

Medical Command, and became Assistant Chief of Staff for Veterinary Services.

A: I did leave the Surgeon General's office and went to Europe, and was assigned there as the Assistant Chief of Staff for Veterinary Services, 7th Medical Command. Our headquarters was in Heidelberg, Germany. I had a senior NCO in my office, a secretary, and two officers. Later on I had two NCOs, two officers, and one secretary.

We were in charge of and responsible for veterinary TO&E units all over Europe, in almost every country of Europe. Our functions were, as we have discussed before, all the many facets of food inspection; some limited facets of preventive medicine at different locations, depending on the personnel there; animal care for the military working dogs; the procurement inspection of food coming from food establishments all over Europe, which we did sanitary inspections on, and listed in the directory; in-storage inspection of government owned food shipped over from the United States; constant participation in different types of field training exercises all over Europe; inspecting the ration breakdown points in the mess facilities; and continuing ongoing unit training.

Communicating with the Command

When I got to Europe, one of the first things I remembered was how I felt when I was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and communications became a primary purpose in life for me there. I was especially aggravated because we were so spread out over Europe, and usually we would only be one officer deep at a location with a varying number of enlisted men, both food inspection specialists, and animal techs under that one officer. There were people all by themselves all over Europe, in every country, and the cobweb center was there in Heidelberg in our office. Together with the people working in my office with me, our entire staff worked together on communications constantly. We did this by setting up a phone roster, and every veterinary officer in Europe was called by either myself or one of my

staff every month, and we talked to them as long as they wanted to talk, and we listened to their problems.

We set up a monthly newsletter that went out to every veterinary officer in Europe, and at that time we also got one from Washington, a Veterinary Corps Information Memorandum. It has since been discontinued, I believe, although parts of it may be being sent out on the Internet to people who are connected by computers. But we sent out the monthly memo from Washington, and then we sent out our own 7th MEDCOM memorandum to each officer.

We had monthly meetings in the conference room in my office there, and every veterinary officer and many of their senior NCOs within driving distance would come to these monthly meetings. We encouraged each commanding officer of veterinary officers at some distance—in Denmark, for example, or in Italy, Egypt, Spain—we encouraged those commanding officers to program funds so that their veterinarian could come to at least a minimum of one of these meetings per year. After the first year, the results of that began to show.

Ticker-Tape Communications

The international telephone service in Europe from 1975 to 1980, and perhaps still today, was not very reliable. Often it was impossible to call Iran, Greece, Spain, Egypt, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Denmark, France, Belgium, Austria, Holland, or other countries where we had Veterinary Service personnel stationed. The food industry deals with highly perishable, time sensitive products which demand instant communication. For this reason, every major food producer in Europe has a ticker-tape machine in it's office and through it they can contact each other and conduct business as fast as a secretary can type. I obtained one in my office in Heidelberg and could contact any of my Veterinary Service people in Europe in minutes. It proved invaluable on many occasions. We had one installed in our office in Tehran, Iran. We remained in contact with our office there until five days after the Revolution had overthrown the Shah. At that time a member of the Revolutionary Guard

answered and after we exchanged a few messages, informed us that that line was dead.

Annual Military Veterinary Medical Training Conference

We programmed and planned for an annual international military veterinary medical training conference. We usually held these in Garmisch or in Berchtesgaden. Because veterinary officers overseas are unable to avail themselves of the continuing education opportunities which exist here in the United States, we made these annual international veterinary medical training conferences just that, a training conference, and we started presenting American Veterinary Medical Association approved veterinary continuing education during this conference, so that the attendees had 15 hours of graduate continuing education training when they left. We gave them a certificate which they could send back to their state or to the AVMA.

This was a tremendous boost to the morale of people, because if you get sent to Europe for four years and you don't have any training opportunities while you're there, in the field of veterinary medicine, you get out of touch. So that paid off.

I did not initiate this training conference. It had been ongoing since back in the 1950s, but the scale of it is what increased, and I feel the quality of it increased. We began to have this training with it, which was an increase that hadn't taken place before, and we began to invite more military veterinarians from our allied nations. For at least two of the years I was there during that tour, we had 18 countries represented with military veterinarians at this conference.

