

James Lindsay Interview

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Interviewed by: Kenneth Clarke

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Edited by: Leah Cohen

CLARKE: Hello, I'm Ken Clarke, and today, May 24, 2017, I'm with General James J. Lindsay, US Army Retired. General Lindsay was the first United States special operations command commander. An army ranger, he volunteered for the draft at the tail end of the Korean War, fought in combat roles during the Vietnam War, and held positions from platoon leader to division commander in the 82nd Airborne Division. Amongst his many awards, he has two Combat Stars on his jump wings and a Distinguished Service Cross for his actions during the Vietnam War. General Lindsay, thank you so much for being with us today here on Fort Bragg and participating in the Museum and Library's oral history program. We've done somewhere around 230 of these oral histories with veterans who range from, you know, rear echelon all the way up to, you know, the teeth and the fight. And you've done a lot of teeth in the fight, but you've also done a lot of stuff on the back end. So I think your perspective here today is gonna be very interesting, especially as we think about the history of the 82nd and your role in it. But this is really a conversation about you and your perspectives. You've done an oral history. When you got out of the Army, you did an oral history. And they -- this is a very extensive oral history that anybody can get from the Internet anywhere there's an Internet connection. What I'm hoping that this oral history will be is pretty much your thoughts on what you said then but seasoned by time. 'Cause time works this way, I think, and gives us incredible perspective on you know, what we think happened and then what we think happened later. So I'm gonna start off with some basic questions because I want our audience to know who you are and where you're from, from the most basic levels so that we know you as a human being and then as a soldier.

LINDSAY: Okay.

CLARKE: So I'm gonna start off with the most basic question. When and where were you born?

LINDSAY: I was born on a farm on -- outside Portage, Wisconsin in 1932. And in 1935, my parents lost their farm and my father and family moved to Madison, Wisconsin where he worked in a factory. And that's where I grew up.

CLARKE: Well, what about that experience affected your life? I mean, your family lost its farm.

LINDSAY: I learned the hard way a lot of things. I was the oldest of ten children, and a large family and a small income, so to speak. And it was very -- I got my first job when I was twelve years old delivering papers. In the summer I worked for farmers. And then I went to work for an upholstery company. So my first employment was in 1944, and I worked until 2019. Long time.

CLARKE: Yeah.

LINDSAY: [Laughs]

CLARKE: Never stop working, right? Keeps you -- I think it keeps men alive, but that's just my opinion. Did you have any exposure through your family history of people serving in the military?

LINDSAY: My father served in the navy after WWI. All my -- all four of my great grandparents came from Ireland in the Potato Famine time, and they all moved into farms in rural Wisconsin. And that's -- that's my background.

CLARKE: So your family loses its farm, you have to start working in a very serious way at a very early age. What was it about the military that got you involved with it?

LINDSAY: Money. I was going to the University of Wisconsin. I'd finished a year. It took me a year and a half to do it. When I was a freshman I had gone in playing basketball. I had a compound fracture in my left arm, and so I had to have several operations. But in February of 1952 I'd completely run out of money, so I went down to join the army. And they gave me the papers to sign up for three years, and I said, "I can't go for three. I can only go for two." He said, "If you're gonna enlist, it's gotta be three." So I said, "Well that's it. I'm not gonna do three years." And I was leaving, he said, "Well, you can volunteer for the draft." And that's what I did. I volunteered for the draft, and interestingly I had been in the ROTC at the University of Wisconsin, and I really disliked it, and I was not planning to like the army, but I needed the money. So I joined, and in basic training I went to the medical replacement-training center at Camp Pickett, Virginia, and the staff was all medical service officers. But the thing that impressed me while I was there was the combat arms committee. The first eight weeks were combat arms. They're mostly infantrymen who'd fought in Korea. And I really was pretty impressed by those guys. And somehow I must have impressed somebody else because they made me a squad leader in basic training, and they kept me there after basic training to be a platoon leader. And I liked it enough that I applied for OCS. And when I went before the board it was interesting. It was an all-medical service corps board. And I told them I didn't want to go to medical service corps OCS. I wanted to go to infantry OCS. And so anyway I made it and got there and went to OCS at Fort Benning and graduated in May, 1953.

CLARKE: So let me get this straight. You didn't want to do the ROTC thing.

LINDSAY: No.

CLARKE: You didn't like that.

LINDSAY: No.

CLARKE: You didn't want to enlist --

LINDSAY: No.

CLARKE: -- but there was a way in to volunteer for the draft.

LINDSAY: Yeah, that's right.

CLARKE: So what was that about? That's a little unconventional, isn't it?

LINDSAY: Oh, that's -- but interestingly, I really, as I said, liked the army. And frankly I didn't bear down very much when I was in OCS. I had no intention of staying in the army. And there were 120 people in the class, and I ranked 112 when we graduated. And one of my friends said Lindsay is the only guy that went to OCS and had fun while he was there. But anyway that's what we did. And I liked it enough I applied for jump school, Airborne School, and Ranger School. And I was in Ranger School when the Korean War ended and when I got my 4F draft notice my mother sent me. [Laughs] For my arm, probably.

CLARKE: Well, what was it about the army that you liked? What changed your mind?

LINDSAY: It was this combat arms committee at Camp Pickett that really impressed me. I really thought they were a bunch of good guys. And when I got to Benning I really liked a lot about OCS. It was sort of a little hard discipline and everything, but I enjoyed OCS, frankly. And so that's why -- I still had no intention of staying in the army. I had an uncle who was a lawyer on an FBI agent, and that's what I wanted to do. Unfortunately, or fortunately, I got involved with some court martials and I didn't like it, and so I decided I wasn't gonna be a lawyer.

CLARKE: It seems that you witnessed the draft used in different ways, where you volunteered for the draft but a lot of other people were drafted, and people could enlist, and there was all sorts of different ways. Now there's a lot of people who are absolutely like you. But what do you say to the people who are -- it's all well and good to have a national draft or a national service requirement, but I don't really like the way the army's run, or I don't like how the army's been used since WWII. Or I just don't want to do it, and that's not for me. And yet you found a way in and then found that you liked it. So what is your thoughts on the idea of national service?

LINDSAY: You know, in 1973 or four -- it was '73 I believe, when they eliminated the draft, I was very much opposed to that. I thought we needed a draft; I thought everybody ought to serve. But one of the things that really -- I learned about after I witnessed what happened to the army. When you had a draft, you had constant turnover, which meant you could only get to a certain level of unit proficiency. I was astonished after—now, of course, in the '60s we had real problems. But after we came out of Vietnam in the '70s we started getting better. Really got much better in the mid-'80s. And I don't know that we could have got that well if it had a draft. I still believed everybody ought to serve their nation in some way or some form. But the level of proficiency the army attained late '80s and early '90s, they couldn't have done if they'd had a draft because you'd just be recycling people so much.

CLARKE: So there are pros and cons to that. What are some examples of service that you can think about for civilians who have no intention to ever join the military?

LINDSAY: Oh, there are all kinds of things. The problems we've got in this nation today, they're all kinds of public service things that people could do to serve their nation. Something like the Israelis do.

CLARKE: So you joined the military in 1952, correct?

LINDSAY: Yeah, February '52.

CLARKE: The Korean War's gone.

LINDSAY: That's right, and I was in Ranger School when the war ended, and I was really looking forward to going to Korea, and I was really disappointed. So I came to the 82nd here at Bragg and served as a platoon leader there for all of four months. And I wasn't planning on staying in the army, but I wanted to go into Special Forces, so I put in an application form for Special Forces and was assigned to Special Forces on Smoke Bomb Hill, then known as the psychological warfare center. And Colonel Edson Raft was our Special Forces commander. I reported to him in January of '54, and Frank Dallas was the adjutant, and he was a captain. And I reported to him, and Colonel Raft from his office said, "Adjutant, is that a second lieutenant?" and he said, "Yes, sir." And he said, "I told the army I would not take any second lieutenants. Convene a board." And it was a really amazing -- I sat there for about three hours while they got a bunch of guys together, and Colonel Black Jack Shannon was the head of the board, and they asked me a ton of questions. They couldn't -- I was assigned. They couldn't get rid of me. I guess they just wanted to scare me a little bit. And so I reported back the next morning. I spent about three hours with them. I reported back the next morning, and they adjutant sent me in to see Colonel Raft, and he said, "We're gonna keep you, but you're on probation." And I thought, well, so, that's the way it is. And he said, "Look at that building next door. That's your office over there." Office, I thought, what do I got an office for? And he said, "You're gonna be our courts and boards officer." And I thought, oh my God. I mean, they threw me in the 82nd, and now I'm gonna be courts and boards officer. I couldn't believe it. And he said, "When you get over there, there's a Pfc in that office. He's a lawyer; don't screw him up." I mean, I've never been as disheartened in my life. So I went over there, and I started reading the court martial manual and all the SOPs and everything. The next day I was, the adjutant called and asked me to report over there, and I reported back to him, and he said, "We're gonna send you over to the post-NCO school as an instructor." So they got rid of me. And I went to the post-NCO school where I taught metadata instruction. And I'd been there a few months, and Raft was a real short guy, but he loved to play volleyball. He was a setter. And we had a volleyball court near the parade field there, and I'd gone back to the unit to pick up my mail. And they asked me to join them 'cause one team needed another player, so I joined them, and I was a pretty good volleyball player in those days. And I ended up spiking and I hit Raft in the head and knocked him down literally. And everyone was smiling and looking the other way. And so the next day I was working, and Major Garden, my boss, called me -- "What's going on?" They want you back, and they're sending a replacement for you Monday. And they want you back in the 77th group." And I said -- I didn't know what was going on. So I went back, and I reported to Colonel Taylor, my battalion commander. And I didn't know what team I was gonna be going to, and he let me know I wasn't going to a team. I was gonna be the volleyball coach. And it was amazing. I said—I begged and pleaded, "Can I spend half a day with the A-Team?" So he agreed to let me spend the mornings with the team and the afternoons as the coach. And the Inter -- it was an amazing volleyball team. Have you ever heard of the Lodge Bill? Henry Cabot Lodge initiated legislation back in the early '50s, maybe '40s, trying to get people from Eastern Europe in the army. And my volleyball team were all Lodge Bill soldiers who'd enlisted for five years to get US citizenship, but they were in a displaced persons camp for two, three years for the most part, and they told me all they did was play soccer or volleyball. So we had a great volleyball team. Not, I -- and short guys. I was six feet, the tallest guy on the team. But they were very good 'cause they played so much. And anyway, we did well, and I got back to my A-team then.

CLARKE: That's an incredible story. So you joined the military smack-dab in the middle of the Korean War. Tell me, were you aware of what was going on over there?

LINDSAY: Oh, yeah, I was very much aware of it.

CLARKE: So you were following what was going on?

LINDSAY: Oh, yes. Yes.

CLARKE: How would you describe that war?

LINDSAY: Well, in retrospect, it's amazing. You know, who was the -- was Gene Atchison the one who, in talking about our interests in the Pacific, neglected Korea? I can't -- one of our high rollers at the time. And it just should never have happened but it did. Nothing we can do about it. Of course we're looking at something somewhat similar today now with that idiot they've got running the place now, and it's scary, frankly, what could happen there. But it was -- the Korean War was tough. And -- but we -- when we went north to the Yalu, that was really a disastrous thing. MacArthur just totally screwed it up. He did some brilliant things like the Inchon landing, but the move north to the Yalu was really incredibly stupid. But anyway.

CLARKE: So there was an awareness of that war --

LINDSAY: Yes, very much so.

CLARKE: -- what was going on. 'Cause people don't really know how to talk about the Korean War today. Except for that they see the ramifications of that war living in front of them in the news every day. So it's kind of like one of those things like, yes, it's not known really well, but then here it is --

LINDSAY: Yeah, exactly.

CLARKE: -- in our society. It's kind of interesting that way. If you don't mind tell me a little bit about Officer Candidate School.

LINDSAY: Well, as I said, I'm the only one of my friends that -- I'm the only guy that had fun going there. I didn't plan on staying in the army, so it didn't bother me. Some people got really uptight there. There was a lot of, I would call, phony baloney, acting tough for the TAC officers and so forth. But I didn't take it very seriously, so -- and I had no intention of staying in the army, so I didn't really care. I changed completely later on when I -- my attitude about things in the military because I really loved it once I got to know it.

CLARKE: So do you think OCS helped you though, as an officer, in hindsight?

LINDSAY: Oh, yeah definitely. It was six months and you can't do a lot in six months, but I learned a lot there.

CLARKE: Yeah.

LINDSAY: About people, mainly.

CLARKE: What did you -- what was just your regular routine?

LINDSAY: It was eighteen/twenty-hour days, and up early, and then train all day. And there were a lot of foolish things like clean-scrubbing everything and looking good, if you will. Well, I didn't mind OCS. Some people -- a lot of the things they did bothered them, but it didn't bother me.

CLARKE: Let's talk a little bit about your time in the 82nd. So you're a platoon leader.

LINDSAY: Yeah, I joined the 82nd in September -- August/September of 1953, and I wasn't gonna stay in the army, so I decided I wanted to go to Special Forces. And I told you about that. But I was a platoon leader for only four months, which is kind of bizarre. In fact, I spent thirty-eight years in the army, and on my first seven, when I was commissioned 'til I went to the infantry officers advanced course, I only spent four months as a platoon leader. I went -- was an A-team leader and an instructor in the Special Forces. And then I -- I only had one year of college, as I mentioned, so I really needed college credits, and I applied for and was accepted to spend a year at Monterey studying the Russian language in the Army Language School. And while I was there, an intelligence program called FOI sent people out to try to recruit people. And as I said, I wasn't very thoughtful in planning my military career. I did something really stupid. I signed up for the FOI program. They sent me to spy school, you might call it, at Fort Holabird, Maryland. Spent six months there, and I'd spent a year studying Russian. And then I went to Bremerhaven, Germany, where I was an agent handler focused on the Soviet forces in Eastern Europe, primarily in East Germany. And I realized after I'd been there a while that, although I spoke Russian, most of the people I was dealing with spoke German. So I hired a German to teach me German, and it was very slow going. So I applied for and was accepted to go to Oberammergau, Germany and study German for six months. I graduated first in my class there. I graduated high in my Russian class, too. And from there I went to Berlin. And I was an agent handler. The first year in Berlin, I was focused on -- a Red Team focused on Soviet concerns, and the second year I focused on -- I headed an Orange Team that focused on the East German Railway System. To move the Soviets, they had to use the East German Railway, and that would be the key to anything they were going to do. And that was a very interesting mission. I learned a lot.

CLARKE: We've done several interviews with other people from the 82nd, and one thing that stands out to a lot of them is jump school. And as much as things have changed with technology, a lot of things, as far as jump school hasn't changed.

LINDSAY: No, jump school is actually the same it has been. I went in 1953. I had commanded Fort Benning in 1983, and it hadn't changed. And frankly, it should. You know, you have -- the first week is thirty-four-foot tower week. The second week is 250-foot jump tower week. And the third week, of course, is jump week. The 250-foot tower, which they acquired in the late 1930s in New Jersey or New York, I think it was, is really a wasted week. You don't learn much on the 250-foot tower. I think if I stayed at Benning longer, I might have eliminated that. The thirty-four-foot tower is a good week. It's a tough week -- the toughest week in jump school. My first platoon sergeant when I was assigned to the 82nd was a guy named John Swetich, famous because he made 123 jumps in one day at Sandrock Airport here in Fayetteville -- really lucky to have him as my platoon sergeant -- but he was not in the original test platoon, but he was one of the

initial cadres at jump school. And he told me an interesting story about why the thirty-four-foot tower is thirty-four feet high. One of their officers had drawn this thing up. He wanted to do this to teach people how to jump. And they went to Georgia Power and Light looking for telephone poles, and when they dug them in the ground, they ended up thirty-four feet high, so that's how the thirty-four-foot tower got that way. But jump school—you're right. Jump school hasn't changed. It's always the same.

CLARKE: What was your personal experience with jump school as you look back?

LINDSAY: Oh, I liked it.

CLARKE: You liked it?

LINDSAY: I was in good shape then, and I had no problems with it. And I went to Ranger School immediately after that. And so I got off to a good start with jump school and Ranger School.

