminal. But they repaired all that stuff so quick that you couldn't tell where one of those rounds had hit. And it was a literal fact that if you wanted to know where a shell had ever hit in Tan Son Nhut, you had to get a guide to go show it to you. And here's a headline in the Stars and Stripes saying, "Battered Tan Son Nhut Shelled Again."

Well, that was sort of typical of what was going on. I can remember the cartoons of Westmoreland standing on top of a heap of

rubble, you know, saying, "Oh, we did great," or whatever it was. Absolute ridiculousness, as was most of the coverage of the war.

G: Let me ask you something about Giap [since] you brought him up. It's been suggested that the reason he went along with Tet was because they gave him Khe Sanh to go after, and he saw a chance to repeat his great triumph of 1954. Do you think there's anything to that?

DG: I don't know. I know people who hold that contention, but as far as I can tell, Giap never left Hanoi during the whole damn exercise. The move against Khe Sanh took place before Khe Sanh had been fortified so that makes the historical corollary a little haywire. But a lot of the things they tried to do to get Khe Sanh resembled Dien Bien Phu, because they tried to dig trenches, and so forth.

The fact of the matter is that Khe Sanh may have been as big a disaster as the opposition, the VC, the NVA particularly, suffered, because by having to mass a bunch of people against Khe Sanh they came under the full brunt of U.S. Arc Light strikes and other heavy fire-power. They did manage to blow up a bunch of munitions at Khe Sanh, because the damn marines never have figured out what that shovel is for that they put on the back of their packs. They had them up on top of the ground, just dumb, you know.

But I can remember a Montagnard bringing down his whole tribe out of the hills just east of Khe Sanh. He came into--gee, I forget where--one of our places there with his people and asked that they be taken care of, which they did, and they asked him why he'd left, and he said, "We could not stand the stench." What the problem was, there

were pieces of North Vietnamese soldiers scattered all over that territory. They stank, you know, and when some things stink so badly that a Montagnard can't stand it, they're smelling pretty goddamn bad.

We knew, too, from intelligence that we had got our direction-finding equipment going so well up around Khe Sanh that whenever they'd hit the key for a minute, boom, they'd get hit. We'd get gripes; here were commanders on their telephones, saying, "Send me more--I need a radio operator. My people won't man the radios." Every time they'd open up with a radio, boom! There comes shot and shell.

G: What was the weapon of choice for dealing with radio intercept like that?

DG: Well, usually it was an air strike by an F-4 or something like that, and sometimes it was with Puff, the Magic Dragon, you know, and occasionally, Arc Strike. If we had an Arc Light mission going up there, and we had picked out a place where there was one of those radio terminals, why, we would shift it over a couple of degrees and, brooom, right down across them. Oh, hell, you know, you got to the point where you kind of sympathized with these poor bastards out there under that kind of shot and shell. They gave up their tunneling efforts to try to get up to Khe Sanh after about, oh, it must have been about three weeks of this tunnel digging, because unlike the French, we were not constrained to just firing a few 105s at them. We'd put Arc Light strikes in against them, and I mean that just tears those people up, trench or no trench. So they gave up on that.

I can remember that after Westy left and General [Creighton] Abrams had taken over--let's see, when was this? This was about. . . .

G: Summer of 1968, more or less?

DG: Well, it was the spring of 1968, I suppose, around May, June, something like that, that the NVA started to move in again toward Khe Sanh. Every week that I had been there, there was a Saturday morning strategy meeting in which my guys delivered the intelligence situation, and then they discussed it and made decisions, and this morning we had briefed on all these indications that the VC might take another crack at Khe Sanh. At that meeting General Abrams turned to [Robert] Cushman, still commanding the marines at the time, and he said, "All right, take your marines out of Khe Sanh and take them back to Nha Trang. Leave a company out there to keep an eye on them and see what they're doing. I don't want to have another shooting gallery at Khe Sanh." Well, nobody disagreed with that, but the public relations officer, who was Major General [Winant] Sidle, said, "Well, you've got to think about this, General Abrams, that the press is going to say that now that Westmoreland is gone, you're changing his strategy, and you're going to get a lot of flak in the press about strategy changes and so forth." And Bob Komer chimed in and said, "Yes, that's right, you're going to have this problem."