Q: And did they participate?

A: And they participated. For example, we wrote to and invited the Chief of the French Army Veterinary Corps to attend, and we asked him to bring his deputy if he wished, and we offered him the opportunity to present a paper at

this conference if he so wished. We sent him copies of previous papers that had been presented on different subjects for his information and guidance. A great many of them did participate. If nothing else, they would present a briefing on the military veterinary services of Italy, or of Spain, or of Iran, or of Turkey, or of Greece, or of Italy, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, France, Switzerland. All of these countries attended.

People arrived on a Sunday, and Monday through Friday we had continuing education every day. Every night the people got together and talked, went out to dinner, and then on Thursday night we had a banquet and everyone from all these countries wore their dress uniform. Most of the non-U.S. officers who attended brought their wives with them, and the U.S. officers in Europe who were married, of course, brought their wives. These were highlight events for everyone there. Everyone benefited.

As a result of that, we began a veterinary officer exchange program with the British. They assigned an officer to the United States Army, here in the United States, located here at Fort Sam Houston, that officer was. We assigned an officer to the British Army of the Rhine stationed in Germany. The next officer we assigned at the British Army veterinary headquarters in England. This lasted several years. It has decreased due to the withdrawal, the downsizing of U.S. forces in Europe. All of the Iranian veterinarians who attended our conference were killed during the revolution, as were most Iranians who had traveled out of the country and been educated out of the country.

The conference was an outstanding way of communicating, and it served its purpose because when we had a food importation problem, or a food trans-shipment problem, food going from Germany to Denmark, the border guard would stop the truck and say “you can’t bring this German food into Denmark.” Well, word would filter in a while, and then we would talk to the chief of the Danish Army Veterinary Service, and he would talk to the chief of their customs service, and the problem would go away. So it worked beautifully.

Here I might add that in Europe, in almost every country of Europe, the veterinary services occupy a much more significant role in the total food safety program than they do here in the United States. At one time in the United States, the Army Veterinary Service was not only in charge of inspecting meat for wholesomeness and quality, but also for grading that meat. The USDA was not grading meat at that time, so we did it for the Armed forces.

In the overseas countries, for example in Denmark, they have a Royal Danish Veterinary College that graduates a class every year. Those veterinarians work in positions in packing plants and in the food industry that here in the United States, our USDA has replaced the veterinarians with lay inspectors, and many of these lay inspectors do not have a high school education. Nothing against them, but they don't have the level of training to qualify them to do the job they're doing.

In Denmark they pay their veterinarians a salary which will attract them to that work, and they don't have food problems. Their entire food program is closely monitored by veterinarians. Here, our USDA, because The Congress does not appropriate the money to hire these veterinarians, they look for a cheaper way of doing the job, and they hire lay inspectors where they previously used veterinarians. And there may be one veterinarian in a large city, and he is supervising many dozens of lay inspectors who are doing the actual hands-on inspection of the meat being purchased.

In Europe, this is not the case in most countries. They almost all have veterinary colleges, they have graduates, they need jobs, and they use them where they are most effective.

International Near-Catastrophe

One year, 1978 I believe, we had invited the Chief of the Veterinary Corps of the French Army, a major general, and his wife to our International Military

Veterinary Conference at Berchtesgaden. We had received no answer and after an unanswered follow-up, assumed he and his wife would not be attending.

On the Sunday before the conference began on Monday, Colonel Scotty Reynolds, who was assigned as the Army and Air Force Exchange Service Veterinarian in Munich, Germany, went out to the Munich Airport to meet a friend coming to the conference.

In the terminal, he saw a French major general pacing the floor by his wife and luggage, obviously very upset. Knowing nothing of the circumstances, Colonel Reynolds saw that something was wrong and asked if he could be of assistance.

The general was very upset that no one had met them. Colonel Reynolds took them to his home in Munich. While his wife fixed them a snack, he brought them each a triple scotch. To their amazement, he then came in with a large deep dish pan full of hot, soapy water, took off her shoes, and put her feet to soak in the pan.

Throughout the conference, the General could talk about little else except the hospitality of Colonel Reynolds!