CLARKE: One thing that is absolutely certain about the 82nd is they know who their leaders and heroes are over time. You know, for the guys who jumped in at Normandy and all that stuff. Have you run into those characters over time, and did you get to work with some of them? And did any of them influence—

LINDSAY: Well, I know Rock Merritt very well. But I also knew some of the legends. Matt Ridgeway. Jim Gavin. Great soldiers. And I met a lot of their subordinates. I was just genuinely impressed with the kind of people they were. Wonderful people.

CLARKE: What did they give to you?

LINDSAY: I'm sorry?

CLARKE: What did they give to you as far as legacy and/or—

LINDSAY: Just the example they set and the leadership they provided. In fact, when I was talking to Matt -- interestingly, I met Matt Ridgeway when I -- we moved the 82nd Airborne headquarters from an old barracks building into a former NCO club in nineteen -- spring of 1981. And I told General Ridgeway I was gonna dedicate the building to him, and it was gonna be Ridgeway Hall. And I said, "I'd like to have you come down, we'll dedicate the building, and then you do the division review as the reviewing officer." And he said he'd be there. And about a month after -- two/three weeks after I'd made that call, my G1 came in and said, "Sir, we've got a problem. We can't name the building after General Ridgeway because he's still alive. Only congressmen have a name when they're still alive." And I said, "Well, my God". And so I called Max Thurman, who is the DESPER of the army, and I said, "Max, look, this can't be." And he said, "Look, I'll take care of it." And unbeknownst to me he talked to Jack Marsh, the Secretary of the Army, and Marsh called Ridgeway and told him why we couldn't name it after him. And I didn't know he'd done that. The next thing I knew his wife called me and said that he wasn't gonna be able to make it. I then learned why. So I talked to John Duvall, who was curator of our 82nd museum, and I said, "John, we need to design a three-inch plaque that's the width of this Ridgeway Hall plaque and say All American Hall on it, and then imbed it over Ridgeway Hall. And then when he passes away we'll take it off, and it will be Ridgeway Hall." And so we did that. Then I called him, and I told him what I was

gonna do. And I said, "Sir, I don't know how to say this, so I'll just tell you. When you go on to big and better things, All American Hall will come off, and it will be Ridgeway Hall." He said, "I'll be there."

[Laughter]

CLARKE: So you found a way around it.

LINDSAY: Yeah. We found a way around. Very interesting, but great guys. But one of the traditions in the Airborne and the officers in the Airborne has been the prop blast ceremony. And I really got disgusted with the prop blast. When I was prop blasted, I was in the 2nd of 325, and it was astonishing. I went out the door -- they had a mock-aircraft there, and you jumped out the door, and I landed -- they gave me a bottle of whiskey and a glass and told me to go back and start drinking, and they'd let me try again. And I couldn't believe it. And I went out, and I drank some, and they'd let me try again. And when I landed on the floor -- I was only twenty years old. Somebody in there knew that. He said, "He's not old enough to drink. Get him some milk." So they gave me a glass of milk. And it was astonishing. I grew up in Wisconsin, but I hate milk. I hadn't had milk since I was five years old. And I just -- the whole scent was so disgusting, I couldn't believe it. And so I asked both Ridgeway and Gavin what prop blasts were like when they first started. They were very sedate affairs honoring your advance into the leaders of the Airborne.

CLARKE: What is a prop blast, real quick?

LINDSAY: It's -- it originally it was an initiation for officers who are leaders in the Airborne. And it was a ceremony, but it evolved into a drunken affair, just absolutely horrible. And then we had a fatality here at Bragg one year, and they cancelled all prop blasts. And I'm not sure where we are now. After the fatality, they started doing them again, but the emphasis was not on drinking but on physical activities. But it was nothing like Ridgeway and Gavin had ever planned them to be.

CLARKE: What do you do? You said you jump out of something.

LINDSAY: It's a mock-up of a C-130 door or a C -- at that time it was C-47 door. And it was just a drunken brawl, is what it was. It evolved into that. It shouldn't have been that, but that's what we did. And I don't know if they do them anymore now or not. I haven't paid that much attention to it. Different.

CLARKE: Yeah. So they told you it was something entirely different when they started doing it?

LINDSAY: Yeah. Totally different. Yeah.

CLARKE: Were there any other thoughts you had about your induction into the 82nd that you wanted to share? 'Cause we're gonna get into more about the 82nd later as you go from platoon leader all the way up to division commander.

LINDSAY: No, I enjoyed what I was doing, but I just was only gonna stay in the Army for two years, so I decided I'd go into Special Forces, and I got there unfortunately.

[Chuckles]

CLARKE: Yeah, so Ranger School. Let's talk a little bit about Ranger School.

LINDSAY: Ranger School was one of the best training sessions of my life. I really probably learned more in Ranger School at that point in my life than I'd done in anything. Just, I learned about leadership by watching people, looking -- interesting. Ranger class -- half the ranger candidates were advanced course graduates who were captains and the other half were lieutenants like me. And I really learned a lot by watching those captains who were my classmates. Very worthwhile experience. Wouldn't trade anything for it.

CLARKE: Let's talk about -- a little bit about language training, shall we?

LINDSAY: Yeah, language training was excellent. All of our instructors in Monterey were native-born Russians who'd fled WWI when the communists took over. And they were very good. And every day was exactly the same. You went to school for three hours— from eight o'clock to eleven o'clock—two-hour lunch break, three hours in the afternoon - - one o'clock to four o'clock -- then you'd eat. And then every night was three hours. So it was nine -- studying. Nine hours a day. And great instructors. I didn't graduate first in that class, but I was in the top eight. And really enjoyed it. I had never studied a language before, and I was surprised I took to it as well as I did. But I really got a lot out of it and used it. I used the German that I had learned at Oberammergau far more because personally everybody I dealt with was German, but I did deal with a few Russians, and that was very helpful.

CLARKE: Have you ever been able to go to Russia?

LINDSAY: Yeah, in fact I -- my wife and I were in -- went from St. Petersburg, formerly Leningrad, on a Viking Cruise to Moscow. Great, great -- it was an amazing experience because freedom of speech is hard to believe they have that in Russia now as opposed to the Soviet Union. But the thing that astonished me -- all our guides there were college graduates -- the single most bitter group of people I think I've ever met. And the reason they were so bitter is all these dyed-in-the-wool communists now were no longer communists. Some of them were billionaire oligarchs. They saw what happened with the money. Very disgusted group of people.

CLARKE: So you found that you liked language school.

LINDSAY: Yes.

CLARKE: And you learned both Russian and German.

LINDSAY: Yes.

CLARKE: Were there any other languages that you picked up? Or is that --

LINDSAY: Well, let me tell you. This is interesting. I tried to learn Vietnamese. And I have serious hearing problems now, but I've always had hearing problems of sorts. And one thing, I have no -- I just don't hear well. And I thought I'd learn some Vietnamese. And I -- I spent a year with a Vietnamese battalion in Vietnam, and I'd learned right off the bat that they couldn't understand a thing I said. [Laughs] Because I was so tone-

deaf, and I -- it was just bad. So I was so successful in Russian and German. I was a disaster in Vietnamese, and I lived with them, but I couldn't speak it.

CLARKE: Could you tell me a little bit about how you specifically used your language skills while you were --

LINDSAY: Well, I was gonna say I was an agent handler in Bremerhaven and Berlin. In Berlin the focus was on the German railroads and the Russian casernes. I spent a year on Russian casernes, and basically what we did, then -- the wall, the Berlin wall had not gone up, and lots of East Germans would take the U-Bahn and S-Bahn and come in to West Berlin. And there was an area in the northern part of West Berlin called the Gesundbrunnen, health spring. And we had two native Germans -- Horst and Jack who were recruiters, and they would recruit people who they'd met there in the Gesundbrunnen area, and they'd talk with them, and then they'd call us -- there were about five or six agent handlers on our team. And we'd go meet them and we'd-- basically, they were doing it for the money. And we initially, as I say, for a year, we worked on people who were in somehow affiliated with the Soviet caserne. The second year we worked on people in the railway system. But it was a very interesting experience.

CLARKE: Yeah. How would you compare US relations with Soviet Union then versus US relations with the Soviet Union -- former Soviet Union now?

LINDSAY: Well, we were under Cold War then, and it was bad. I'm not sure what's going on now. I think Putin is just as bad as they were, but it's a different situation. And, of course, the Soviet Union went away, so he's trying to restore something like that, I think. We'll see. Maybe he and our illustrious president can sort something out. That'd be nice. [Laughs]

CLARKE: So there's really no comparison to the Cold War.

LINDSAY: No, I don't see anything. No, not at all. Now, of course, Putin's trying to get back there, what he done to Crimea and the Ukraine is really criminal in my opinion, but nothing -- we haven't done anything about it.

CLARKE: So you hear a lot of Russia in the news, and it's, you know, everything's bad and everybody's hair's on fire. But really, compared to the Cold War --

LINDSAY: Yeah, it's very different. Very different.

CLARKE: You mentioned Vietnamese as a language that you tried to learn and did okay with.

LINDSAY: Failed.

CLARKE: Yeah, failed. Were there any other languages that you wished you had learned, or was --?

LINDSAY: No. Oh, Spanish obviously.

CLARKE: Okay.

LINDSAY: If I go back right now, I'd learn Spanish instantly -- that would be my number one priority.

CLARKE: Okay. So let's move on to post-Korea and the time between Korea and the beginning of the Vietnam War.

LINDSAY: Well, basically I was focused on going to school or in Europe, in Bremerhaven, Oberammergau and Berlin. I came back from Berlin in 1960, went to the advanced course at Fort Benning for nine months, and that was interesting because I'd been a reserve officer when I came in with one year of college, and so -- and I finished, I said, 112 out of 120 in my class. But I went to the advanced course with 210 regular army captains, and I finished eighth out of the 210, so I learned something about studying in the interim. And I went -- from there I went from the advanced course back to the 82nd as a company commander in the battle group in the 82nd. And I commanded a company -- big companies. In those days we had battle groups, which were commanded by a colonel, and the companies had a strength of about 265-270, four rifle platoons and a weapons platoon. They were big companies. And it was a great experience here. We had an advisory effort in Vietnam then. And when I finished the year in company command, I received orders to go to the White Star program in Laos, which was run by Special Forces. I was going as a Special Forces officer. But White Star was cancelled when I was on leave en route so I went back to Bragg and spent another year before I went to Vietnam. I went to Vietnam, and I joined the Vietnamese airborne as a battalion advisor, 'cause I was captain then. And ironically I was on orders to go to the ranger training center at Trung Lap, but a friend of mine, Tom McCarthy -- a very close friend. We had been company commanders together in the 82nd. He was killed and I ended up replacing him in the 1st Battalion of the Vietnamese Airborne.

CLARKE: When you think of him, what do you -- what do you remember most?

LINDSAY: About Vietnam?

CLARKE: No, about your friend who was killed?

LINDSAY: Well, he was just a great guy, and it was just a tragedy. It was very disheartening, and the amazing thing to me was that he went to Vietnam, obviously, almost a year before I did. But we were talking just before he left, and I asked where his wife was going to stay, and he said -- he had three sons -- and he said, "I'm gonna leave them here in Cotton Bay," which is a neighborhood right close to Fort Bragg -- "because if something happens" -- he said -- I'm trying to think why he said he was leaving -- oh, because of all the support in the military and everything. And the amazing thing was, when he was killed -- I hadn't left to go yet -- she was notified when a taxi driver come up, rang the doorbell, and gave her a telegram saying he'd been killed. I couldn't believe it. Ultimately they got that changed, but it was just horrible. But he was a good man, did a great job there, and I was -- I'm glad I got the job, but it was a hell of a way to get it.

CLARKE: How did you meet him? Through—

LINDSAY: We were in the advanced course together at Fort Benning, and then we served together in the 82nd for a year.

CLARKE: What do you think drew you two together as friends?

LINDSAY: I don't know, we just -- both Irishmen, I guess. We just -- I don't know. But anyway we were very good friends.

CLARKE: So you're in charge of a company, and how prepared were the noncommissioned troops at the time?

LINDSAY: Now, we didn't have a good NCO training program like we do now. 7th Army in Europe had a very good NCO academy. But we didn't have an organized system such as we do now with various steps you had to take. But I was very blessed. I had four -- five great platoon sergeants, and a great first sergeant, and excellent platoon leaders. Company command was a piece of cake, really, 'cause I had a great team to work with.

CLARKE: What was the day-to-day of that period of time with you?

LINDSAY: We -- I'll go back to a point I made earlier. At that time the army was still a top-down army from WWII. And so the training was such that in the early fall you focused on individual training, then it was squad, then it was platoon, then it was company. And at the end of each of those phases, there were a series of tests. And in the company case, the battle group would conduct an annual training test -- ATT. I'm getting ahead of myself. I'm now back as a brigade commander. I need to go back and talk about that later. But in those days you still had to do ATTs. But to tell you how top-down the army was, we were training for our annual training test, and we had done a movement to contact or something right before noon, and we screwed it up, big time. And so I stopped everything and said, "Let's have our C-rations, and let's do that again." But that afternoon, about, oh, two or three o'clock, we were doing it again. And an inspector from the division came by, and I told him what we were doing and why we were doing it. And he said, "But your training schedule said you're supposed to be doing this." I said, "Sir, we couldn't do it because we had to go back and do this other thing." And I got an unsatisfactory rating for training because I didn't follow my schedule, which would be insane. But that's how rigid the army was in those days. It's not that way now. It's much better now.

CLARKE: So they want you to get it right before—

LINDSAY: Yeah, yeah.

CLARKE: -- you move on to the next thing. Is that what it is?

LINDSAY: Yeah, exactly.

CLARKE: Yeah. So how did the army change post-Korea? What did the army do to change?

LINDSAY: The army was -- it eroded. It was pretty good in the early 60s. And in fact had been quite good, but things started to dissipate. Part of it was turbulence. I mean, we're just an incredibly turbulent army supporting the Vietnam effort. And discipline slipped, but it really slipped badly in the late 60s, early 70s, and it took us several years to get it back, but we did.

CLARKE: So the war kind of wore away, or what was it that made that happen, that slippage happen? I mean, 'cause—

LINDSAY: That's a good question. I'm not sure I know the correct answer. Discipline in Vietnam had really slipped. Part of the -- let me just describe what it was like as a battalion commander in Vietnam. I had a big battalion -- over a thousand people, five companies. The officer corps, we just had an incredible need for lieutenants, for instance. Before I went to Vietnam I was an assignment officer in the infantry branch, and I was assigning four to five hundred lieutenants a month. And every one of them got the same thing. They get four months in the training center, and then they go to Vietnam. They had to have four months troop duty to go to Vietnam. And most of them were very young, and so you had a situation with the lieutenants who were young, immature, and very little experience. The company commanders were captains, but in those days you made captain in two years. Two years of service, you were automatically promoted unless somebody blocked it. So you had captains -- in fact, I had five companies, three of them were commanded by lieutenants. That means they had less than two years' service. So you had very immature, inexperienced lieutenants commanding companies. Younger inexperienced lieutenants commanding platoons. And when I was commanding my battalion it was interesting because the army suddenly realized that in the infantry they were gonna have to assign NCOs for their second tours, so they had a lot of infantry NCOs who weren't serving in infantry units, what we called TDA units -- ash and rash around the post. And they set up a little course at Benning to reblue them, to retrain them. But basically we got an influx of NCOs when I was a battalion commander that had no recent infantry experience. So they really weren't doing that well. The best young NCOs I had were so-called shake and bake or instant NCOs, who were basic trainees who identified as having leadership ability and then held over in school, trained for six/eight weeks -- I can't remember for sure -- and most of them turned out pretty well. The only problem was, a lot of them were fairly good fighters, leaders in fight, but when it came to care and maintenance of the soldiers under their care, back in garrison they weren't very good, because they were just all the same -- all young guys, and they weren't very good at it. But a lot of them were very good as leaders in combat. But the whole army eroded significantly in that timeframe. Bad.

CLARKE: That's very interesting. You served as an advisor to the Vietnamese Airborne Brigade.

LINDSAY: Mm-hm.