Old Abe sat there chomping on his cigar, as he was wont to do, and after this discussion had gone on for about five minutes, Old Abe said, "Wait a minute. It occurs to me from this conversation that I've never really let you people on the staff know what my attitude is toward

the press." So everybody fell silent to hear his attitude toward the press. And Abe said, "My attitude toward the press is fuck 'em!" (Laughter)

Well, I could have run down the table and kissed the old man, because that was such a refreshing attitude toward the press.

G: And yet the press liked him.

DG: Yes, there's the irony of it all. He got far better press than Westmoreland did, and Westmoreland was forever trying to coddle the press. But not Abrams. He said, "My attitude toward the press is fuck 'em!" And of course that was the best attitude toward the press. He just did what he thought was right, and if the press didn't like it, screw 'em. If Westmoreland had done it that way, I think he would have been a lot more successful. He didn't. I can remember at least two occasions when he called in those of us who had to deal with the press--and General Davidson had me deal with the press from the intelligence point of view--and he said, "Well, now, you gentlemen are really not getting our story across to the press." And it always occurred to me that he didn't really realize the press was not out there to get our side of the story, they were out there to screw us, you know. Not all of them, but like eight out of ten.

G: Who were some good reporters?

DG: Joe Alsop was good and. . . . Oh, shoot, now I'm trying to think of the guy who was working for the [Washington] Star there, and then went to the [Washington] Post, begins with an O--Ober--

G: [Don] Oberdorfer?

DG: Oberdorfer was good.

G: Did they come see you?

DG: Oh, yes, yes. Oberdorfer saw that I was leaving--that was in August of 1978 [1968]--and he said, "Gee, can I have one more interview?" And I said, "Yes, sure you can." Shoot, I was all packed up, you know; my bags were all ready to go and everything on that last interview. And I thought I'd pull something on Oberdorfer, which I did. He came in and I said, "Look, I've been saving a story that now that I'm leaving I'll tell it, and I'll give it to you because you've been pretty good." Because Oberdorfer on a couple of occasions had told me, and I believed him, that he had filed a story X, [and] when printed back in Washington it would come out X minus or X . . . you know, it wasn't quite right. And he always claimed that his editors were screwing with it, and I believed him.

Well, he came in and I said, "Look, do you realize how many Vietnamese have defected to the other side?" And he said, "No." So I started down through a list of division commanders and battalion commanders and so forth and so forth, and finally I hit one that he recognized--and he was taking all this down assiduosly--and he said, "Wait a minute! You're talking about the North Vietnamese and VC defecting to the South Vietnamese." And I said, "Right. Does that make it a non-story?" He said, "Okay, you got a point. I'll tell you what I'll do. We'll finish this interview, and I'm going to send the story in, and I'm going to go through the first part of it just the way you have, and only in the middle of the story I'm going to say,

'Now, by the way, these guys are coming from the communist side and defecting to the South.'" I said, "Okay, Don. I take the Star back home, and I'll be looking for the story." Well, I looked and looked and looked and looked [inaudible]. Don Oberdorfer came to me later on, because he was writing that book on the Tet offensive [Tet!], which is a damn good book, by the way; it's quite accurate on the Tet offensive. And I said, "Hey, what happened to that story?" He said, "Believe me, I did file it. It just got killed back in Washington." And that's the Star, which, compared to the Post, was supportive.

This sort of thing went on with the press out there all the time. I just don't know, if you're going to have a military action and have it covered fully by the press, you had better have it quick and sharp. Use as much violence as is required for a short time and get it over with, because if you don't, you're going to have the American press turn on you, and then no matter what you do it's not going to turn out right. You're going to kill the politician who used the force. This is what I think happened to LBJ and will happen to anybody who gets themselves involved in a long, drawn-out, inconclusive military affair. The American people are too used to wars that sort of run like football games, you know. We're now on the forty-yard line, we're now on the thirty-yard line, we're now on the twenty, and touchdown, it's over. They don't like this business of where you can't tell where the ball is. The American temperament won't stand for that.