Procurement of Food in Europe

Our procurement people, during this tour when I was in Europe, I touched earlier on the problem we had with the directory where they wanted to have a big thick telephone book directory, and we wanted a small directory of outstanding establishments to produce food, establishments that had the sanitation, and that had the capital, and that had the volume output to justify our purchasing from them. We had ongoing problems with these procurement people in Europe, and I think they perhaps culminated when they independently made a trip to Italy on a procurement problem.

This Quartermaster colonel got to Italy to address this meeting, to solve this

problem, and when he went into the meeting, he sat at the table, and the whole table was full of Italian military veterinary officers. They started the meeting, and the Italian colonel chairing the meeting turned to this Quartermaster colonel and said, "Colonel, what veterinary college did you graduate from in the United States?" He said, "I'm not a veterinarian. I'm a Quartermaster officer." And the Italians closed their books, and they all stood up, and the meeting was over. So to accomplish what he wanted to accomplish there, he had to wire back to Heidelberg and we provided him with a veterinary officer to go to the meeting with him, and that was the only way they would deal. They don't deal otherwise.

That's an example of how the veterinary services in Europe differ from the way they operate here. They have a lot more power. We learned a lot from them, they learned a lot from us. The Turkish, the Iranian veterinary services wanted complete copies of all of our regulations, our operating manuals, equipment sets; they wanted everything we had, and we provided them footlockers full of material, and they went on to develop a good veterinary service which probably has gone totally down the tube now, at least in Iran.

Commanding the Various Teams

This veterinary conference operated for about 10 years over there annually in the manner I've described, and it operated very well. I talked about communications, and I can't overstress how important I think it is. When I went to France on my first tour as a lieutenant, I had personnel stationed at 35 different installations around France, and most of them were absolutely outstanding soldiers. I had a few problem soldiers.

I had one that just ran my 1st Sergeant and me both crazy. We were talking about it one night and scratching our heads trying to figure out well, what in the world can we do. I said, "I wish I could write a letter to his mother." And I said well, why not. I got his home address and wrote a letter to his mother and father and told them what a potentially outstanding soldier their son was. I

went on in that vein for a while, and then I told them what a problem I was having with him.

I went back down in that area not too long after that and visited another installation, and while I was there one of the enlisted men asked me, he said, "Sir, did you really write a letter to Corporal so-and-so's mother?" And I said, "Yes, I did," and he just shook his head. But the corporal straightened up. That worked, and I did that on many occasions after that, and there in Europe established a policy of sending a birthday greeting to every veterinary officer in the command. I couldn't do it to all the enlisted men. I did it to a few of the senior ones, but I sent them birthday greetings, and if they got married, or if they had a baby, or if one of their parents died, I wrote them a letter. The payback was unbelievable.

I continued this practice when I became Chief, and from 1980 to 1985, I sent a birthday letter to each officer in the Corps each year. I wrote three different letters each year, one for colonels, one for field grade, and one for company grade officers. This was a small thing, but the officers in Alaska, Korea, Guam, Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Hawaii, Panama, Kenya, Egypt, and many, many other isolated locations around the world seemed to appreciate the letters, and I sincerely appreciated the work they were doing.

When I left Europe, and as with the War College, I received notice one day to come up to the MEDCOM Surgeon's office, and when I got there he told me I had been selected to be the next Chief. I was totally astonished. But when I became Chief and came back to Washington, I tried to continue these various communication techniques that I've discussed with you. And I continued writing letters, and I continued the newsletter, and I continued having conferences and meetings, and I set up the phone roster and I or someone in my office called every senior veterinary officer in the United States or overseas once a month. I made at least one trip per year to Europe while I was Chief and visited the international conference, and then after that I spent a week visiting units all over Europe, as many as time permitted.

I went to the Pacific once a year and visited Alaska, Hawaii, Korea, Japan, Guam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, and any other place that we might have people over there at that time. I held meetings there, and I tried my best the whole time during those four years to start an international military veterinary conference out in the Pacific because I believed it would have had just as beneficial effect as the one in Europe did. But I never was able to crack that nut. I tried to do that.