CLARKE: Tell me a little bit about what that experience was like. Is this where you tried your Vietnamese, and it didn't work?

LINDSAY: That's right. It was interesting. As I say, I replaced a friend of mine, Tom McCarthy. And I had a good battalion commander. Ironically he and I were born on the same day: October 10, 1932. Him in Vietnam, me in the States. But interestingly, he had a wealth of combat experience. And I was his advisor. Fact of the matter was, I was really his scrounger, who got things out of his system to help him. I also was the guy who always had to bring a bottle of whiskey when we went into combat so we could have an aperitif in the evening. [Chuckles] But he was a great guy, and he fought well. We had some very interesting -- and I was very lucky. I had friends of mine with Vietnamese units who were really afraid at night; they didn't know what was gonna happen to them. I never, never worried about this outfit. They were incredibly good. In

fact the one thing they did wrong -- their solution to everything was to charge -- attack if you will -- and you paid a price for that. One afternoon -- I'll never forget, one afternoon we had twelve platoon leaders. We had four of them killed and five of them wounded in one afternoon. And just, awesome, but they were good, and so I didn't have to worry about that. I spent five months, I think, as a battalion advisor, and I got promoted to major. And they took me up to brigade to be the advisor to the brigade operations officer, and I spent the rest of my tour there doing that. And I really enjoyed serving with the Vietnamese Airborne. Great guys.

[42:41.6]

CLARKE: Why in particular? What was it like serving with them?

LINDSAY: Well, I just got along well with them. I thought they were good fighters. And it was interesting. It changed my eating habits significantly. I had my own rice bowl. I had my own chopsticks, and Lic, who was my radiotelephone operator, carried them. And I'll never forget, the first operation we went on, we ate one meal a day. In the morning they'd have black coffee -- thick, black coffee. And then our one meal was at noon, and we carried live chickens and ducks with us. Seriously. And they'd killed the chickens and ducks, and they'd throw all these greens in there, and they'd boil it up, and then you'd eat it. And when I started out, I was a one-bowl man. But I got used to it, and I became a four or five bowl man. I really enjoyed it. But the thing that shocked me, the first meal I ate with them in the field—in the Mekong Delta you have thatch hooches all over the place. The farmers, the rice farmers there, and they all have a mound-like wall out on one side of their hooch, which is about probably six feet high. And they trap rainwater in it, but also at high tide in the Mekong Delta water goes into it. And every one of them has a log out over it with bamboo wrapped around the end of it, and that's the family bathroom. And so that's what goes in there. And I'll never forget seeing Lic my radio operator washing my bowl in the stuff coming out of it. [Laughs] I said, "Oh, my god." So I immediately went to my survival kit that they had given me before I got there, and I went through it, and I found -- I can't remember the name of it now. I found this thing that was supposed to be for dysentery, things like that, and I took one every day, every morning, just automatically took it. And my friends were getting sick, but I was doing great. And I went on for several months like this. In fact, by the time I left the battalion is when it happened. I just -- I was in horrible shape. I had amoebic dysentery, and I didn't know it. And I went to a doctor at Tan Son Nhut Airbase when I was back there, and he came out and said, "You've got a serious problem." And he said, "The only way we can solve that is to starve it out." And I went from 213 pounds to 165 pounds. [Laughs] Yeah, it was real bad. But again in spite of things like that I really enjoyed the tour. It was a great experience.

CLARKE: So—

[Chuckling]

CLARKE: Except for that one washing the bowl out in the refuse water, yeah, that's great. How long were you out in the field then?

LINDSAY: It depended. We'd go on operations and come back, go out and back, out and back. Sometimes two/three weeks, sometimes a few days. It depends. We -- the Vietnamese Airborne was the reaction force for the Vietnamese military. And so we were based at Tan Son Nhut Airbase just outside Saigon. And we'd go out -- we fought mainly

in the delta, but I was always up to, not the DMZ, but to Hue. Hue, Phu Bai, and Da Nang. I was all over Vietnam basically.

CLARKE: So tell me how that would work. You'd be at the airbase, you'd—you've got—

LINDSAY: We had Vietnamese C-47s, we had US Air Force C-123s, and we had helicopters. And sometimes we'd go by truck. And it was interesting because on two occasions we made combat jumps. One was -- you ever heard of Nick Rowe? He was a prisoner for five years over there, and he was captured in the southern part of Vietnam by -- down around Ca Mau. And one of the jumps we made was to rescue him. The secret SI people, the special intelligence folks, have got a pinpoint location on him, and so we -- they called me and the brigade S3 to the Vietnamese High Command and told us they had a location on him and they weren't gonna tell anybody because they knew a lot of the headquarters were penetrated. So we were gonna jump on -- it was Saturday. Yeah, this happened on Tuesday. We were gonna jump on Saturday in broad daylight. And then they called us back on Wednesday, the next day, and called the brigade commander, and they told -- we were gonna tell IV Corps; that was the headquarters that was in charge of this area. And so on Thursday they had the commander, the S3, and myself fly to Can Tho to brief the IV Corps on what we were gonna do. And we briefed them, and while Nick escaped later on, he told me that evening they moved, and the headquarters had been penetrated. And they immediately moved out. And he said, "I watched the air show from some distance, he said, but I knew you had two different kinds of airplanes." He actually watched what we did. Very frustrating, but anyway that happened. But that was the sort of thing we did, but that was unusual. The usual thing was, most of our efforts were in the upper Mekong Delta, the so-called rice bowl, trying to keep Highway four open to get rice into Saigon.

CLARKE: Lot of stories coming out of Vietnam combat soldiers is a lot of traipsing through the jungle looking for the enemy.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: Is that basically what you experienced, or --

LINDSAY: Yes. Intelligence was horrible. In fact, when I was a -- go to the time I was a battalion commander. The intelligence was bad with the Vietnamese, too, but it was horrible when I was in the 9th Infantry Division as a battalion commander in '68. Every day, the division G2 would send us targets to go to. And I was a so-called strike battalion. I -- every other day I'd get a -- of ten Lipschitz helicopters, Hueys, and cavalry - - not a troop. I'm trying to think of the name. Yeah, a cavalry troops. And the cavalry troop was invaluable because that was the only intelligence we had. The day before, we'd get targets from division G2 that we were to hit, and after a month or so, we ignored them. They were always history. They were accurate three days ago. And so we would use the cav troop to just go out and find things, and it worked reasonably well. But intelligence was horrible.

CLARKE: I've talked to many combat soldiers from Vietnam. And in trying to explain their experience of what they went through, it's always very difficult for them to describe it. Is that something that you would relate with?

LINDSAY: Yeah, I -- I can understand that. It's difficult for me to describe. You know, you first have to look at the way we fought the war. We had an advisory effort that was pretty robust. Got more robust as time went on. And then in 1965 we introduced US troops. And General Westmoreland was the commander then, and he focused on search-and-destroy operations, thinking we could trip?? the Viet Cong to the point, and later the NVA, to the point that they'd have to give the thing up. Well, search-and-destroy really didn't work very well. It -- we killed a bunch of Viet Cong and a bunch of NVA, but it did not work well. Harold K. Johnson was Chief of Staff of the army in the mid-60s there, and he had a study done about how we were fighting the war in Vietnam. And it recommended, don't do search and destroy. Do clear and hold. Basically clear and hold would be to try to protect villages and so forth, and arm and equip the regional force, popular forces that protected those villages to the point that the people would feel safe. And Harold -- Creighton Abrams came over as General Westmoreland's deputy commander in 1968. He bought the guy that did this study about Vietnam with him, and as soon as General Westmoreland left, he shifted the program from search and destroy to clear and hold. At the same time the premier was Thieu, and he instituted a number of programs. One of them was land to the tiller. Virtually everybody in Vietnam was a sharecropper. So he instituted this program, land to the tiller, and I'm trying to think, at least four hundred -- I want to say 400,000. I need to call you afterward and tell you if I got this wrong. But I think 400,000 farmers gained some land of their own that they could call their own. And the combination of those two -- things really changed. And in fact, I left Vietnam in the spring of '69, and I planned to go back to Vietnam, but I wanted to see some of my family occasionally. So when I graduated from the war college I got on the Special Forces assignment in Thailand and took my family with me to Thailand. And my plan was at the end of the two years they would stay in Bangkok and I would go back to Vietnam. But in the two years I was in Thailand, from '71 to '73, I was absolutely amazed at how Vietnam had changed with the clear and hold thing. You -- I went back to visit some of my Vietnamese Airborne friends, and they talked, one time I was there -- let's go -- they wanted to go to these areas we had fights in. And so I said, "On my next visit let's go there." So on my next visit, they picked me up in two jeeps. I think there were three of them. And I was expecting at least a squad guarding us. Nobody. They had pistols. They didn't even carry rifles. I couldn't believe we were going in this area that was just bad, and it was amazing. We drove all over the place. And I just finished the National War College, and I didn't know this. And this was really important, how things had changed. And that was true nationwide. It just was a different world. In fact, I'm trying to think, it was a Brit or an Aussie who had been involved -- a Brit had been involved in the insurgency in Malaysia. He came to Vietnam, Abrams brought him there to Vietnam and he wrote about what a difference he saw in 1971 as opposed to '68, '69. But the fact of the matter is, none of that made the airwaves back to the United States. It had changed significantly, but nobody recognized it. But it was much better. In fact, I think had we adopted that clear and hold thing in the beginning, and now that there were a bunch of efforts on the part of the Vietnamese government that were, frankly, I remember them being corrupt to the core. They still were corrupt, but there were a lot of things they did to improve things under the Premier, Thieu. So it was two different wars, you might say -- the 60s and then the early 70s. But we were out of there then, so that was it.

[55:18.6]

CLARKE: Kinda too late.

LINDSAY: Very confusing.

CLARKE: Too little too late, and confusing.

LINDSAY: Yeah, that's right.

CLARKE: You have two Combat Stars on your jump wings.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: Will you talk a little bit about each of those stars, 'cause you --

LINDSAY: I mentioned one. The jump to rescue Nick Rowe. And unfortunately, the thing was compromised, and he moved the night before we jumped. The second one was interesting. We, the advisors on the Vietnamese Airborne, were all -- it was a Saturday night. We were all back in Saigon for some reason, and we were all out partying, having fun. And the premier -- I can't remember what his name was at that time. Anyway, he had gathered all the province chiefs in Vietnam on Phu Quoc Island. It's in the Gulf of Siam just by the Cambodian border -- on a ship anchored off Phu Quoc Island. And there were no NVA or anything. There was a small band of Viet Cong. And they'd fired some mortars at the ship. And so nobody was hurt, nobody wounded or anything, but they overreacted, and they wanted an airborne troop out there. So they contacted us -- we were in a bar someplace -- and got us back out to Tan Son Nhut. And they had the aircraft lined up. They were Vietnamese C-47s. And we were gonna jump -- I can't remember the name of the town, now. We were gonna jump on a drop zone just north of this little town, and by the time we got everything organized, we didn't jump until BMNT - - beginning of morning, early twilight, just before the sun came up. And I was the ops officer advisor to the brigade. And when I got out there the -- General Dong, who was the brigade commander, and I were talking, and I mentioned that I'd graduated from pathfinder school, and he asked me if I wanted to jump with their pathfinders, and I said - - that's the group that jumps ahead of everybody else and marks the drop zone and everything. And I said, "Yeah, I'd like to do that." 'Cause I thought frankly, it was a piece of cake. The first jump I made rescuing Nick Rowe, I had hand grenades all over me. In fact, I had my carbine under the bellyband of my reserve, which is what you're supposed to do -- wrapped in it so it wouldn't -- so I could get it when I got to the ground, but I was so scared that before I jumped I took it out of the bellyband, put it back in the bellyband, and I jumped out of the plane with the rifle in my hand. I was that scared. But I was astonished. There was no firing because they'd all left the day before. But on this jump, I thought this was a piece of cake. And we made one circle of the drop zone, and we did take some small arms fire -- hit one round -- couple rounds in the wing, I think. And then we came back, and we jumped, and I couldn't believe it. My parachute opened, I looked down, and here are these guys in black pajamas running all over the place. I just was amazed. And what it was -- the local regional forces, popular forces, didn't have uniforms, and they'd come out of their little fort there yelling at us that there were -- be careful, there was a minefield down there. [Laughs] No, nobody went in it. But the amazing thing then -- this was carrying the pilots. Really bizarre. We jumped, there was no combat at all. We all assembled -- the pathfinders -- that is. Then the next -- it was two companies, not a whole battalion. Two companies jumped in and we all then walked into this little town on the shore, and the premier sent this truck -- boat in, picked us up, and we went out. No combat. We went out the ship and had lunch -- breakfast, I mean. And then, this was an amazing event. After we had breakfast, the premier got us all together, and we went back down to the boat, drove ashore. And on the shore there was

an old, real beat up US Army three-quarter-ton truck that had a driver in it. And the premier kicked the driver out of the truck, or got him out of the truck, and he got in and told us to get in the back. And there were two dirt streets in this town, and he drove round and round two or three times. And the people were all clapping and cheering. It made no sense whatsoever. But as I said, Vietnam was a crazy war. [Laughs] And then we went back to Saigon. Different.

CLARKE: Sounds a little different, yeah. There are a lot of opinions and feelings and thoughts about the Vietnam War. It seems that we are visiting that war regularly. We're in the 50th of it's -- I guess, observation, if you will, from the beginning of the war to the end, that will happen here in a few years. But what are your thoughts about the war overall and its impact on our society?

LINDSAY: Let me tell ya, I was with the Vietnamese Airborne in December of '64, Christmastime, and it was Christmas. We'd all got together, the CD advisors that is, for a little Christmas party. And the evening before, the Viet Cong had attacked an airfield in Pleiku, up in the northern part of Vietnam, and a friend of ours who we'd all served with in the 82nd with was killed. Pete Hall was his name. And they were all talking about, "We've gotta get US troops in here. We've gotta do it." I remember saying at the time, "You know, if the Vietnamese can't do this themselves, I don't think we can do it for them." And I still kinda think that way. I really love the Vietnamese people I knew. But as I said, search and destroy to me was a wrong concept. Clear and hold, if we had started earlier, might have worked, but we'll never know 'cause we didn't. So I don't know.

CLARKE: There are people who still fly the South Vietnamese flag in Chicago.

LINDSAY: Oh, really.

CLARKE: Yeah, you can see them out on the streets, out on the houses. So they have vets and their families who came over with the boat people, and things like that. So there's a lot of very strongly held feelings on both sides of this.

LINDSAY: I'll tell ya, you know, the Vietnamese Airborne people who made it out of Vietnam have been extraordinarily successful here. Really very, very successful. Now, unfortunately, some of the senior Vietnamese come out, took a ton of money with them, but that's the other side. There was a lot of graft and corruption there.

CLARKE: Let's talk a little bit about your family during this period of time. You mentioned taking your family to Thailand for two years?

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: So obviously you have a family up to this point. So everything we've talked about from you joining the military to this moment in Thailand, you've met, fallen in love, and had kids with. Can we talk a little bit about your family during this period of time?

LINDSAY: It's interesting. My wife was a civilian bookkeeper for the Air Force at Pope Airbase when I met her in August of 1964 at the officers' club at Fort Bragg. And we hit it off immediately. In fact, neither one of us ever dated anybody else. And in, I guess it was March of 1955, the warrant officer in 77 Special Forces group personnel office called me and said, "If you don't get some paperwork, in you're gonna be out of the army on the

20th of May." And I said, "I know. I plan to get out of the army on the 20th of May." And he said, okay, I just want to know. And that night -- Gerry's my wife -- we were talking, and I said the warrant officer called me, and I'm gonna get out. And she said, "Well, you don't want to be a lawyer anymore so what are you gonna do?" And I said, "I've thought about it, and I think I'll come back in the army, because I really like it now." And she said, "Well, why get out?" And I said, "Well, I'm a major -- I mean, I'm a reserve officer with one year of college, and there's no future." She said, "Well, what do you think you could do?" And I said, "I might be able to make Major." And she said, "Well, you like teaching, so why don't you stay in the army and then get out and be a teacher?" And I said, "I'll think about that," and I thought about it for a day or so. And I called the warrant officer and said, "I need that paperwork." And so I ended up staying in, but I had no intention of staying in beyond twenty years, 'cause I was a reserve officer, but things got better after that.