G: Tell me some more about Joe Alsop. I've heard stories that he had special access.

DG: Well, he did in a way, because Joe was a guy who had seen enough of this sort of thing in China and so forth that he was willing to look. Furthermore, Joe, as opposed to many newsmen, wanted to get in a chopper and get out where the action was and actually find out what was going on. You know, a large percentage of the American press was willing to sit in the Caravelle [Hotel] bar in downtown Saigon, exchange their opinions, and then send them back as news. I know of one case where one new division had come down--this was before Tet--from North Vietnam, entered the I Corps area, up against General George Walker [?] and the 4th Division up there, and came plunging into I Corps, and then were counterattacked by the airborne brigade, the 197th.

G: The 173rd [brigade]?

DG: Was it the 173rd? Well, the airborne brigade. This North Vietnamese guy, contrary to what they had been doing, decided he would hold his ground; he did a sort of classical defending two hills with one regiment back. He couldn't have done anything dumber, because it gave us a chance to unload, you know, to do a sort of classic infantry attack on these things and use all our firepower. Well, it just literally shredded two of his regiments, and the reserve regiment, instead of being committed to support, ran racing across the Laos border. A tremendous coup for the U.S. side.

Well, there was some young reporter who came in, and I forget what news bunch he was working for, but first he came into MACV headquarters, and everybody was elated at that action, saying, "We really scored a victory here. We really scored a victory." Then he went up to corps headquarters, and the corps people said, "Gee, we're all delighted," and he got down to the brigade headquarters and they were all delighted. But after going down, down, down through the ranks, he finally got to some spec 5 whose squad had been in the assault and who had taken, not any fatalities, but had taken some wounds in the squad, and this guy said, "Well, if this was a victory, I don't want any part of any more victories." That was his headline. That's how he keyed his story and what his banner was when it showed up. So it's one of the problems of trying to run a war in the living rooms of Americans.

G: Did you ever have contact with Peter Braestrup of the Post?

DG: No, I never contacted him out there, but I have met him since, and I understand he's gotten into the ill graces of many of the media people here recently by saying, "Shoot, the press didn't do right by this war." Of course, he's absolutely correct.

I recall one incident where one of the search and destroy units--it was a battalion combat team down in III Corps--

G: Not at Phan Thiet, was it?

DG: No, it wasn't Phan Thiet. They had uncovered one of these underground installations of the VC, and the VC had decided that the best way to protect that was not to defend it but to get the hell out of there and

hope that it wasn't discovered. You had all these little spider hole things and so forth. But it didn't work, and they did discover it, and they went down the holes and they found all sorts of documents. They captured a lot of weapons, and they had a hospital down there, and some of the wounded that they couldn't take out they took prisoner. But not a shot was fired in taking this place.

Back in MACV headquarters I found out about it immediately, and I just said I was going to get down there right away and make sure that the troops, in taking their souvenirs and so forth, didn't reduce the intelligence value of this place, being a proper intelligence officer. So I got a chopper real quick, and roared down there to try to make sure that the local intelligence officer, the battalion S-2, knew what the hell he was doing, and make sure that I didn't lose any intelligence through mistake. But I'll be damned, when my chopper landed, there were already two TV crews on the ground, CBS and NBC, I think. Nobody in the television crew was English-speaking. One of them was a bunch of Koreans and another was a bunch of Thailanders, and all they were down there [for] was to get the footage. There wasn't an American newsman anywhere around. When my chopper landed, I guess they decided I was a very big wheel. Maybe they thought I was a general, because I was a colonel at the time and I had a general staff star on, and they started following me around with the cameras. I went around kicking tires and looking at equipment and documents and so forth.