The Combat Casualty Care Course

While I was in Europe, from 1975 to 1980, we started something else over there. The Medical Department has what they call the Combat Casualty Care Course. It was here at San Antonio, and the purpose of the Combat Casualty Care Course was to train as many medical service personnel—medical officers, dental officers, nurses, MSCs, senior enlisted people, physical therapists, veterinarians—to train as many of them as they could on immediate care of mass casualties. At that time, we were under the nuclear threat, and it was envisioned that we were going to have hundreds and thousands of mass casualties.

You're probably familiar with the triage principle. When you have hundreds of casualties come in, your most experienced physician has to step out and examine them, and quickly classify them into categories. Then you allocate your treatment resources, which are limited, to care for those casualties for the greatest possible return. You may have a man there who has all four limbs broken, and a concussion of the brain, and a gaping wound to the chest, but he's still very strong and alive. And if that were a peacetime accident here in the United States, you'd bring in a massive team and you'd work 15 hours straight, and you'd save a man's life.

But under a mass casualty condition you can't do that. So you set that man aside in what's called the expectant category. He is expected to die. You can't devote all your efforts to that one man when there are 200 out here who have spurting arteries, that if they're tied off, you'll save his life. That's all you have

to do is tie off that one artery. So you put your resources where they can do the most good.

Well, another important thing, and I felt very strongly toward it, while I was there in Europe, we were close to the combat situation. We had various ammunition storage facilities in Europe where they stored all classes of weapons. You can't get in there with a gasoline powered lawn mower that emits sparks to mow the grass. So we started putting herds of goats in there, and they do an excellent job. They keep it clean, and then you've got goats. They reproduce so you've got more goats.

To conduct a Combat Casualty Care Surgical Training course, you have to have an animal, so they used goats. They anesthetize the animal, and they shoot them and break the femur and cause various injuries, and then you teach these medical people to care for them, to stabilize them and save their lives. And it's a very important course, and tens of thousands of medical people here in the United States went through this Combat Casualty Care Course.

We did it in Europe. The veterinary service supervised the raising of the goats. We brought the goats in, prepared them for surgery, shot them, trimmed them, clipped them, draped them, had all the equipment ready for the students. There are all kinds of physicians. Only a small number of them are surgeons. If you take a physician who is a psychiatrist, he has had medical training, but he is a psychiatrist and really is not very competent in surgery. They need refresher training periodically on how to do these simple, life-saving things. You bring this class in, and the veterinarian would conduct the class, and show them what was to be done, and supervise them while they did it. We did it in Europe, and it worked beautifully. We trained a high percentage of our medical people in Europe. Of course, it's a continuing, ongoing thing. People rotate and new ones come in, and you continue training.

We did it, and when I came back from Europe and was then Corps Chief, we had the CCCC program ongoing here at San Antonio, and it was started at many other installations all over the United States. Every one of those

installations had areas that were very, very ideal for the raising of goats. All you had to do was start with a billy and 10 nannies, and you can raise all the goats you want. We wanted to do that, and we wanted to help with this program. I say we—the Veterinary Service wanted to help with it. We wanted to do it; we wanted to participate in it to whatever degree the Surgeon General wanted us to participate. But we wanted to be there. Congress required that a veterinarian be there, so if we're going to be there, we want to go ahead and give the introductory lecture and show them what was to be done. We could do it as well as anyone.

I spent four years trying to sell this idea, and I never did sell it. So I left the office feeling I had failed on that. It was something I felt was good, and essential, and cost effective, and it was not approved because the American College of Surgeons feared that the veterinary profession was trying to encroach on the medical profession. It was a political thing. It took me a long time to recognize that, but I finally recognized it and quit. I tried to sell it to at least two, maybe three surgeon generals. They would seem very interested, and then later on they would talk to their friends and find the political ramifications of it and they would back off.

The program went on and we still participated, but not as much as I wanted. I don't know whether that program is still ongoing today or not. It may be one of the things that was dropped, since the threat of mass casualties had lessened.

Advertising the Veterinary Program

Q: Are we through with Europe? You took that program right from Europe, right through the United States, and ran it around the world and back again. You were talking about communicating, and the communicating job that you did in Europe when you came back there because you recognized your problems you had with the lack of communicating with higher headquarters.