CLARKE: Yeah.

LINDSAY: But for the family, it was tough. I went to study Russian to get college credits. I got thirty college credits there. I got fifteen studying German, but I still had a long way to go. So anytime I had a job that gave me any time, I was going to school evenings or weekends. And as a result, my wife Gerry raised our kids. Four kids. She did everything, and she did a great job. All our kids and all our grandkids are college graduates. They've all done very -- in fact, one of my grandsons finished medical school, became a doctor and a captain in the army last Saturday up at this Campbell College.

CLARKE: Congratulations.

LINDSAY: But they've all done well, but I didn't do it; my wife did. [Chuckles] Seriously. She did a great job raising them.

CLARKE: So how'd you meet again?

LINDSAY: She lived with her boss, and her boss was a female. And they were going to a party at the officers' club at Fort Bragg. And they asked her to go with them, and so she was just in the officers' club at Bragg, and I saw her and asked her to dance, and that's how we met.

CLARKE: That's kind of a storybook story, in a way.

LINDSAY: Mm-hm.

CLARKE: You never dated anybody else.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: Yeah. So you mentioned that it was tough on your kids and that your wife raised them all. How do you look back on that?

LINDSAY: Well, I wish I could have done more, but I -- I was probably too focused on my career and doing things. But as I said, I was blessed with a wife who could do that.

CLARKE: How do you relate with your kids now about that topic? Do you ever talk about it, or is it a --

LINDSAY: No they—no. They -- we did a lot of things together when we had time. In fact in the Far East we went to, all through Malaysia. We went to the Philippines. We went all over Thailand, and so they got some incredible experiences over there. And they were blessed -- the international school in Bangkok was awesome, and they all really made out well there. And so there were some things that were very good about it.

[1:06:37]

CLARKE: We currently have an exhibit up about the Vietnam War, and there's a lot of propaganda art that is from the North Vietnamese, and it's paired with the work of Bill Mauldin's, and it's also paired the words of combat veterans. One of the chief goals of the exhibit is to explore the concept of who our enemy was during the Vietnam War. It's not somebody that we Americans know an awful lot about. What are your opinions about the proficiency and will of the North Vietnamese that you fought against?

LINDSAY: I fought mainly against the VC. And the interesting thing about it was that the soldiers -- or the, whatever you want to call them -- guerillas in the VC and the soldiers in the Vietnamese army were basically the same cut of cloth, so to speak. But it was the leadership in the Viet Cong that made a difference, I think. And they also had hidden control in the community that the army didn't have. So, no, they trained them well, and it was very interesting because the NVA -- I remember, I was talking with Ward Just, the famous writer who had written couple books on Vietnam, before I went back in 1968, and I remember he said something to me that I thought was very profound. He said, "You knew I was going to the northern Mekong Delta, and I knew I'd be based in Long An Province." And he said, "You know, if you ever see the NVA in Lang An Province, you won the war." This was amazing. Tet '68 so decimated the Viet Cong, they had to move NVA into areas where the Viet Cong had been in control. And we were in a fight one night, and we -- let me tell ya. Let me tell you how we fought. I should have said -- thought this earlier. I started out, the first mission I had there was securing Highway 4, the rice road into Bangkok, which was a very boring mission and wasn't very good. But I then got shifted to be a strike battalion, and -- I think I might have said this before, but every other day, I'd get a lift of ten Huey helicopters and a cav troop. Yeah, I did tell you that before. And we'd go out, and intelligence was lousy, so we'd just go where the cav people took us. And what would usually happen, the Viet Cong usually avoided conflict until late in the day when they could, if they made contact, they could then get into any place there was water. There would be streams, what have you. There would be a nipa palm, and there'd be -- they'd build bunkers all through the nipa palm. And they knew what danger close was. You didn't want to bring the artillery shorter than danger close, which was about two hundred yards. So they knew we'd be on the paddy dykes on the outside, so they'd build those bunkers inside two hundred yards from the paddy dykes so they wouldn't get artillery there. And I just went through this time after time. And we'd be out there on the paddy dykes and shooting, and they're shooting, and just go on and on, and eventually we'd escape out of there. But this one night we were out on the dykes, the paddy dykes, and -- where they'd captured some VC. And so, anyway, I waited a while, and finally somebody came crawling back and said, "They aren't VC. They're NVA." And my S3 was laying there beside me, and I said, "Well, we just won the war." He said, "What do you mean?" "Ward just told me if we had NVA in Lang An Province, we've won the war." But we obviously hadn't -- but that's the way they fought, and they fought pretty darn well, quite frankly.

CLARKE: How important is it to be out in the field to see what your men are experiencing firsthand when it comes to leadership?

LINDSAY: You have to. That's -- you have to be there to see what's going on. The one thing I would say though -- it's interesting -- as you go up in the military, I found going from battalion to brigade was a huge leap for me, because at battalion -- I mentioned the kind of battalion I had. I had to be there for virtually everything because they just didn't have the experience, the depth. It just -- I had to be there, myself and the sergeant major both. And when I first took over the brigade I found I was getting too deep into things. I needed to back off and look ahead, not focus on what's happening now, but what's got to happen next. And that's true at every level as you move up. But by the same token, you need to know what's going on. You need to get out there and see. So you've got to have that mix, and it's hard to make the right, correct mix some times.

CLARKE: Well, it's the stuff of movies and novels. It's the people on High Command don't have the full amount of information to actually know what's going on.

LINDSAY: Yeah, that's common.

CLARKE: And so you have the people who are on the ground who actually see the full picture.

LINDSAY: Yes.

CLARKE: But then you have people who are making decisions who don't have the full picture. There was a guy named Bill Albracht who came in and talked about his novel about the Vietnam War, and it was an exact situation where he knew they had to get the heck out of there or they were all gonna be dead, but command was saying, "No, you've gotta stay and hold."

LINDSAY: Yeah, let me tell ya, I keep a padlock that's been cut on my desk. I've had it there for twenty-eight or twenty-nine years now, to remind me: trust the guy on the scene. He knows so much more than you do that you've got to trust what he says. And I'll tell you how it happened. In August of [pause] 1989. Aug -- yeah, August of '89, I had all of JSOC -- JSOCs are counter-terror joint task force -- I had all of JSOC commanders in to brief me on how they were gonna do Blue Spoon. And when they got all done, I said, "This is the most complex thing I've ever seen." And I called Colin Powell, who was chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff that afternoon, and I said, "Colin, look, I just had all the guys in from JSOC, and I'm not sure we can do this. We've got more things moving at one time in more places than I've ever seen. And I need some money to build a full-scale replica of all our targets." And so he said, "It's gonna take a while. Let me"—he says, "Give me something in writing to justify it." So I wrote it up, or had it written up, and sent it to him. And he got the money for me -- several million dollars -- in about two or three weeks. And we built full-scale models of all our targets in this panhandle of Florida at Eglin Air force base, Hurlburt Field, Apalachicola, the peninsula down there. And one of the targets was Modelo Prison. Have you heard of the Kurt Muse rescue?

CLARKE: [Negative reply]

LINDSAY: Kurt Muse was a[n] American civilian. His father had served in WWII and liked Panama, and moved there after the war. Kurt grew up there, fluent in Spanish and English. His wife was a schoolteacher in the Canal Zone schools. And he got involved with some other Panamanian businessmen in going after things Noriega was doing. They weren't very effective, quite frankly, but they were having fun doing it, I guess. And somehow the CIA got involved with it, and somehow Noriega found out, and they put him in prison. His family -- his kids and wife got out of there, but he went to prison -- Modelo Prison. And they put him on the second -- third floor, I think it was. Second -- anyway, he was in the middle of the prison, and they put a PDF guard. He had an open cell with bars on one side, and the PDF guard sat next to the bars with an M-16 rifle. And he was told, and we were told -- the American embassy was told, any attempt to rescue him, he's dead. So anyway, shortly before or after that meeting, I was in a meeting with Dick Cheney. He and I had gone to the -- some inter-agency meeting. And Judge Webster, the head of the CIA, was there. He said he needed to talk to me, and Cheney and I walked over to him afterwards. He said, are you familiar with Kurt Muse's case? I said, "Yes, sir." He said -- and I was amazed. This is the head of the CIA. He said, "Can you get him out of there?" I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Can you do it without killing anybody?" I said, "No." He said, "You do it without getting anybody killed?" I said, "Probably not." And he just sort of shook his head and walked away. And as Cheney and I were walking back to the car, he said, "Mrs. Muse wouldn't have liked that conversation." [Chuckles] So anyway, I then got this money, and we took us a while to build all this stuff. And we got it done in, I want to say, around Halloween. And Delta Force was able to go down and practice on some of the buildings and so forth. But I set up a full-scale dress rehearsal of everything. Everybody does exactly what they're going to do. And we did that on Thursday night, which was I think the -- we did it on a Thursday night, anyway, and everything went pretty well. But during the rehearsal, not the most important thing, but the most dangerous thing was getting Kurt Muse out of Modelo prison, knowing that guard was sitting there. So I watched the rangers that were jumping at Apalachicola, and then I went to the roof of Modelo prison, and I was laying along one of the walls, and I told the guys I was gonna be there. I wasn't a bad guy. And the little birds came in, they all jumped off, and the breaching sergeant ran up to this door -- here was a cupola there -- and he slapped the breaching charge on it, but nothing happened. And the next thing, I see a bolt cutter out there, and I think, "Oh, shit, he's dead." And so they then cut it and ran down, and I went over and picked up the lock. And at the rehearsal after action review we did the next morning I was going to say, this is the best laid plans of mice and men or some bullshit like that. And before I did, the breaching sergeant got up, and he said, "Sergeant so and so slapped the breaching charge on the door, and he could see through the cracks." We had a platoon of soldiers from the 101st Airborne that were playing the role of PDF guards, that you could see through the cracks if he blew the door he'd hurt this guy. So, that's why he used the bolt cutter. So when I got up, I said, "This is gonna stay on the front of my desk for the rest of my life to remind, trust the guy on the ground. He knows what's going on better than you do." And anyway, but then we did it, and it all worked out. Unfortunately, there were some guys hurt. Little bird -- one other thing I gotta tell you -- I can tell you this. The morning before this went, there was a guy who came to see Muse, every week. And one of the things he told Muse, there was a steno, PDF steno there taking notes. He said, "If anything happens to you, Kurt, every PDF guard in this prison will die." And they got the word. [Laughs]

CLARKE: Said it loud enough for the guy with the M-16 to hear it.

LINDSAY: There was one guy hurt real bad when the helicopter overpowered or something and crashed on the way out, but they all got out. A very good thing. The interesting thing about that, though, was, we were so focused on the combat side of it, the PDF, that -- and it was my fault. I was the one that -- civil affairs guys and ops guys said you need more of us. That we frontloaded it combat -wise, and it was Christmastime of course, and then we spent the Christmas season harassing every civil affairs and PSYWAR guy we could find to get him to Panama, because Promote Liberty was the big operation. That was the civil affairs calming things down afterward and rebuilding the nation. Anyway, it worked out.

CLARKE: So what would be your advice to a future commander or a current commander to trust the guy on the ground? I mean, 'cause there are those-those historic gaps in oversight where somebody didn't pay attention to something that was just sitting there totally obvious, and there's always 20/20 hindsight—

LINDSAY: You just have to be very judicious, and of course now it's even trickier because now you can see everything with drones. I mean, those guys back in the CIA and Washington, they can see what's going on in Afghanistan and Pakistan and wherever they're at. They can watch it. Very different than what [was] my experience.

CLARKE: Interesting.

LINDSAY: Very different.

CLARKE: Very interesting. All right. You went through the Marine staff college.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: Tell me a little bit about that, and is that common for somebody like you to go through that?

LINDSAY: Every year they pick people in their eleventh, twelfth year of service to go to the staff college. And there were six of us army guys in that marine staff college. I liked it. They were very casual in their attitude towards academics, and I was too, so it was a very good year.

CLARKE: Yeah.

LINDSAY: [Laughs]

CLARKE: What is the difference between that and, say, the army?

LINDSAY: I really don't know. I didn't attend the army staff college, but I did have occasion to -- I spent nineteen years after I retired as a senior mentor in the army battle command-training program. And every spring they have a two-week graduation exercise, and every spring I'd go to Leavenworth to work with the students there in an exercise coaching and mentoring them.

CLARKE: So you have this very interesting perspective of going from, you know, platoon level all the way up to four-star. And what do you think that the most interesting or challenging thing is for the person to go from, "We're getting it done now," to the, "We

need to think about the future"? What do you think the most interesting shift is in somebody like yours experience --

LINDSAY: As I said, when I went from battalion to brigade it was huge, but each jump it was more important to look ahead, but then somehow you had to know what's going on now, too. But you really had to think two or three steps ahead because just, it's extraordinarily complex, and I'm not articulate enough to really lay it all out. But it's very difficult.

CLARKE: Do you have another example of that, that you could share?

LINDSAY: Well, I was just thinking about when I was commanding the 18th Airborne Corps, and we were very focused on Iran at that time. And Central Command -- Bob Kingston as the commander -- ran an annual exercise of, there were a thousand series OP planes, so to speak. And the first one I did was the first year I was commanding the 82nd Airborne, and they had us -- the division was committed in the Yaz corridor; that's the easternmost corridor coming up through Iran going towards Tehran. And I had really worked, studied on how soldiers fight in the desert. And light infantry does not have a hell of a big role in the desert. Just way too complicated. So I really looked at it, and -- bottom line, when we got to the end of the exercise, I got up and said, "This is not a role for the 82nd Airborne." And Bob Kingston -- his nickname was Barbed Wire Bob -- took exception to that and didn't question my manhood but inferred something like that. But I said, "Sir, this is not terrain for light infantry. We need to be moving." They moved us to the Yaz corridor the next year, and the next year I said the same thing again. And he again questioned my manhood, but Shy Meyer, the chief of staff of the army was there, and he didn't say anything, but afterward he said, "You're right." And anyway, I got us moved to another area, and they brought the 24th Division in and took my place. But you just really have to think ahead and -- so complex. You have to know what's going on now, but you have to really get your deep thought into what it's gonna be like when you fight in a situation like that. And --

CLARKE: Where do you think the tension is there? I mean, there's definitely tension between you and the guy questioning your manhood, but what do you think that tension is?

LINDSAY: Well, you've got to be aware of what's happening, but you've got to view you, the head guy has got much farther out than the rest of them. You've got to have some guys out there with you, too, looking at it. It's just very complex.

CLARKE: Do you think on that level, like, when he's challenging you on, "No, you need to be there. Light infantry needs to be there." Do you think that's a matter of I have to have my say. I would imagine he also believes very firmly that he's right.

LINDSAY: Well, he believed that, but frankly, I had an experience in this regard when I was a brigade commander in the 82nd. I had just taken over the brigade. And Fritz Kroesen, who was a division commander -- a great American -- had assigned -- there were three brigades. First, second, third. Sandy Malloy commanded the first, Bob Elton the second, me the third. He told Malloy, "You and your brigade are to focus on finding our techniques for parachuting airborne operations. Told Elton, "You and your brigade are focused on how we do air assault operations." And he told me I was to focus on anti-armor operations. And so I really got into it. And I went down to Fort Benning to talk to

the faculty down there. And learned a lot from them, and then came back and conducted a symposium for all the platoon sergeants, platoon leaders, and company commanders in the division. And then we started conducting exercises on how light infantry fights armor. And bottom line is, I stole from a Brit, J.F.C. Fuller -- a major general -- his idea. He came up with what they called the Archipelago Defense, which was using terrain for light infantry to fight armor. And that's what we did. And bottom line is, in that concept, some places you can't do it. You've got to have the terrain to do it. So that became -- the 82nd still uses that technique.

[1:26:19]

CLARKE: Oh, great. You joined during the Korean War -- you don't get to go over. You serve during the Vietnam War. After Vietnam War you move your family to Thailand. You've become, quite frankly, the epitome of the Cold War Warrior.

LINDSAY: Well, I wouldn't say that. But—

CLARKE: In some ways.