Well, I managed to get the [S]-2 squared away, and I got back to Saigon, and Westmoreland had been looking for me. There was an argument back in Washington and he wanted me to get on a plane right away and get back to Washington to represent him in an intelligence argument. So I did so.

Well, I was sitting in a conference with a bunch of people over at DIA when a fellow came in and he says, "Hey, Danny, you're on television." And I said, "Oh, yeah, I know what that is." But I get home and my wife meets me at the door, and she's really mad. She says, "What the hell are you doing? You're trying to play [Douglas] MacArthur, you're trying to get promoted," and blah-blah-blah. She's giving me all kinds of hell. I said, "What are you talking about?" She says, "Well, it's probably going to be on the news again." It was about six, six-thirty. She turns on the news. Sure enough, first of all, there's an announcer talking as if he were in a foxhole defilade, talking about this American action. There's a rattle of machine gun fire, and mortar or artillery or something going off in this capture of this Vietnamese position, even though it occurred without a shot being fired. Then it pans to Graham walking around with a soft hat on, not even a helmet, in the middle of all this uproar, with guys being carried out on stretchers, which they'd gotten [from] some other tape from some other action, no doubt, because nobody got hurt there. So my wife was properly angry. And I said, "Jesus, Ruth, if all that hell had been breaking loose, I'd have been in eyeball defilade somewhere."

But they were making theater out of something that was not very theatrical. I mean it was, oh, pretty dull stuff. But it was apparently the take of the day, and they had goosed it up with this guy talking like Ernie Pyle in a foxhole, you know. Jesus! Absolute phony. So this was the press in Vietnam, and I don't know how you beat that except to get your war over real quick.

G: Let me ask you a couple of specific questions, to backtrack on a couple of these things. This is going real well and I'm very pleased. You mentioned Robert Komer.

DG: Yes.

G: Now, I have heard that his arrival created some complications in the operations of army's intelligence in the field because of his insistence on maintaining the intelligence network on the political infrastructure. Did that create jurisdictional troubles?

DG: Oh, a little bit, I think. Not much. I think Bob Komer, being a CIA guy, was a fairly astute intelligence officer, on the one hand. On the other hand, he also realized that the intelligence had as much of an effect on political decision as it did on military decision. And he insisted on that being taken into account, as far as I'm concerned, quite justifiably. There's a lot of things that Bob Komer and I have disagreed on in the past and before and since Vietnam, but in this case I think Bob was quite right. Now, Bob is a very flamboyant fellow and he may have overstated the case--I shouldn't say may, I know he overstated the case in a few instances. But Bob also saw what I saw, [which] was that there was something utterly haywire about

increasing enemy order of battle figures and the operational statistics that were coming in on the other side; they didn't make sense. So that when I had my people complete this input-output study that later became known as the crossover memo, he was delighted that somebody had done that, and I think that he jumped the gun a bit in getting it out.

There was another thing, and that is that he took more interest in the military intelligence product than a lot of people thought was consistent with his job description, as the head of the pacification effort.

G: I've heard General McChristian was kind of unhappy with Mr. Komer.

DG: Well, General McChristian was, but General McChristian was an absolutely pedantic intelligence officer. He tried to run the intelligence business in Vietnam as if you were fighting the Germans in World War II and thus made some very fundamental mistakes. With his attitude toward intelligence, he was bound to get crosswise with Komer, although the overlap between him and Komer was very short. I think Komer and McChristian could not have been in the same headquarters for more than two months.

G: I think that's about right. Spring of 1967.

DG: Yes. But McChristian was not a good intelligence officer as compared to his successor, Phil Davidson. He didn't hold a candle to Davidson, at least for that kind of operation, because there was no. . . . Well, he was a by-the-book kind of military intelligence officer, where you did order of battle as if you were facing German armies,

corps, divisions, battalions, companies, and so forth. And it made for a poor product.

G: What doesn't that take into account in Vietnam?