A: Yes. Another facet of that that we touched on—communicating. When I got to Europe and began, during my first few months there, to visit, for example, the

naval base at Rota, Spain, where we had a veterinary officer assigned, Italy, many of the major army installations in Europe. I was a colonel then, but when I'd go to one of these bases, the first thing I always had to do was call on the commanding officer, the base commander, and tell him who I was and why I was there.

A number of them, when I would arrange an appointment, I would go and see them and they would say, "Well, I was surprised when you called for an appointment because I didn't know I had a veterinarian here," and that opened my eyes. At one of our first monthly meetings, please let me digress here, before we held these monthly meetings, all the veterinary officers and NCOs all over Europe would send in their suggestions of items to be discussed at this monthly meeting. We would list them all on a piece of paper with a space between each one, and then at the meeting we would discuss each one around the table. If we reached a decision right then, we wrote it down. And then when the meeting was over, the minutes were typed up and sent out to everyone, so they knew what had happened and they had it in writing.

At one of our first monthly meetings, I told each officer that they had so many weeks to go back to their base and prepare a 30 to 45 minute briefing for their commanding officer or commanding general, the installation commander under whom they served. We told them to use no more than 10 projectuals, try to make it 30 minutes, never have it more than 45 minutes, and when they got their draft finished, to send a copy of the draft to our office. That way we made sure everyone prepared it.

We got in this whole file of drafts for each area, and each veterinarian then would call up the general, the admiral, the colonel, whoever was the base commander, and talk to their aide and request 45 minutes to brief the general. What do you want to brief him on? I want to brief him on the veterinary service. And they were dumbfounded.

The veterinary officer would go in and would brief the general, and would tell him, "General, this is what we are doing for you in your area. These are the

functions we perform,” and they would give him a very brief organizational briefing on how many men they had, how many vehicles they had, what area they covered, what activities were in that area, what food inspection they did, what sanitary inspection of establishments, what refrigerated warehouses were there, what dry storage we had, what military working dogs. They told him everything they did for him. And then they told him what he did for them. They said you’re providing us with our building, with our telephone, with our vehicle, with our POL, with our barracks, with our mess facilities, and we want to thank you for that. We’re not directly under you, but we certainly appreciate your support. And about then the general’s mouth would drop open.

Then when I started going around following that and visiting these same people, I walked in the general’s door and he would say, “Colonel, your captain was in here two months ago and already briefed me on the veterinary service. He gave me an excellent briefing, and I know what you do. But I didn’t even know I had a veterinarian on my base.”

Consolidating the Army and the Air Force Veterinary Services

We started that, and it became policy. Everywhere I went in Europe, every base I would go to, when I went in to see the base commander, he had been briefed, and briefed very well. Along about then, beginning in 1979 and 1980, we started planning for the amalgamation of the Air Force Veterinary Service into the Army Veterinary Service. We had had all of these studies. The studies would address both the Air Force Veterinary Service and the Army Veterinary Service, but they concentrated on the Army. The Army had come through all these studies with flying colors.

Then The Congress, in their frustration, said well, we have two veterinary services. Why do we need two? If we eliminated one of them, we could save X number of manpower spaces. The Army Veterinary Service was established in 1916, the Air Force in 1947. The Congress eventually decided to abolish the Air Force Veterinary Service and consolidate the two, which was done.

There were many air bases in Europe at that time that had Base Veterinarians. We met with them. There was a senior Air Force officer in Europe, Colonel Joe West, who is now at Texas A&M at the Texas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. Joe and I would meet frequently. The Air Force veterinarians attended our meetings. He and I met and developed a phased plan to allow the Army to assume veterinary services to these various bases. As their people finished their tours, we would bring an Army officer in to take their place. We had Army officers on air bases all over Europe, and on some navy bases. As soon as they arrived, they had to brief their commanding general. And we learned that sometimes the Air Force base commander didn't know that he had a veterinarian on base, so it paid off.

Q: Especially an Army one.

A: Right. We had a veterinary unit at Subic Bay in the Philippines. My appointment with the admiral wasn't until the next day, so the veterinarian took me all around and showed me everything he had, and showed me that down on the dock they had to work standing out on the dock in the rain, and inspect food, and they had no facility and no place to wash their hands.