LINDSAY: Yeah, interesting, yeah.

CLARKE: Well, my question is, there is a service medal for the War on Terror, that also there are service medals for Afghanistan and Iraq. But right now the Cold War, which I would argue maybe is more important than the War on Terror in some ways, as far as its impact and influence and global scale -- doesn't have a service medal. And I'm kind of wondering your thoughts on that.

LINDSAY: I see nothing wrong with doing that. The problem is defining who'd be eligible.

CLARKE: 'Cause the Cold War had hot flashes. It wasn't—

LINDSAY: Oh, yes. Yeah.

CLARKE: Yeah, It's a war with wars within it.

LINDSAY: I don't know.

CLARKE: It seems like maybe the fall of the Berlin Wall, or the '91 coup in Russia. That would be kind of the end of it, right? '91, maybe. So it starts -- really starts during the Korean War. So you have this period of time that -- and I mean, all things goes with it, not only with the 82nd, but what we did with submarines and the navy and this and that and the other -- containment.

LINDSAY: That's a hard one, because you'd have to get -- Cold War's a huge thing. But nobody who served then is serving now, for the most part, or very few. And so if you served during that time, I see nothing wrong with giving them an award, frankly.

CLARKE: Because they did a Civil War service medal after the Civil War. I think it was at the beginning part of the 20th century.

LINDSAY: Well, they also gave out a ton of Medals of Honor too, during the Civil War. [Chuckles]

CLARKE: They gave those out a little differently yes. You re-upped? Here's your Medal of Honor. Yeah. So what do you think the case would be, then, for a Cold War service medal of some nature?

LINDSAY: I see nothing wrong with that. It would -- like, I -- last year, and we've done it again this year, we hold a ceremony at the museum honoring Vietnam War veterans, and there's a Vietnam War medal -- not a medal, a badge -- we pin on all of them. I've done it two years in a row. And they all seem to like it. So if somebody served in the Cold War, yeah, I see nothing wrong with doing that.

CLARKE: What do you think that would take to get that done?

LINDSAY: Congressional action.

CLARKE: Really?

LINDSAY: Yeah, yeah.

CLARKE: That's the only really way to do it.

LINDSAY: Yeah, I'm sure. I doubt the military could do that itself. It would have to be somebody in Congress.

CLARKE: I'm asking for a reason, because we're looking at doing some things to try to get a Cold War service medal. Something that Jennifer is very interested in. And it's possible even building a Cold War memorial. Because I guess my next question to you is, given that context, because the Cold War you then kept serving, obviously, retiring in the '90s. So you really did see the entire Cold War—

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: -- from beginning to end and were a part of it. So you have some additional thoughts about the Cold War medal or service medal?

LINDSAY: Yeah, I was just thinking, as I mentioned to you earlier, the last two years, the Airborne Special Ops Museum -- we've held a ceremony in the spring honoring Vietnam veterans, and for all Vietnam veterans who show up, we give them that Vietnam War pin or badge, if you will. And they showed up by the hundreds. I mean, they really are honored by getting it. So I think the Cold War thing might probably do the same thing. It'd probably be a good idea.

CLARKE: Do you think it could be a national service medal? Do you think somebody would do that?

LINDSAY: Yeah. You'd have to get somebody in Congress to help you, though.

CLARKE: Yeah. That'd be the way to do it.

LINDSAY: Yeah, exactly.

CLARKE: Probably need a lobbyist in Washington to help us out. [Chuckles]

LINDSAY: Yeah, exactly.

[1:30:19]

CLARKE: Well, let's talk a little bit more about -- 'cause we're gonna shift here. But let's -- you had mentioned earlier, and I'm kind of curious about this. You'd mentioned earlier about taking your family to Thailand. And they went to school over in Thailand. What was your experience like returning from Thailand after the Vietnam War?

LINDSAY: Well, it was interesting because my one son was a junior in high school, and he said he didn't learn anything his senior year 'cause he'd learned so much more in Bangkok at the International School. Our daughter was in -- going out of second, into third grade, and the teacher -- she was doing so well the teacher made her teacher's assistant. So it was a great school they had there. And they had some incredible adventures, I said, in Malaysia, Philippines, up-country in Thailand. They got to travel a lot. Really enjoyed it.

CLARKE: So how did they adjust coming back to the States?

LINDSAY: No problems.

CLARKE: No problems, yeah.

LINDSAY: No. We were very lucky because drugs were a big thing in Bangkok in the high school there, even though the school was great. In fact, we had a -- we lived on street 49 in Bangkok, and one of the sixteen-year-old high school students there died of a drug overdose. It was -- drugs were a problem, but we were lucky that we didn't have a --

CLARKE: Escaped all that.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: Still true today.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: We talked a little bit about your family and when you met your wife. How important were they to you as you served in the military?

LINDSAY: Invaluable. I mean, I wouldn't -- as I said, I was so busy so often, I wished I could have spent more time with them, but my wife did a good job. And, of course, they've all turned out great, all college graduates, and their kids are all college graduates. So it's been -- they didn't suffer any ill effects of all the travel.

CLARKE: This sounds kind of maybe like out of one of those movie scenes where the commander is going off and leaving his family and going off. But you probably had a lot of those moments.

LINDSAY: Oh, I'll tell you, it was tough. It was tough for my wife, especially, because she knew I'd be gone for a year both times, and frankly, I -- when I was commanding 82nd --

when I was in a number of jobs, I was traveling all the time. Now when I commanded US SOCOM and US REDCOM, she was able to travel with me frequently, so it was much better then.

CLARKE: So that time in Thailand was really important.

LINDSAY: Yeah, oh, yes. It was great.

CLARKE: 'Cause you were all together.

LINDSAY: Yeah, and the big thing about it was, I went there on a Special Forces assignment and I got diverted out of it. The commander of the military assistance group in Thailand was an air force general who'd brought an old friend of his to be his chief of staff, and, unfortunately, his old friend was a ROAD officer -- what I call "Retired On Active Duty" -- and he wasn't doing his job, so he pulled me out of my Special Forces job and as a result for two years -- first time I can remember -- I was with my family all the time. I did very little travelling. I went back to Vietnam, oh, every month or so for two or three days, but that was it. It was nothing like it had been other times.

[1:33:35]

CLARKE: So that was an important time for you and your family. Let's talk a little bit about the rebuilding of the army between Vietnam and Desert Storm. You played very key roles in this and were involved with a lot of stuff during this period of time. And it's a big, complex thing. And there's a lot of low morale in the army after the Vietnam War, and a lot of --

LINDSAY: Exactly.

CLARKE: -- problems with discipline and drugs. And I've talked to Keith Nightingale a little bit about this, and he had some interesting views. So I'd be interested to hear your views as well on how -- how did you rebuild the army after Vietnam War?

LINDSAY: Yeah, well, I was one of the participants. There were a bunch of people. But I'd say it started out with Creighton Abrams as chief of staff and some of the things he did. And I think it was under his watch that we formed training and doctrine command. Prior to that time, we'd had the continental armies, and we'd had CONARC, and it was a totally dysfunctional organization. And by separating the school systems into TRADOC and moving the army elements in the states into forces command, it made much more sense. That was a start. But then the other things -- we rebuilt NCO Corps with a great NCO education system that really, really was a major move forward. So that was a start. And then things just settled down. And of course, we'd got out of the draft, and we didn't have to worry about the draft, training draftees all the time. And things just started sorting out. In fact, I'm trying to visualize the years. When I was in the 82nd, we still were struggling with problems, but the 82nd was better off than most other units in the early '80s. But as we went through the 80s -- no, actually -- yeah, early-80s -- we formed the Dirk Training Center. It's the National Training and the JROTC, joint training center at Fort Polk. And that was probably one of the smartest things done in the history of the army. It totally changed the way we're doing things. And we realized shortly thereafter that our battalion commanders were better than our brigade commanders because of what they'd learned in the Dirk CTCs. And so we had to do something to enhance everything. And so we started the battle command-training program -- BCTP that I served in for nineteen years as a senior observer. And the combination of the training

methodology -- complete change in training methodology and just the fact that we were drawing some pretty good folks into the army, things really started getting better. I went into the joint arena in 1986 after I turned over command of the corps, and I didn't see the army again as an -- internally, so to speak, until 1990 after I retired. But when I left in '86, things were getting pretty good. When I left in -- yeah, when I left 18th Corps in '86 things were getting pretty good. But after I retired in 1990, I joined the Battle Command Training Program, and the first thing I did was go to Korea with Dave Grange and Dick Cavazos, the other two senior mentors, and do an exercise with the 2nd Division. And they both asked me, when was the last time you'd seen an army command in action?" I said, "Well, it's been at least four or five years." And they both told me the same thing. "You're gonna be amazed at what's happened to the army." And I truly was. I was really impressed with the 2nd Division. And I went from there to Fort Carson, Colorado with the 4th Infantry-saw the same thing again. The vast improvement in the army in the late 80s was just awesome. And the army that we sent to Desert Storm was just about as good as any army that, I think, ever existed. Just really good, and it showed.

CLARKE: So, and that's a result of that whole --

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: -- that whole rebuild.

LINDSAY: There was -- started with Creighton Abrams, and then all kinds of good things happened. And the army changed the way it did business, establishing TRADOC and all. Just very well done.

CLARKE: Are you familiar with the Goldwater-Nichols Act of—

LINDSAY: Yes, very familiar with it. Jim Locher, who basically wrote it, is a close friend of mine. In fact, if you haven't read his book *Victory on the Potomac*, I strongly recommend it. That was one of the smartest things we've ever done. The thing -- and read the book *Victory on the Potomac*, because the way the individual services fought that thing is incredible. It really made the unified commanders much more effective, much more -- and it just, it solved a bunch of problems. But that was very well done.

CLARKE: So you think it was a success.

LINDSAY: Oh, yes, absolutely. The quality of people in the joint arena is much better. I know Sam Nunn very well, and he was key to there and very well done.

CLARKE: Will you explain it a little bit for our listeners, what that act did?

LINDSAY: Basically, up 'til then the Joint Chiefs of Staff were the four individual service chiefs -- chairmen of the joint chiefs. And the uni -- and they basically controlled everything. But the fact is, each was also a service chief, and their service was near and dear, especially in the navy and Marine Corps. And you had to get an agreement of all four of those to get anything done. And when you had people like Secretary of the Navy Lehman, I mean, you got nothing done. And he was one. There were several others. And no, it was very unfortunate the way things ran. But that was very well done.

CLARKE: So that basically changed all that.

LINDSAY: Yeah. It just was great.

CLARKE: Excellent. So you have—you've been in 18th Corps. You're the commander.

LINDSAY: I commanded 18th Corps.

CLARKE: Is there anything in particular about that particular command that you'd like to share with us? 'Cause this is Rock Merritt's corps, right?

LINDSAY: What's that?

CLARKE: Rock Merritt was 18th Corps, right?

LINDSAY: Yes, that's correct. No, 18th -- that was an interesting, how the corps have evolved over time. But when I commanded 18th Corps, I had an airborne division -- the 82nd. I had a MAC armored division, the 3rd Infantry Division. 24th and then it became the 3rd. Had the 101st Airborne Division, air assault Fort Campbell, and the 10th Mountain Division up in Fort Drum. And the 194th Brigade at Fort Knox, the 197th Brigade at Benning. It was a very versatile organization. And I hadn't thought through this one. I need to think some more about what I want to say about 18th Corps. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Great people, good staff.

CLARKE: You are the first commander of the -- you are the first commander in chief of US Special Operations Command or USOC—

LINDSAY: Right.

CLARKE: At MacDill Air Force Base. And this is a big deal because everybody knows about USOC these days -- anybody who's anybody in Special Forces. And you're kind of the George Washington of that particular unit. Tell me the circumstances that led to you being in charge.

LINDSAY: Well, the whole thing centered around the Cohen/Nunn amendment. The bottom line is Sam Cohen -- Sam Nunn and Bill Cohen had been worried sometime about what they saw just cause -- not just cause, but in Grenada and the Middle East, in Lebanon. They were very concerned about a lot of things. And so that's what concern produced the Goldwater-Nichols Act. But they were also concerned, especially, about the special ops community and what they heard in Grenada. But they held a hearing, and when they concluded the hearing they were gonna just pass a legislation that said it was a sense of the Senate that they needed to do something about upgrading our special ops personnel. But Dick Shultis, a very good friend of mine was first commander in JSOC, commanded JSOC during Grenada. And somebody on their staff -- I can't remember which one it was -- invited Shultis to talk with Cohen and Nunn, and he told them some of the true horror stories of what happened in Grenada. It was really a screwed up operation. And LAMPCON really screwed that up. And so as a result it became a law. I was walking in the hall in the Pentagon. I was commanding a corps, but I had been picked to command a readiness command. And Jack Marx, the Secretary of the Army, happened to walk passed me and said, "You know, we don't know what's going to happen with what's going on over in Congress now in the special ops community, but if it's a law as opposed to sent to the Senate, you're gonna be the army

nominee to command it." I said, "Sir, I'm on my way to command REDCOM." And he said, "I know that, but that's what we're gonna do." And anyway, after they talked to Dick Shultis, they decide they needed a law. And it became law. And so I -- and I was in a unique fix. I had taken command of Readiness Command. Are you -- Readiness Command had a number of missions. One of them was defense of the continental United States, which nobody paid much attention to, except one of my predecessors -- I can't think of his name now -- but anyway, most focused on other missions and basically, focused on joint training exercises. In fact, you had one question you'd asked me earlier about the strike command. Strike command was formed in 1960 to bring the army/navy/air force together. Unfortunately, the navy and Marine Corps didn't want to join, so they didn't. So it became basically strike command had two headquarters or two subordinate commands -- tactical air command and United States Army Forces command. The first exercises they conducted in 1981 -- rather '61, '62, and '63 were Swift Strike 1, 2, and 3. I was a company commander in the first one, Swift Strike 1; a brigade staff officer in the second one, Swift Strike 2; and the division G3 ops for the 82nd in Swift Strike 3. And they were some of the worst experiences I'd ever encountered because they were trying to train people at corps level and above, but they're using an FTX that, to provide challenges to people at the corps level and above, you had to have them making reasonably quick decisions. But if you had people down like me at company level trying to exercise, it was futile because if they operated at a pace, at the corps level that would give them a challenge, for those of us down at the bottom it was a road race. It was a rat race, just crazy. And so I was pretty much against this from the beginning. I thought it was totally dysfunctional. Fred Mahaffey, a very close friend of mine, in fact replaced me as a battalion commander in Vietnam -- was my predecessor at Readiness Command. And he called me when he was told he was going to command. And I said, "Fred the first thing you've got to do is get rid of these damn FTXs that are so crazy dysfunctional."

CLARKE: So what's an FTX, just for --?

LINDSAY: Field training exercises. And you need to develop something that we can train them with a simulation. And he said, "I agree with that." And let's see, I told him one other thing. Oh, and you need to form -- we need to form an agency within REDCOM that would run exercises like that. So, unfortunately, Fred developed cancer shortly after he'd taken over, and he didn't get a whole lot done. And he died, as a matter of fact just after I took command. And so when I got down there, I got the whole command together, the headquarters, and said, "You know, we have an exercise coming up at Cascade Peak called out at Fort Lewis that I can't cancel 'cause we've got too much invested, but that will be the last exercise we run. And we're going to go to simulations." I said, "The Air Force has got a thing at Hurlburt called Blue Flag. We want to do something like that. The army hasn't got anything like that now, but they're working on it, and we need to do the same thing here." And so I said, you know, "That's the approach we're gonna take on all this." And let's see, I'm trying to think what else I was gonna say about that. [Pause] God, I can't remember. But anyway, so when I took command I had that talk. And then I formed what I called the joint war-fighting center, JWFC. Fred had started it, but he couldn't get it finished. He died. And so I formed the joint war-fighting center with about thirty people, I think it was, and we really didn't have a good simulation at that time. But I moved them up to Hurlburt. I moved them out of MacDill up to Hurlburt. Co-located them with the Air Force Blue Flag headquarters there and got them started. And we found a simulation that we could use to train people so we didn't have to do huge field training exercises like that. And I was doing all this while this Cohen/Nunn thing was

spinning around as to, are we gonna establish SOCOM? Then the decision was made to establish SOCOM. And when that happened I went to see Bill Crowe, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and I told him what I was gonna do in the headquarters. I wanted to let him know I was gonna quit doing the big exercises. I was gonna do these simulations and everything. And I said, "By the way, you know, you might want to consider using the REDCOM base to establish US SOCOM. Because I've got a lot of people down there now that I'm not gonna need, but we need to preserve the joint war-fighting center." And he talked to Cap Weinberger. He talked to -- I talked to all the service chiefs and everything. And this was a very traumatic experience, but anyway, we finally -- the decision was made. We disestablished REDCOM. We preserved the joint war-fighting center. And the joint war-fighting center was moved up to Suffolk, Virginia from Hurlburt. And then when joint forces command was established there, it became part of joint forces command. I did some exercises with them after I retired, and they turned out pretty good. So that all turned out well. But the problem of course with REDCOM -- I didn't make that US SOCOM; I didn't have near the special ops talent that I needed there, and that was a major challenge when we first started out. I fought and fought to get people, but it was really tough. And we got them, finally, but it took a long time. And let me think, what else I want to say about that. I guess, it was a little bumpy at first, but everything seemed to work out eventually.