DG: What it doesn't take into account is that the Viet Cong may call somebody a battalion when they've only got fifty people. There was not in the enemy logistical or replacement system something that, say, if a battalion were normally four hundred men, and on day X they took a hundred casualties, that you could assume that thirty days later those casualties had been replaced through the replacement depot system. They didn't have a replacement depot system. It was quite likely that if they lost three hundred men on April 1, that on May 1 they'd still be down three hundred men. This was something that in the mechanistic approach to intelligence, which McChristian applied, wouldn't be taken into account.

G: The VC did have an extraordinary reputation for resiliency that way, didn't they?

DG: Well, see, what the VC had going for them is that the level of action that they pursued they could tailor to what their strength was. If they were low in strength and didn't have capabilities, well, they just didn't get into action; if they were up to strength, they got into action. That's different from a normal war. [In] a normal war, you're liable to get into action and it doesn't make any difference whether you're under strength or not. But given the VC situation, where theirs was the initiative, they could just avoid action, you

know, until they felt they had enough strength to come back and do something.

One of the very interesting things that was the case, and had been the case for six months before I got there, was that there was scarcely any guerrilla activity. The only actions that were being carried out were by local and main force units and NVA units. No guerrilla activity to speak of. You'd get maybe three, four, a maximum of ten guerrilla incidents in a day, yet we were carrying guerrilla strength at like a hundred and twenty thousand people, scattered all over the country. Why, with a hundred and twenty thousand guerrillas, can you only pull off ten stunts, like blowing up a bridge, or planting a mine, or something? You know, minor stuff at that. Why is it, with a hundred and twenty thousand guerrillas, you can only do that much? This is a conundrum. And what we found was that the main force units had been so decimated by contact with U.S. and other allied forces that they were having to take the guerrillas and put them into the ranks in order to fill them up, which depleted the guerrilla ranks, and they really didn't have anybody to do anything with. That was the answer. But a guy like Joe McChristian would never buy that. If he tangled with Komer early on, it wouldn't surprise me, although I didn't know anything about it.

I do know that there's a great deal of ill will between the two, but there's even more ill will between McChristian and Davidson and me. Davidson and I, when we came in, we said, "We've been going the wrong direction," i.e., McChristian's direction, "We want to go

another direction." And then Davidson got his third star, and I got my third star, and McChristian never did. He'll never forgive us for it. So, no, McChristian is a decent man, but he's pedantic. He's a military pedant, okay? He goes by the book. And you couldn't go by the book in Vietnam; it was too different, it was an entirely different situation.

(Interruption)

G: All right, sir, go ahead.

DG: Yes. This is right after the Tet offensive, and the CIA was saying that the VC had taken over the countryside, which was not true. Then we were getting a lot of reports that the VC were still in close around Saigon, and the kind of information I was getting from Colonel Thiep, T-H-I-E-P, who was the J-2 of the joint general staff on the ARVN side, saying, "No, they're not around here. They're bugging out right and left." So I got a chopper. I had this warrant flying the chopper. Now, man, he was a latter-day Eddie Rickenbacker, and he goes roaring off with this chopper, and I had told him, "I want to fly low all around the perimeter of Saigon, because I want to find out whether these damn VC are here or not." Well, eventually I had to tell him, "Take it up a little," he was scaring me to death; he was flying lower than the tops of the palm trees, you know. I said, "Take it up a little bit, I don't really want to look in the windows of the hooches." But we flew that thing dead low all the way around. I looked for signs of VC. We did get one burst of fire from an AK-47, I believe it was, and that's all, all the way around Saigon.

Then I went down to Can Tho, where a CIA guy named Wood [?], I believe his name was, was the main source of all these reports going back to Washington that I think had a real effect on the political action back in Washington, which were saying, "Well, yes, the VC did fail to take the cities and so forth, but they have taken over the countryside." And again, Colonel Thiep had said, "No, I'm getting all these reports from the RF-PFs"--Regional Force-Provincial Force people--"that they're in good shape." So there was a contradiction here, and from what I could see, probably the Vietnamese were right and the CIA was wrong.