The next day I went in to see the admiral, and he told me that my man had briefed him, and he was impressed with the briefing. We had set up a recuperage operation there for the navy vessels that were on patrol in the Indian Ocean. The ships go out and they stay so long, and then they come back, and they are resupplied. Previously, when they came back they got offshore so many hundreds of miles, and any food they had left, they dumped overseas, and it was a total loss, but a lot of it was still good.

So our people talked the admiral into setting up a recuperage operation using Philippine labor, and they brought all this food in and unloaded it, and then steam-cleaned the storage areas on the ship. Our people would recoup the subsistence, put it in new boxes and re-strap it, and they would load it back on the ship. All of a sudden, his expense records began to show a tremendous

savings in rations expense. That was a big feather in his hat, and he got a lot of brownie points for it, and it worked out very well.

When I went in to see the admiral he said, “What do your people need?” I said, “Well, it looks like you’ve taken very good care of them, and I thank you. They’ve got good quarters, and good message facilities, and you’ve given them good vehicle support. By the way, the chief veterinarian did mention to me that they’re having to inspect their food down on the dock out in the rain sometimes.” It rains 15 inches overnight there at Subic Bay sometimes. He said, “Well, we’ll just build them a facility.” Within days, a unit of Seabees came in and they built them a facility and put in latrines, and inspection tables, and everything they wanted. So they appreciated our support.

Promotion to Brigadier General

Q: Did you get your star in Europe, or did you get it on your way back? Were you able to show that star off to all those people over there?

A. Yes. I got a call and they told me I had been selected, and then it surprised me how difficult it is to buy general officers uniforms and accouterments in Europe. I had some friends, and one man gave me a pair of trousers, another man gave me a blouse, and someone found me some stars up at some other installation, and I gradually assembled a uniform. The blouse and trousers didn’t match very well, but they did the job, and I was sworn in and commissioned as a general there in Europe. Then when I got back to the Surgeon General’s office, I was sworn in as Chief of the Corps there.

Chief, Veterinary Corps, Office, Surgeon General, United States Army, Washington, DC, 1980 to 1985; Assistant Surgeon General for Veterinary Services, Office, Surgeon General, United States Army, Washington, DC; Acting Department of Defense, Executive Agent for Veterinary Services, and Deputy Commander, United States Army Medical Research & Development Command, Fort Detrick, Maryland, 1984 to 1985

Q: So then you went back to become Chief in Washington in November of 1980?

A: Yes, and I stayed there until February of 1985, I believe it was, when I retired.

Integration of the Army and Air Force Veterinarian Services

And that was a tremendously interesting period in the history of the Veterinary Corps because the integration of the Army and Air Force Veterinary Service had begun, but I would say it was less than 5 percent complete when I got back. So we still had a long way to go. There was a considerable amount of resistance on the part of the Air Force. Not too long after I came back to Washington, the Air Force Surgeon General invited me to a medical commanders conference at the Air Force Academy, and every senior Air Force medical officer in the Air Force from all over the world was there. There were probably 150 officers, and they were from the Philippines, Korea, and all over the world, wherever there was an air base.

I gave a briefing on the Army Veterinary Service, what we do, how we do it, how we're equipped to do it, how we're manned to do it, and then I discussed the consolidation plan. We had planned how to assume command of the veterinary services on the various air bases all over the world: the staged plan, as their people reached the end of their tour, they would come back to the United States and then we would send an Army man in to replace them.

When I got to the meeting, the atmosphere was awkward, and when I went into this big meeting room, they had me seated in the witness chair over at one side of the room, and I felt very ill at ease. The introduction I received was supposed to be funny, but it really had an underlying note to it. Anyhow, I gave them my briefing. It was supposed to last about 40 minutes, and I finished it in about 35 minutes, and they then told me I had 45 minutes. Well, arms started going up and the questions started coming in, and my part of the meeting took about 2.5 hours. It was supposed to take 45 minutes on their program, and one flurry of questions would die down and the Surgeon General

would try to terminate it, and around the audience some very senior officers would hold up their hands, and they'd ask some other questions.