CLARKE: So what did the Special Operations command really do? What did you have to do to really get that up and running?

LINDSAY: Well, I had to get more people -- the right people that I had. And I had to go around to the navy -- the first issue was the navy wasn't in it because the navy lobbied to keep the SEALs out. And I went to see Bill Crowe, the chairman of joint chiefs and said, "Hey, you know, navy special warfare groups 1 and 2 should be part of this command." SEAL Team 6, which was part of JSOC was already fixed. But -- oh, I did get the BUD school, the basic underwater demolition school at Coronado. That's all I had. So I went to Crowe and told him I want the SEALs, and he said I had to talk to Carl Trost, the chief of naval operations. And we simply agreed to disagree. And so I went straight from his office to Secretary Weinberger's office, and I said I wanted to see the secretary and I wanted -- told him what I want, to talk about the SEALs and Special Operations command. And so he said he'll set it up. And I got a call, oh, a week later. He wouldn't see me alone. Weinberger was a very wise man in many respects. He had a little conference room off his office, and he invited Admiral Crowe, the chairman. And he and Admiral Crowe sat here. He put me at this end of the table. He put Admiral Trost, the Chief of Naval Operations at that end of the table. He put the secretary of the navy here, and the secretary of the army here -- Jack Marsh. And then they asked me to give my pitch. So I gave my pitch. And Trost and I argued for an hour and half going back and forth, and they all listened. Nobody said a hell of a lot. And when it was all over, Weinberger said, "This is complex. I've got to take some time to think about it." Well, I left and flew back to MacDill. And either Weinberger told Trost we were gonna get the SEALs or Trost figured out where he was coming from, because when I landed at MacDill, my secretary said Senator McCain wanted to talk to me, and I said, "I'll call him in the morning." And she said, "No, he wants to talk to you, now." And I got on the phone—I have never been chewed out and cursed out like that in my -- I held the phone out here. And he just went on and on and on. And it was incredible. And then he hung up. I never said a word. I just said hello, and that was it. And it was interesting, you know, in that regard. One of my grandsons was a senate page a couple years ago. And I

asked him about different senators. And I said, "What do you think of Senator McCain?" And he said, "Grandpa, he uses the F-word too much."

[Laughs]

CLARKE: So you heard a few of those when you—

LINDSAY: But it was astonishing because—

CLARKE: What was he yelling about? Why was he—

LINDSAY: It was about me getting the SEALS.

CLARKE: Oh. Well, why did he have a horse in that race?

LINDSAY: No, Trost -- he was a navy man. Trost had obviously called him and told him what had happened, and he decided to get me. Why, I don't know. The amazing thing about this was that I had set up a meeting with the Senate Armed Service—there are twelve members of the senate armed service committee. I had set up a breakfast between Sam Nunn and McCain -- Sam Nunn and Cohen. Orchestrated this. We set up a breakfast over in the congress, and I was gonna brief them on what we -- all the things we were doing, since we were a creation of the Senate Armed Services Committee. And I knew Senator McCain would be there, and I was dreading it. How was I gonna react if he started cursing me out in front of all these people. And I didn't know what I was gonna do. I was still thinking when I felt his arm on my left shoulder, or hand, and I looked around. It was McCain, and he said, "Let me know, how I can help you." Amazing. And he helped me very much. In fact, he helped me so much that when he asked me to join his campaign to be president, I joined him. Screwed-up campaign, but I joined him.

[Laughs]

LINDSAY: I mean, it was really—

CLARKE: Well, why did he -- why did he then -- he just knew it was inevitable and so he wasn't gonna fight it, or --

LINDSAY: I have no idea. He and I never talked about that phone convers -- now, I don't know. I just -- it was bizarre, but he was very helpful.

CLARKE: So you were able to herd all the Special Forces operations and under you.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: And what did that mean? I mean --

LINDSAY: The what?

CLARKE: Do me a favor and name off all the units, and then—

LINDSAY: Well, in the navy we got the BUD School, the Basic Underwater Demolition School in Coronado. We got navy special warfare groups 1 and 2, Atlantic and Pacific, and SEAL Team 6, the counterterrorist element JSOC. And so that completed the --

CLARKE: But then you also had the Rangers.

LINDSAY: Oh, yeah, we had the Rangers from the beginning, yeah.

CLARKE: Yeah. And the Green Berets.

LINDSAY: Special -- oh, yeah, in the army it was Special Forces, PSYOPS, Civil Affairs. The army is the biggest single element of USSOCOM -- Special Forces, rangers, and PSYOPS Civil Affairs. The navy element is a good bit smaller, but still there. And, of course, air force was different in that when 23rd Air Force was the -- had the naval special ops elements in it, but it also had a lot of other things. And it was at Scott Airbase in Illinois, collocated with MAC headquarters. And they moved it to Hurlburt, but it still had the non-special ops elements in it. And it was very awkward. We solved the navy thing, but the air force thing took a couple years to solve because they had the 23rd Air Force in a dual chain of command with US SOCOM and MAC headquarters. And you can't really work a dual change of command. And what happened was, because Dwayne Cassidy, who was the commander in MAC, and I had been very good friends when we were both major generals, we worked things out, but it caused us to get involved at levels far below where we should have been. It got us into things that we really didn't need to be involved in. But then we solved all that in 1989 when MAC went away and they belonged to US SOCOM. So it all worked out. Took a little while to get there, but it worked out.

CLARKE: What are your -- what do you think other than herding all the cats to get them into the command, what as your next challenge after that?

LINDSAY: Well, it was to train the command to work and to support the unified command. There was some great skepticism in the unified command as to what we were gonna do. They weren't really sure how this was all gonna turn out. And thank God, it happened, though, because after 9/11 we would have had to do this. And we'd done it already, so we'd made some progress. But I would tell you -- and I just participated in the thing with the current US SOCOM commander about a month ago -- that what they have done in terms of merging the Special Ops and conventional forces is beyond anything I ever thought possible. I mean, it's just amazing. And the situation they're in is what caused that to happen. But they are really working well together now. Incredibly well. Yeah, great.

CLARKE: So what do you think it was about your training and experience that helped you get what you got done, done? I mean, you had to have a lot of analytical skills—

LINDSAY: I have a knack for picking good people. Seriously, I mean -- you know, I mentioned being in the Vietnamese Airborne Brigade. When I -- before I went to Vietnamese airborne brigade, I was the G3 Ops sergeant for the 82nd. My assistant was Pete Dawkins, the famous football player from West Point. When I got to Vietnam and went from the battalion to Brigade 3, Pete Dawkins came in behind me and my battalion, and Bill Carpenter, the Lonesome End, was my assistant ops officer. I've been blessed by having a lot of good -- a great family, and a lot of good people working for me.

CLARKE: That's the key to your success, huh?

LINDSAY: Yeah. Yeah.

CLARKE: The other people. So you -- you're in charge of the Special Operations command. And is that -- I'm trying to think now. I'm blanking on -- you retired as that?

LINDSAY: Yes.

CLARKE: That was your command when you retired. So you—

LINDSAY: I had Readiness Command first, and then special ops command.

CLARKE: So you retired as the—

LINDSAY: In 1990.

CLARKE: Yes, you retired in 1990 as the commander of special operations command, a four-star. And you're leaving right as things are heating up in the Gulf War. Now you mentioned -- you mentioned that that was probably the -- one of the brightest moments of the in US Army history. You saw that progression happening as you were about to retire.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: Can you share with me a little bit about that and watching it and being a part of it?

LINDSAY: Well, I would love to have been there, but it just wasn't -- in fact, it was interesting when you say that. A similar situation occurred in 1983. I turned over command of the 82nd in August and took command of the Infantry school at Fort Benning. And then they went to Grenada, the 82nd did. And I'd come home at night, and I was watching TV -- watching the news, and my wife said, "Why are you crying?" I said - - I didn't know I was crying. I was watching the 82nd, and tears were running down my eyes 'cause I wanted to be there.

[Laughs]

CLARKE: That's why.

LINDSAY: But that's the way it is.

CLARKE: You felt the same way.

LINDSAY: But I had that experience -- but when I retired, that was it. That was done. But I went right back to work for the army, and I worked for nineteen years in the battle command-training program.

CLARKE: Sure.

LINDSAY: I didn't work all the time, but I worked, oh, a week or two a month.

CLARKE: So that pinnacle of the army, when it comes to Desert Storm -- describe for me a little bit about that. Because we talked about that earlier.

LINDSAY: Well, the army -- Saddam couldn't have picked a worse time to do that, because the army to me was at a peak then. They were just awesome. I participated in two divisional exercises -- 2nd Division, Korea, and the 4th at Fort Lewis, I mean Fort Carson. And they really were in great shape. And after 9/11 they stayed in great shape. But the problem was, OPTEMPO began to really fray things around the edges.

CLARKE: Yeah. It does that.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

[1:59:40]

CLARKE: So if you were to summarize the -- like, if you were to give an elevator pitch to somebody about your view of the army and as it transformed itself from Vietnam to Desert Storm, how would you summarize that?

LINDSAY: That's hard. I hadn't thought about that. But, bottom line is we really struggled, initially, coming out of Vietnam, and thanks to guys like Creighton Abrams and Bill DePew and a few others, we really -- it was a hell of an effort, but by 1990, we were in great shape, but it took a while --

CLARKE: -- took a while, a lot of effort. Are there some roles in the army that stand out to you as your favorite roles that you played?

LINDSAY: I loved being a company commander. I don't know why. I just thought that was a great job. And any command. My last seventeen years in the army, I was commanding something, except for two years when I was Chief of Staff of the 82nd, Chief Staff Corps. And the fifteen years in command were great. Being Chief of Staff for somebody else was a hard job.

CLARKE: Was it?

LINDSAY: [Laughing] Yeah.

CLARKE: How does it feel to be abducted to both the United States Army Ranger Hall of Fame and the Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame?

LINDSAY: I was honored with that. I never anticipated having anything like that happen. I was—

CLARKE: After listening to you today, I can see why, but why do you think why you were inducted into those?

LINDSAY: I have no idea. Things I did, I guess. I don't know.

CLARKE: Yeah.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: Who you are. Your Distinguished Service Cross is one of the several citations you were awarded during your time in the military. Is there a particular award you received or recognition you received that stand out to you as having a story behind it that is the most important that you would want someone to know about?

LINDSAY: Well, the DSC was a big deal, obviously. It was interesting. That -- I'd been in command of the battalion, I guess, about a month or so. And that was a unique event. In fact, what happened was -- this isn't even in the citation -- but at that time I was -- told you before -- I was getting ten Hueys and slick helicopters, lift helicopters, and a Cav troop every day to go find a fight 'cause their intelligence was so lousy. And two days before that I got into a fight in the same area on the south side of the plain of reeds, and I was putting in a lift of five and a lift of five. And if they made contact, we'd land stuff behind them. If they didn't make contact, we'd pick them up and move them someplace else. And I put in my Charlie Company, a platoon of Charlie Company. And my pilot said, "I've got to go refuel." And I said, "I can't leave you." He said, "Okay, put me down where you put that last platoon down." And he put me down by that platoon. They'd gone into the tree line on the south edge of the plain of reeds. And I was there, and they'd made contact about the time I got there, so I radioed to the company commander, who was in another lift, to come in to us, an LZ right close to that. And the sergeant major and I and my radio operator then started walking forward to try to find where the platoon was. We couldn't see them. And I was amazed there was some trails in there, and the platoon was running towards me, led by the platoon leader who was yelling, "They've got machine guns. They've got machine guns." I'll never forget it. I had to grab him to stop him. And I said, "What's wrong?" And he was just blabbering. And I finally said, "Look, first have you got all your people?" He said he didn't know, so I got them all together, and he was missing two people. So he wasn't fit to do anything at that point. So I got the Sergeant Major and I, and I told them all, "Look, we've got to go get" -- they told me the names. I said, "We've got to go find them." And we started up through these trees, and we got in there and we found them. Fortunately they still had their M-16s, but they were both dead. And so I -- we bought them out and got the rest -- the Charlie Company, company commander was wounded getting off the helicopter, so he got back on the helicopter. And I ended up with most of Charlie Company there. And we spent the whole night trying to find these guys. And we exchanged shots, but we didn't do much. But I got picked up the next morning and moved by the CH-47s and moved to our firebase. And at the same time, the 2nd of 39th, another battalion in my brigade, got their helicopter and started doing the same thing in the same general area that I had been. And they got waxed. They landed too close to a tree line, and it was a real mess. So Emerson, a brigade commander, called me and said, "Hey you gotta get your battalion ready, and you gotta get up here with everything you can." So I got Charlie Company and Alpha Company there. And first thing that happened, the Alpha Company commander, the West Pointer who told me that he was -- his EXO was gonna run the operation 'cause he was going to Bangkok on R and R, and I said, "Not now you aren't." So anyway, that leads to something else later on. So anyway I got -- I can't remember -- B Company. I got Bravo Company, and I landed on this LZ, and it was a mess. There was one helicopter down. There were bodies all over. It was just terrible. And we crawled through them, and I got B Company up -- it was a big claw in the canal on the north -- I got B Company up on the canal, and then I got A Company in, the one who was going on R and R to Bangkok. I got him in, and I got him on the right. So I had two companies then. B Company here and A Company here. And we started forward. And we fought, and we fought, and we fought. And this went on for three or four hours. And

we were moving, though. And at about some time in the early afternoon, whoever the A company commander said he was pinned down and couldn't move. And I couldn't understand it. I couldn't see him. And so, I then realized he was about a hundred yards behind me. So I said, "Look to your front. Look to your left front." He said, "I'm looking." I said, "Okay, watch." And I went like that, pulled my arm down in front and said, "Do you see anything?" "I saw an arm." I said, "That's me. Get your ass up here."

[Chuckles]

LINDSAY: So anyway, but I didn't know Bill Knowlton, who was the Brigadier General, who was the Assistant Division Commander -- Dave Petraeus's father-in-law by the way -- he heard all this, and that's what started the citation for the Medal of -- for the Distinguished Service Cross. Because he'd listened to the radio conversation. And it was amazing. He finally got up there, and we fought way into the night. I hadn't slept the night before, and I -- it was amazing. I finally about three or four in the morning I remember falling asleep and the -- there were pools of water all over in the Mekong Delta. And I'd laid down beside one of them, sound asleep. And when I woke up about an hour later there was a dead VC lying beside me who wasn't there when I went to sleep. [Laughs] But what they used to do, if they were pinned down, they'd get straws from plants and get underwater and breathe through the straw. That may have been what happened. I don't know, but he was dead as a doornail then. [Laughs]

CLARKE: [Chuckling] Geez.

LINDSAY: So anyway, then, we did all that by, and then we went on -- it went on for two or three days. But it all started out with this one thing that wasn't even in the citation. [Laughs] But anyway, that's what happened.

CLARKE: As far as activities of the 82nd, you have, like, say Operation Power Pack or Panama. You mentioned the Panama stuff. Are there things the 82nd has done since, say, the Vietnam War or even during the Vietnam War, that more people should be more aware of?