I went down to Can Tho, with a chopper and I said, "All right, who's making all these reports?" And the CIA people said, "Well, our agent network is making the reports." I said, "Where are the agents?" Oh. Well, it turned out all the agents had come in to Can Tho and were in there behind barbed wire and sandbags. I said, "Then how in God's name do they know whether the VC has taken over the countryside?" "Well, they have some reports coming out." And it occurred to me that perhaps the reason they were saying the VC had taken over the countryside was to avoid being sent back out to the countryside just in case the VC had taken over the countryside. So I said, "I want to go up to"--oh, what was that place? It began with Ben. Oh, well, it was up the river, and it was one of the places which was supposed to be infested with the VC now that everybody had gone to town.

G: Not Ben Cat?

DG: No, no, it was the place that had been a base for some of our riverine

operations that had been operating the riverboats out of there.

G: Hop Tac? Was there a--?

DG: No, it was Vung something.

G: Not Ben Tre either?

DG: No, no. I just can't remember the name of the place now. But I said, "Okay, I want some of your people that are making these reports to get in the chopper with me and go back." Well, none of the CIA guys would go, but I did finally impress into service one of the Phoenix guys, you know, one of the province intelligence lieutenants, who sort of shamefacedly crawled aboard the chopper.

G: This was an American?

DG: An American, yes. So there we go. They swore that I would be shot down by fifty calibers because the VC owned the place. So we took off in the chopper, and we approached it reasonably cautiously and came in and landed at the pad. And across the field runs a little RF-PF guy with his M-1 banging on the ground--you know how it was, it was longer than they were--and he smiles and salutes. I couldn't speak Vietnamese, but Colonel Thiep had sent a captain, an ARVN intelligence officer, along with me, and I said, "Ask him whether the VC have taken over." He asked him, and he said, "Oh, no, no. We're having a great time out here." And he said something and I got a sort of a vague answer out of the ARVN guy, so I thought it wasn't quite right. I said, "I want a direct translation of what that man said." So he said, "Well, he said, 'ARVN has gone to town, and the VC have gone to town, and nobody's stealing the chickens.'"

(Laughter)

It was perfectly obvious that the VC were not controlling the area. But, you know, all those reports had been going back to Washington: "Yes, their assault on the cities has been frustrated, but they've taken over the countryside." Absolutely untrue, throughout Vietnam that was untrue, we found out eventually.

G: You're saying there was a vacuum in the countryside?

DG: That's right. The VC were demoralized, they were deserting, running back to their original villages and trying to get back in to disappear, and the VC had not taken over the countryside at all. As a matter of fact, the countryside had never been in better shape than then. The units that were trying to stick in around Saigon and other places--well, they weren't even trying to stick in around places like Ban Me Thuot, although they'd run through Ban Me Thuot mainly because the ARVN commander had been well alerted and went out looking for them and missed them, and they sort of went by him into Ban Me Thuot. Yes, they just passed like ships in the night. But, hell, that commander up there, he hadn't let anybody go home on Tet leave, and he went after them. But he missed them. But even up there we couldn't find much going on.

G: Now, this is really an operational question, and a question for a commander, but I feel sure you'll have an opinion. With this vacuum existing in the post-Tet period, it seems that it took us longer than it should have to move out into the countryside and take advantage of the situation. Is that a correct impression?

DG: That's absolutely correct, and this is another place where Bob Komer was right. Bob Komer and I and Phil Davidson felt that after the Tet offensive what should have been done was to break down the whole allied force into little groups, like a platoon of U.S. and a platoon of ARVN, or a platoon of Koreans and a platoon of ARVN, whoever it was, and just get out into the whole countryside, every village in the country. I believe that had we done that, the show would have been over. Because they had so ripped up their infrastructure, and they'd taken horrendous casualties, too. When you think that they took about one-third dead, of the people that attacked in the first two days of Tet, they were in terrible shape. What it required was bold action, not trying to circle the wagons around the major cities. Unfortunately, we circled the wagons around the major cities.

G: There were reports, too, and I presume these were in conflict with the picture that you had, which was that there was a second wave of attacks planned.

DG: Well, eventually we got one. We fiddled around long enough so that in May we got this sort of feeble second wave, but it was so feeble that they really didn't get anywhere. They did get into the outskirts of Saigon and set a few things on fire, and they got into the graveyard that was just right down near the BOQ. It was the only time I nearly got killed, because the field grade officers BOQ was next to a girls' school, which was next to a graveyard that the VC got into in the May affair. When that was discovered, why, they turned out this squad of lieutenant colonels commanded by an air force lieutenant colonel who

I'm sure had never seen small arms in his life, and they tried to help the ARVN by firing into the graveyard. Unfortunately, the next building to us had been occupied by the ARVN rangers who didn't know the territory very well, and when this fire came from our BOQ, they turned around and opened fire on the BOQ, which tore up my bookshelf, among other things. It's the closest I ever got to getting shot in the whole damned affair. (Laughter)

G: You don't recommend forming tactical units on that basis?

DG: No, not out of lieutenant colonels, and particularly not commanded by an air force guy.

(Laughter)

G: It's a little hard to tell which end of that arrangement you liked the least.

(Laughter)

DG: They had all these guys with their carbines rattling away. I don't blame the rangers at all, because I'm sure their [the Americans'] fire was grossly inaccurate, and they turned around and opened up on the BOQ. They didn't know who the hell was in there. That made for a bad morning.

G: Let me ask you this question. To what extent was Tet a surprise?

DG: Very little. There was one thing that surprised us, and I have to admit that this was an intelligence error. We were not surprised that Tet occurred when it did. We were not surprised that it was countrywide. What we were surprised at, and we have to accept it as an intelligence failure, is that they actually attacked the cities.

The reason I say that's an intelligence failure is because the VC documents and orders and things that we were getting in caused us to send out the alert that they were going to attack the day before or the day after Tet, which were the best bets. Because the ARVN people just couldn't bring themselves to believe that anybody would actually attack on Tet itself because of the sort of holiness of the day. But we had them alerted. We knew there was going to be countrywide [action], but the VC were saying, "We're going to attack the big cities and it's going to be a general uprising." We knew the temperament, or I think we correctly estimated the temperament of the people, and said, "It would be absolute suicide for these guys to attack the big cities, so they don't really mean that; that's propaganda." So we downplayed that part of the evidence we were getting, because we just didn't think it made any sense. Well, it didn't make any sense, but on the other hand, we made a mistake. I think the fundamental problem--the reason we made the mistake is that we were unable to convince ourselves of the bad shape they were in, how desperate they needed something dramatic to happen.

G: Is it going to be always difficult to predict a suicidal sort of thing like that?

DG: Yes, it is. Yes, it is. I can remember the Yom Kippur War. We had two groups of people saying it would never happen. One was the side who said, "War is such an intellectually unsound thing to do that they won't do it," and the other was our own military guys, saying, "Nobody's going to attack the Israelis when they know they're going to get

whipped." So both biases combined to make a very bad estimate of what was going to happen at Yom Kippur.

G: It's hard to compromise that sort of thing.

DG: Yes. And the Yom Kippur thing was another--there's sort of a connection there between the Tet thing, you know, Yom Kippur and Tet. So every now and then, when it comes to something that an opponent might do that looks like, from our point of view, it's a failure, we fail to predict. I think the Falkland Islands is a bit of that same thing. We were getting evidence that the Argentines were getting ready to invade the Falklands, but it was, "No, hell, they're not going to do that. My God, they'll get the Brits all stirred up. So they won't do it." But they did it. Yom Kippur, the same. Tet, the same. It's very hard to stop putting your own reasoning process into somebody else's mind, and to the extent that we failed to predict the attack on the cities at Tet, it was a failure because we said, "It won't work, and therefore we think their sensible military guys are not going to do it." It was only after the fact that we read into what Giap had said, [which] was that Giap's view of the likelihood of an attack on the cities working was the same as ours. But both we and Giap got it in the neck, because while it didn't work militarily, it did work politically.

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I

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