LINDSAY: Yeah. You know, they were the first people into Desert Shield/ Desert Storm, but they were a light infantry. As I've said before, they weren't really ready to fight in the desert with tanks and so forth. But they were there to hold the line until we got the rest of the force in. They did a very good job there. 82nd has done a great job in Afghanistan, in fact, and -- and Iraq. And they've been there for years. It's amazing how many tours these kids have. Just astonishing. OPTEMPO is off the wall.

CLARKE: Are there people that you can think of that have been your mentor through all this progression that you'd like to mention?

LINDSAY: Yeah, I would say one of the most -- there were several. Ed Sayre was a great battle group commander who really worked me hard, pushed me, and helped me. If you read Jim Gavin's book about WWII, he was the first -- recognized as the first guy into Sicily when he parachuted into Sicily. He was a great commander. Hank Emerson was corps commander, commanded the 2nd Division in Korea. He was my brigade commander in Vietnam and was very, very helpful. Julian Ewell was another great guy, a twenty-five year old regimental commander in the 101st, Battle of the Bulge. And I worked with him. And there's just been a series. I've been very -- as I said, I've been

blessed with having great talent for subordinates and with bosses who were really good. I've had a couple of bad experiences with bosses. One was horrible. I had graduated from Russian Language School and Spy School, and I was an agent handler in Bremerhaven. And station commander was a major. In those days military intelligence didn't have a branch, so they had people from all over the army. This guy was about 6'3", fat as a hog. Served in the 82nd in WWII unfortunately. And was a womanizer -- just was bad news. And every Friday night, he'd take all the officers, we'd go out to bars. And I went one time and didn't go again. He questioned my manhood several times. And it was amazing, I -- Charlie Jameson, who was a friend of mine from Raleigh, North Carolina, and was gonna be promoted to captain. And we were all supposedly civilians, although we weren't. So we had his promotion party at the officers' club, at Bremerhaven officers' club. And they announced he was gonna be promoted. And Major Thorne was the guy's name. He went up to pin the captain bars on his civilian suit, and instead of doing that he pulled a scissors out of his pocket and cut his necktie. And then he started cutting other neckties. And I didn't know what to do. I just tried to get away from it. Unfortunately, our eyes caught, and he remembered me, and he came straight for me. And I -- he was about three inches taller, much bigger, and my boss's boss. And I didn't know what the hell I was gonna do. So I just said, "Sir, don't cut my necktie." And then he said, "What are you gonna do if I cut it?" Then I stupidly said, "Cut it and you'll find out." And the room had been -- everybody went dead silent. And then we just looked at each other. And I was just terrified that sweat would be coming off my forehead. I didn't -- I just was scared to death. And he cursed and walked away, and the party broke up. And then -- this is amazing. I had just made regular army. I went to work Monday morning, and my desk faced the wall. And I felt a presence in the room, and it was him. And he said, "I endorse your efficiency report." And I didn't look up. I just said, "So what?" And I went home and told Gerry that we were gonna be getting out of the army. I just made RA but I said, "I'll never get promoted again." And somehow, somehow our headquarters was in the IG Farben building in Frankfurt, Germany, and he was relieved of command the next day. And I never said anything to anybody, but he was relieved so all turned out okay. [Laughs] Different experience.

CLARKE: Yeah, that's the other kind of mentor. The anti-mentor.

LINDSAY: As I said, I've been blessed with great bosses and great subordinates, with that exception.

CLARKE: Do you have any close friends that have been with you that weren't necessarily mentors but were just close friends, battle buddies you served with, or--

LINDSAY: Well, Keith Nightingale, who you talked to, is a good -- we don't -- he lives in California, but we email back and forth all the time. He writes interesting -- have you seen some of the stuff he--

CLARKE: Yeah, yeah.

LINDSAY: It's very good. And I just have -- I'm trying to think who else I could -- I can't think of anybody else right now. I'm drawing a blank, but I have lots of folks I deal with over the Internet primarily.

[2:13:26]

CLARKE: Yeah. Yeah. If you were to advise the public on how to think about conflict and warfare and the gravity of it and the fact that our men and women go into that on

command when they're told to go, how would you have them think about warfare and combat?

LINDSAY: Well, it's extraordinarily stressful. And stress is the main thing. And the intensity is such that ultimately it can get to you at times. I mean, it can get really extraordinarily stressful at times, and you really have to be able to deal with that. And I, for instance, on PTSD, you know, posttraumatic stress syndrome. I sort of used to poo-poo that. But I think there's something to it, definitely. But interestingly, when I was a senior mentor in the Battle Command Training Program we would meet with the Chief of Staff of the army every three, four months, something like that, and never identify, even—we'd tell him what we saw, what was going on out there, because they liked to know, but we didn't identify units. But to prepare for that sort of thing, to collect information on exercises with divisions, battalions, brigades, I would -- one of the days there, I would invite all the company commanders, captains to come together for lunch, a brown bag lunch and talk about what was going on. And feedback they'd like to give to the hierarchy of the army. And at the height of the upgrade in Iraq where we increased the number of troops in 2006-7, I think it was, I was talking one day to a group of company commanders, and I asked about posttraumatic stress. And they started talking about it. And two captains over in the corner were talking and they were sort of giggling, and I said, "Did I say something funny about that?" They both said, "No." They said, "You know, we all have -- everybody has to go see the shrink when we get back, and he won't let you out of there 'til you say you're crazy."

[Chuckles]

LINDSAY: And I said, "Wait a minute." I said to the rest of them, "Are these guys trying to be macho?" They said, "No, he's right. They try to make you say you're crazy." And I did that with several other groups, and I got the same reaction in virtually all of them. Now was it macho or was it? I don't know. But I do think there's something to it sometimes at some point. On the other hand there are some real cases where it's a bunch of baloney. The classic was that female national guard officer in the Illinois National Guard, your state, who was accused of propositioning a subordinate, and she -- I'm trying to think how she did it -- she -- it was posttraumatic stress that caused her to do it and a bad back or something like that, and I found it unbelievable what she said, but she left the Illinois National Guard, ended up in the Colorado National Guard, did the same thing, again. So I do think though there's something to posttraumatic stress, but I don't understand it.

CLARKE: Yeah. Yeah. What weapons systems and equipment would you bring back from the past, if any?

LINDSAY: I frankly can't think of anything. Speaking of weapons systems, though, changing weapons systems in the army is incredibly difficult. I had a couple months -- I knew I was gonna take command of Fort Benning, and I'd read their priorities. And the people who preceded me down there have been basically heavy infantrymen with a mechanized side. And to me as the commander of the 82nd, which I was doing at that time, the number one thing we needed was a tank killer to replace the Dragon. The Dragon was not a good system. So I wrote this all up, and I got to Fort Benning, and the first issue of Infantry Magazine that they put out I wrote all about this. And I got the support of General Richards and the TRADOC commander to move the javelin to the number one issue. The single most difficult thing I think I've ever been involved in. I

didn't realize the bureaucracy in new systems. It was incredible. And we went round and round, and fortunately, I had a great deputy, and a guy -- Ed Burba -- and my successor was John Foss, who was also great. So they both signed up for this. I, unfortunately, I left there after nine months, but they took it. And it took years to fight that through the system with all -- I don't know how the system works really. But I'll never forget it was -- this happened in 1983. Sometime in the 1990s, late 1990s, I was at -- it might have been 2000. I was in the 3rd Brigade Headquarters, and they said they had the javelin in, and I said, "God, I want to see it." And so they got a sergeant in there, an E5, and he showed it to me, and I said, "What were you doing in 1983?" And he said, "I was in third grade." And I said to the rest of them, I said, "That's how long it takes to get a new weapons system in the army."

CLARKE: Wow.

LINDSAY: [Laughs] Interesting.

CLARKE: Well, then maybe even more difficult a question, as far as, like, making it operational -- do you think that there should be more things that are common amongst all the service branches as far as weapons that are carried, or systems?

LINDSAY: I -- it makes sense, but you know, the Marines and the army can't agree on pistols many times. I don't understand why some of these things are so difficult to do, but they are. And you get factions or elements in certain organizations that just believe -- like, for instance, when I talked about the SEALs, when I was arguing in front of Weinberger there, I said, "Hell, the west coast SEALs got forty-five pistols. The east coast got 9mm. Why?" And Proast answered, "That's so I can tell who killed the bad guy." Bullshit.

CLARKE: [Laughs] So then it goes into operational and tactical and strategic doctrine, being the same across service branches, which is even more -- it's kind of what you did with special operations command, but how would you advise people on something like that, if any?

LINDSAY: Well, the army and Marine Corps cooperate pretty much on doctrine. In fact, much better than it used to be. The navy, I don't think plays a role at all with the other services. I'm out of date right now, several years out of date, but the navy did its own thing the whole time I was around them, and very different.

CLARKE: So then training. Should there be a common training corps to US service branches, or --

LINDSAY: I don't know that --

CLARKE: The tribalism of the service branches is --

LINDSAY: --- yeah, I don't know --

CLARKE: -- everybody knows about that. You don't even need to be in the military to know that --

LINDSAY: Yeah, I --

CLARKE: -- army--

LINDSAY: I doubt that could ever happen, just human nature being what it is.

CLARKE: Because of that tribalism?

LINDSAY: Yeah. Exactly. Yeah, exactly.

CLARKE: So it's probably kind of the corps element on all of these things.

LINDSAY: Yeah, exactly.

CLARKE: We don't want to use your pistol. We want to use our pistol.

LINDSAY: It's better now than it used to be. Especially, you mentioned the Goldwater-Nichols Act. There are a lot of things that that changed and fixed, but not everything.

CLARKE: So God forbid we ever have to go to a national mobilization for war, kind of like Pershing or WWII. Think any of that would change how we do stuff, like manufacturing?

LINDSAY: No, I doubt it.

CLARKE: Yeah, probably not.

LINDSAY: They'd be focused on other things. No, I doubt that will ever change.

CLARKE: 'Cause Pershing had to retool basically all the industry.

LINDSAY: Yeah, that's exactly right.

CLARKE: To be able to go from making stuff for the Allies to actually making stuff for us.

LINDSAY: Yeah, what he did was incredible.

CLARKE: Yeah, it's kind of hard to even think of that happening again.

LINDSAY: Exactly.

[2:21:55]

CLARKE: Do you think the open service of LGBT personnel helps or hurts overall combat readiness of the armed forces?

LINDSAY: I don't know if there's any impact on overall combat readiness. But it's not posed any problems that I'm aware of. They've always been there; they just couldn't talk about it. But I've seen -- of course -- I'm not involved with units right now, but from what I've seen and commanders I've talked to, there's been no problems.

CLARKE: What do you mean by, they've always been there?

LINDSAY: Oh, well let me tell ya. I was cripple when I joined the army, so I got a 4-F notice. But they sent me to basic training at the Medical Replacement Training Center. And I don't know how they select people to go there, but I would say at least twenty-five percent of the trainees in the unit I was in, were homosexual. This was 1952. And it's always been there, it's just -- and why there were so many in that unit, I'll never know. But now, they can talk about it, so it's a different ballgame. And it has no impact that I've seen whatsoever.

CLARKE: So it's just kind of inconsequential.

LINDSAY: Yeah, nothing.

CLARKE: What do you think that the greatest security threat to the United States is in 2017?

LINDSAY: Well, the Islamic radicals, the ISIS nuts over there. I mean, like what happened in Britain, yesterday, you know, is just astonishing. And it's unfortunate, but they're obviously able to influence people over the Internet. And I can't conceive of that happening, but it's happened numerous times, now. And they're going to continue to do it, and how do you deal with it? One of the biggest challenges we've got 'cause we haven't had it happen here except that one case in California. It hasn't happened here like it's happened in Europe. But it's a major challenge. I totally disagree with the President's ban on Muslims. That's absolute BS, in my opinion. But somehow, some way, we've got to figure out how to deal with that.

CLARKE: That's -- it's a propaganda issue as much as anything in some ways.

LINDSAY: Yes, exactly.

CLARKE: They're good at it. They stand for something. We don't agree with what they stand for, but they do stand for something.

LINDSAY: Yeah, and it's unfortunate because, you know, there are a lot of Muslim ministers, if you will -- I don't know what -- who are very far to the right hard side, and, unfortunately, they influence people.

CLARKE: Yeah. You got into the army right as the Korean War was going away, but the Korean War has never really gone away. Do you think a[n] open conflict with North Korea is possible?

LINDSAY: No, we want to avoid that at all costs. Have you been to Seoul?

CLARKE: I have not.

LINDSAY: Seoul is awesome. Just incredible. And they have their artillery pieces buried in that granite, up there that would really do a job on Seoul, and we can't let that happen. But we couldn't -- I don't know how you prevent it if it happened instantly. We would ultimately prevail if the South Koreans and us. But it would just be a disaster in terms of human life-loss.

CLARKE: Civilian casualties.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: So they would target the city.

LINDSAY: Yeah, that's it. Yeah, that's what they do. We would -- South Korea and the United States would win ultimately, but it would be an incredible cost of life.

CLARKE: Cost. Well, we haven't seen anything like that since WWII --

LINDSAY: -That's right, exactly --

CLARKE: -- that kind of civilian center that is targeted like that.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: You know, we're kind of in a time where everything, all the safeguards that the WWII generation put into place, to mitigate threats like the Nazi threat and the German threat, really, if you take WWI into it --

LINDSAY: Right.

CLARKE: And all those things are kind of coming apart right now. The nationalism seems to be rising a bit. And certainly we're a long way off from the way the world was when WWI broke out or even WWII, but what do you see happening right now in that regard?

LINDSAY: I don't know. I'm very worried about the European Union. When Britain pulled out, I couldn't believe it. They aren't out yet, but they will be, and that could have long-term really bad consequences. Of course, I said, all my great grandparents came from Ireland, and at the beginning of WWII I was in lower grades in grade school, and I really used to worry about my grandparents because they hated the Brits so bad I really thought they might be Nazis.

[Laughs]

CLARKE: It was for other reasons. Do you think joint operations are better now than they were in --?

LINDSAY: Which operations?

CLARKE: The Joint Operations. Do you think they're better now?

LINDSAY: Vastly. I mean, they're -- it's awesome how much things have improved. And I'm about seven years out of date on watching joint operations, but, no, they had some years in just a very quick period of time there after Goldwater-Nichols.

CLARKE: So I guess my question is, to follow up on that, you hear a lot about how the military's not ready or the military's weak or the military needs to be built up or that, you know, sequester really hit it in ways that can't be fixed. Except through the passage of time. But then there's the other reality that seems to be true, is that things are humming

along in the army and in joint operations and, you know, and in the navy we're adding more ships than in any time in our history since WWII. So which is it? Are we --?

LINDSAY: Oh, no, not—

CLARKE: Are we vulnerable or are we --

LINDSAY: The thing I worry most about right now is the stress on the service members serving, because it's awesome stress on them and their families. They're gone all the time now, far more so than any time in my service. People in WWII put up with that, but they could see there'd be an end at some point. Right now, we've been at this sixteen going on seventeen years, and there's no sign of it letting up.

CLARKE: So that's your biggest concern about it?

LINDSAY: Yeah, stress on the people. It's really a stressful life they're living.

CLARKE: And that makes us vulnerable?

LINDSAY: I think it does, yeah.

CLARKE: Interesting.

LINDSAY: I don't know. I just -- we seem to be able to keep them in. I was concerned for a while we were gonna be losing people right and left, but we don't seem to be. Seems to be working.

[2:28:37]

CLARKE: Well, how did you become involved with the Airborne Special Operations Museum?

LINDSAY: I was commanding the 82nd in 1982 -- '81 or '82 -- and I went to a briefing at 18th Corps, and they briefed the plan to tear down all the WWII buildings. They were built in '39, '40, and '41, and they were built to last twenty years. And they'd been around about forty years at that time. And I got to thinking, you know, that was almost a miracle what they did. So I tried to get federal government money to preserve a barrack, the chapel, a mess hall, and a supply room orderly room. And I was gonna put them on the grounds of the 82nd Museum and restore them to original condition, put artifacts in them and all that stuff. And I couldn't get any federal money, so Fritz Healy who was the Miller Beer distributor here in Fayetteville, was a member of the Chamber of Commerce in Fayetteville, and I went to see him, and he was the interface with the military between the chamber of commerce. And I made some pitch to try to get the business community come up with some money for me. And he said, "Look, last month the Green Berets were here. This month you're here. Why don't you guys get together and build a world class museum the community can get behind?" I said, "That's a good idea." So I talked to Joe Lutz who was the commander of the Green Berets then, and he and I agreed we'd do something, but neither one of us had a staff that supported it. None of them wanted to do it. They didn't want to say it, but -- so I left then, took command of Fort Benning, and when I came back from Benning Leroy Suddath was then commander of Special Forces, and I talked with him and he agreed it might be a good idea. I talked again to the chamber of commerce, and I set aside a twenty-acre site here on Fort Bragg to put the museum on, and I designated four buildings that we'd put with the

museum. And then I left to go to Command -- Readiness command, special ops command, and frankly none of my staff was very thrilled with this idea, and so it died. And the people that kept it alive was the chamber of commerce that I'd talked to originally. So when I retired, I was talking to a guy in the chamber of commerce, and he said, "You know" -- nothing had happened in the four years I had been gone. He said, "You know, why don't we form a foundation to build the museum?" And he asked me if I'd be head of it. And I said, "Okay," and I got with a lawyer in Fayetteville, John Raper, and he drew up a charter for a 501-C3 foundation to raise the money. And we put it all together and got the -- had my first meeting of the foundation in 1990, August. And then that fall I spent a ton of time in Washington lobbying different congressmen, starting with the North Carolina delegation. And it took me a few months, but I lined up a four-million-dollar grant. And we got that, and then I started raising money here in Fayetteville. I went to Senator Tony Rand, state legislature, and I got four million dollars in federal government. And we had enough at that point to design, we thought, to design our building. And we designed it, and we decided we needed twelve million dollars -- eight million for the building and four for the stuff inside. And we broke ground on Fort Bragg in 1996. And we had our design, but there was a protest on the bid, and so we weren't able to open the bids until after we'd broken ground. And we opened the bids, the low bid on the building, which we thought would be eight million, was sixteen million, twice as much as we thought. And so we struggled and struggled, and I didn't know what in the hell I was gonna do. And on Labor Day, 1997, the chairman of -- the head of the chamber of commerce in Fayetteville came to see me in my home and said he'd talked to the city and the county and the chamber members, and if we would move the museum downtown they would pay it off. And he was on our executive board. And, unfortunately, he told them they could do it for I think, four, five million dollars. It was over seven million. So I didn't know this until Jack Keane, who was the Corps commander, and I got together, and we made an announcement in the officers' club here at Bragg of what we were gonna do, moving downtown, and I didn't know 'til then what he told them and as far as the money was concerned. So we fought and fought for months. And we finally worked out an arrangement. I got money from the city, money from the county. And, unfortunately, when we moved downtown I couldn't move the WWI buildings that started it all off. So we moved down there, and one other thing. If you've been there, you know the building is five stories high. The original design was eight stories high, and it was much bigger. And we had to take out a lot of glass and steel. But we built it, and now we're face with a challenge. We're -- our technology there is way out of date, and it's gonna take probably about four or five million dollars to fix it, and we're working with fundraisers right now to start doing that, which I don't look forward to.

CLARKE: It's an endless process, isn't it? Just when you get it done, you've got to update it again.

LINDSAY: Horrible, yeah. But I'll tell you, there are a lot of people in Fayetteville who really did a great job of making that happen. I'm very grateful to them.

CLARKE: Well, it's become the number one Trip Advisor reason to come to Fayetteville, North Carolina.

LINDSAY: Yeah, yeah.

CLARKE: So there's -- the chamber of commerce was very smart about this, and you were, too.

LINDSAY: National Geographic Traveler picked it as one of ten places -- military museums to visit.

CLARKE: That you must go to, yeah.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: Well, it tells a very good story that a lot of people don't have a lot of information on. And it gives people a reason to come to Fayetteville outside of just coming to do business with the army.

LINDSAY: Yeah.

[2:34:55]

CLARKE: This is, actually, a good question. What is the difference between building a museum -- working with the civilian world and the military world -- and running, say, I don't know, the 18th Corps or something like that?

LINDSAY: Museum's probably the toughest thing I've been involved with. That's been -- it's been a pleasure now that it's up, but my wife used to say, "When are you ever gonna get a break, here?" You know, it just goes on and on. And I thought we were done, and now I'm looking at another. But, I, fortunately, I've got the Center for Military History to agree to put up the million dollars in design work it will pay. I just need to raise some other money.

CLARKE: We want to—

LINDSAY: And by the way, the two biggest donors to that museum -- Jennifer Pritzker and Ross Perot.

CLARKE: Yeah. Those people have some very good hearts and want to help the right things. And I know that Colonel Pritzker is very proud of her support of that, being in the 82nd and also the 101st and all that kind of stuff. Well, General, you've stayed involved with the military after your retirement. And could you describe some of those things that you've done and what you've helped with?

LINDSAY: Well, my biggest involvement has been with the battle command-training program. I spent nineteen years there and working with -- and it was an incredible experience. I wouldn't trade anything for it, and I hope I was able to make a contribution.

CLARKE: What does that group do?

LINDSAY: Battle Command Training Program, you know, I mentioned earlier when we talked that we discovered -- we established the National Training Center, Dirk Training Center in the desert in California at Fort Irwin, and we discovered that the battalions that went through that incredible training there just performed much, much better than they had before in other training units, too. And it was a unique experience, and first time I'd ever seen it. You know, in exercises, normally, if the emperor has no clothes -- if the commander screwed up, nobody talks about the commander. Well, in the battle -- in Dirk combat training centers, if the emperor had no clothes, it was talked about. I never -- the first AAR I attended, I couldn't believe what I was hearing. They were sitting there talking

about the commander sitting there screwing up. And it paid off. It paid off big time. And then we established JROTC at Fort Polk in Louisiana, and we realized that we really had to do something in a similar manner for our generals in command divisions, brigades, corps so forth. And so we established -- we couldn't do FTXs with them, so we got a simulation. It was -- I can't remember what it was originally called, but, anyway, we got a simulation that we could train divisions and brigades. And the same methodology prevailed. If the commander was screwed up, we talked about it, and he talked about it. And it was just revolutionary. In fact, other people have tried to adopt it. The Marine Corps decided to do it, and they asked me to come with one of their generals and do it for them. And Ernie -- I can't remember his name. Anyway, so I went and did it -- Camp Lejeune. And when he and I went and briefed the commander about what we were gonna talk about, he refused to attend the after-action review [laughs]. Seriously, it happened. Then I went -- they were getting ready to go into, oh, Bosnia, Kosovo thing there. And I went with the -- it was a British commander and a primarily British staff, NATO staff in northern Monchengladbach in northern Germany. And the commander was a British 3-star, very impressive guy. But the staff wouldn't cooperate when they realized that we we're gonna be talking about what he screwed up. Nobody wanted to do that. But the army's done it, and it's paid off incredible dividend. The Marine Corps did adopt it ultimately, though, and they're doing it, too. I don't think the navy's adopted it. But basically it's a simulation that puts people through drills, and if they screw up we all talk about how we do it better next time. And nobody's punished for anything. It's a great, great procedure.

CLARKE: How much do you think that padlock experience plays into that training?

LINDSAY: Yeah, it does, yeah—

CLARKE: You know, the cut lock, and them knowing—

LINDSAY: Yeah, exactly. Because you have to trust your subordinates, and if you can't trust them, then you get -- need to get other subordinates.

CLARKE: But the subordinates have to trust the--

LINDSAY: Yeah, that's right.

CLARKE: It's really cyclical, isn't it?

LINDSAY: It's a -- yes, exactly. That says it better than I could have.

CLARKE: So how do the generals, so to speak, take being reviewed?

LINDSAY: At first -- at first it was hard to get used to for a lot of them. I wasn't subjected to it because I never went through as a commander, but I could tell it was difficult for some of them. But it really paid off, and it made a vast improvement on how we do business.

CLARKE: So how does it help with the whole chain of command?

LINDSAY: Oh, I think it's incredible because everybody is going through the same procedure, and everybody's treated fairly. And everybody learns by that fairness.

CLARKE: And it's not punitive.

LINDSAY: And it's not punitive.

CLARKE: Wow.

LINDSAY: Yeah, that's the one thing. You can't let that happen. You can't ever let that happen.

CLARKE: So how does it -- how do you bridge the -- it seems like there's a chasm there of, like, you're criticizing a commander, therefore there's insubordination, and yet you're opening something up there that is -- you know, it's like one of those trust exercises where you -- okay, fall.

LINDSAY: But I did it for nineteen years--

CLARKE: Yeah.

LINDSAY: -- and the culture has changed completely. Nobody's ashamed or afraid of talking about screwing things up.

CLARKE: So everybody says, "Okay, we're human. Let's figure this out."

LINDSAY: Yeah, and let's—

CLARKE: That's really cool.

LINDSAY: Let's figure how we do it better next time.

CLARKE: So the army and the navy is -- or the army and the Marine Corps is doing this.

LINDSAY: Yes. That's correct.

CLARKE: All the way up and down.

LINDSAY: Yeah, and the air force does something. I'm not sure which. I'm not that familiar with it. They looked at it, and I'm not sure which model they adopted, but the army and Marine Corps are in it big time.

CLARKE: How did you get involved with this?

LINDSAY: When I was retiring Carl Vuono, who was Chief of Staff of the army asked me if -- he had Dick Cavazos and David Grange, who were two great soldiers, who were the senior mentors. And they joined about a year -- they started the program about a year before I retired, and they asked me to join them, and three of us did it. Then we added two or three more later on.

CLARKE: Did they have to make a case for you of why you were the guy, or--

LINDSAY: No, they just asked me if I wanted to do it, and I said, "Of course."

CLARKE: Yeah, okay. It just seemed like a right idea from the get-go.

LINDSAY: And it's a great program.

CLARKE: Yeah, not a lot of -- not a lot of bad ideas in that. It seems like it would open a lot of things up.

LINDSAY: Yeah, it did --

CLARKE: To get more done, quite frankly, maybe that's one of the reasons that --

LINDSAY: I would assume civilian organizations that are successful do something like that in some form or fashion. I don't know.

CLARKE: It's called 360 review, and it's done a lot at university and government levels, but not so much in private.

LINDSAY: I see.

CLARKE: So, but it really depends on the company, 'cause, you know, the private sector is so different. But yeah, no, I think that a lot of people could have benefit from that. I think that, you know, acknowledging -- [chuckles] -- everybody acknowledging that they're gonna screw up, and so, hey, can you help me out when I do? And I'll help you out when you screw up, and we'll figure this out together. As opposed to that other system, which gets punitive, and people get mad at each other, and people get fired. And sometimes people need to get fired or replaced as a leader or whatever, but I think you can mitigate a lot of that drama with something like you just said.

LINDSAY: Yeah, it's—

CLARKE: It's pretty exciting.

LINDSAY: -- it's a great program.

[2:43:07]

CLARKE: Looking at your history as you've served, from the tail end of the Korean War to 1990 right before Desert Storm, you've seen a lot. You've done a lot. And when you retired in '93, you did an oral history with the army, but you've been retired for a little while now. And I'm kind of wondering about how that time has seasoned your thoughts about your service and about the military and what kind of lessons -- what kind of lessons-learned things do you have for somebody who may be listening or watching this, if they're either in the military or they're thinking about going in the military, they're a leader? How would you distill all that with the -- you know, again, from the lens of time passed?

LINDSAY: That's a difficult question to answer. I'll tell you why. You know, you saw that 1993 interview with me with the army war college. And I went back and read it, and I haven't changed much on anything. [Laughs] Maybe I'd reached the learning curve point where I can't absorb any more. I don't know, but I haven't changed much.

CLARKE: So what you said then is good now, too, huh?

LINDSAY: Yeah, right.

CLARKE: So we have—

LINDSAY: I think so.

CLARKE: Yeah. So then -- okay, so if there's not any reflection or philosophy, what do you think the greatest lesson that you learned as a leader in the army that you could tell somebody to pay attention to?

LINDSAY: I guess, I think the one thing that I wish I had done better that is very important is coaching and mentoring my subordinates. As I look back on what I've done that I should have done better was coaching and mentoring my subordinates. I worked at it, but I didn't do it -- it's very important that you do that, and I didn't do it as well as I should have. I would put more focus on that. And like writing efficiency reports. I just wrote efficiency reports. You actually should sit down with the person and talk to them about what you're doing and coaching and mentoring in the process. That's the one thing that, if I look back on what -- I would do a lot more of that than I did.

CLARKE: Is there an experience that you carry with you that changed the way that you approached your service or your leadership?

LINDSAY: Well, I -- you know, I told you earlier that I had an uncle who was an FBI agent and lawyer, and I was gonna do that. In fact, I might have -- I don't know if I ever would have finished law school. But as I got involved in court martial, I realized, my God, I don't want to do that. But I just didn't know. It seemed very prestigious. You've got to know what it's really all about before you want to do it, but I don't know. I can't --

CLARKE: It was a career-changing moment.

LINDSAY: Yeah, that's right.

CLARKE: Well, you are doing an interview with a group that runs a museum and library. And all the challenges you mentioned about the special operations museum, we face too.

LINDSAY: Yes.

CLARKE: But we also have a very large lending library that we lend to anywhere in the country and in Canada and other places. Do you have any suggestions for us as far as, like, what we should be reading or favorite books you might have that --?

LINDSAY: Well I wrote some -- first of all, I wrote this down. I'm a big fan of Rick Atkinson. I assume you've -- I've read all his books. And those last -- that trilogy on Iraq, Afghanistan -- I mean, the WWII things I thought was great. And his last one on -- what was the last one on? I can't find it here. But anyway, to go back to books -- I'll think of it later -- you've read *The Forgotten Soldier* by Sajer. You know, I found that to be a great book. I read it a couple times. I really liked it. *This Kind of War*. The Korean -- *This Kind of War* by Fehrenbach I thought was very good. I assume you probably read that. But as far as books on Iraq and Afghanistan -- two fascinating books, both by females. Have

you read Emma Sky? She wrote the book *The Unraveling* about Iraq, and this -- I strongly recommend it. This is an amazing book. This gal, very interesting background. Her father was Jewish. She went to a kibbutz in Israel for a while. And then as she saw what was going on in Iraq, she wanted to find out more about it, so she traveled over there to Iraq, and she got a job in one of the provinces, and -- with a civilian agency of some sort. And the commander of the brigade, whose name I can't recall right now, was so impressed by her that he brought her up on his staff in some advisory capacity. Dave Petraeus was so impressed by her when he talked to her, he brought her up, put her to work for him. And when she came back to the States and when Ordierno took over, he brought her back from the States to Iraq. And it's a great book. Carlotta Gall, G-A-L-L, female, New York Times reporter has spent ten/twelve years in Pakistan and Afghanistan. And she wrote a great book, only her title was *The Wrong Enemy*. Very good. Excellent book.

CLARKE: I haven't read either one of those books, so thank you very much.

LINDSAY: They're very good. Excellent. And, yeah -- see, if I had any—

CLARKE: We're very good friends with Rick Atkinson. He's working on a trilogy for the American Revolution now.

LINDSAY: Oh, really?

CLARKE: Yeah, so he's—

LINDSAY: Yeah, he's super.

CLARKE: -- he's under deadline right now.

LINDSAY: One of the best writers I've ever read.

CLARKE: He's going to probably revolutionize the Revolutionary War for us and bringing it back to light in a way, 'cause his WWII books are widely read and --

LINDSAY: Yeah.

CLARKE: -- and easily consumed, but with tons of facts and solid writing.

LINDSAY: Yeah, they're just -- I really enjoy reading him.

CLARKE: There's a reason why he's won three Pulitzer Prizes. [Laughs]

LINDSAY: Yes, I know. That is amazing.

CLARKE: He's just a very, very talented guy. Well, General Lindsay, it's an honor and a privilege to be here with you at Fort Bragg, the home of the 82nd Airborne, with whom you've spent so much of your career. Thank you so much for meeting with me today and telling your story. Very much appreciate it.