I had a good feeling when I walked out of there, and that night we had a dinner, and a cocktail hour, and many, many of these men came up to me and talked in a very friendly manner. In the next four years, as I visited air bases all over the world, I kept running into these same men. "Oh, yeah, I remember you. You were at Colorado Springs. You spoke to us there. They were trying to do a hatchet job on you, weren't they?" It was interesting.

Q: You were able to demonstrate a successful program in Europe because you had already done that.

A: Yes. And so it worked out.

Q: Was that your major problem you had when you were ...

A: That was the major problem. It was ongoing. It really wasn't a problem because it turned out very smooth and everything went well. Before I left Europe, all these veterinary officers there, we had this annual military veterinary conference and we invited all of the Air Force veterinary officers to attend, and a great many of them did attend. During that conference that year, and that was probably 1979, they had a couple of officers there who were sort of spokesmen for the group. So I told these spokesmen that I would like to have lunch with all the Air Force officers. Do you think you could arrange to get them to agree to sit down with me?

He said he could, so we got a separate room, and had a big, long table, and we all sat around the table. I sat in the middle of one side of the table, and I said "now, what do you gentlemen want to know?" And so they started tossing all kinds of rumors, and questions, and things they had heard, and things they had been told, and we sat there and talked for an hour and a half or two hours. They were offered the option of transferring to the Army if they wanted to, or they could get out of the Air Force altogether. Or they could remain in the Air

Force as a Medical Service Corps officer. I think they call them biomedical officers. But they do still have a few veterinarians in the Air Force serving as biomedical officers.

They were concerned that if they transferred to the Army, the Army promotion selection board would not be familiar with Air Force officer record briefs, and they wouldn't be able to interpret their training as compared to a comparable Army officer's training, and decide who to promote. They were concerned about their promotion status. They were concerned about their pay status, the future. They were concerned about having to work on Army bases instead of Air Bases. They had been brainwashed that the Air Force is so much superior to the Army, that they didn't want to work on an Army base.

We had a good discussion that day, and eventually the majority of those officers sitting at the table transferred to the Army, and I don't think any of them ever regretted it.

When I got back to Washington as Chief, I brought one of the Air Force officers that had transferred to the Army into my office there, in the Surgeon General's office as a staff officer. That made them all feel better because they could pick up the phone and call someone in the Chief's office, and they felt like they could get straight answers. That worked out well.

One of the Air Force officers who had transferred, Lieutenant Colonel Gary Stamp, now Colonel Gary Stamp, is the commander of the Veterinary Command in San Antonio now, and he was Air Force. The things that we were able to do in Europe, most of them followed on here in the United States, and really the phase of takeovers was comparatively smooth.

Q: How long did that takeover take?

A: We were completed by the end of 1985. In fact, I think for all purposes we completed it a little bit before that. But it started in 1980 and it was all over by 1985, as well as I remember.

Q: By the time you left, it was done?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have any other projects you were working on during that time frame?

The Veterinary Officers Guide

A: Yes, a great many, but for one thing I reviewed the *Veterinary Officers Guide* and had it updated and republished. I don't know where it is now. There was never an end to the project. One thing we touched on before, things were changing, things were a great deal different than they had been when I entered the Army. We, there in Washington, convened a meeting of all the senior veterinary officers and some NCOs including some of the overseas ones. We brought them all back, and we got out at a countryside conference center there in Virginia and had a veterinary service strategic planning conference that lasted several days.

We started out the first day and presented the problem and it's sort of a discussion, and we broke up in the working groups and addressed different problems, and we ended up with a published three ring notebook that everyone got a copy of eventually, redefining the mission of the Veterinary Corps, setting forth immediate, short range, mid-range, and long-range goals, and addressed ways and means of accomplishing these goals, and as Colonel [Paul L.] Barrows indicated to us, that is still ongoing. And not too many months after that, other branches of the Surgeon General's office began to do the same thing, and it spread throughout the Army. So far as I know, we were the first AMEDD branch to do it.

The idea was not mine entirely. I had a brother-in-law who worked for Hewlett-Packard, and he was the Hewlett-Packard manager east of the Mississippi River. I would get with him periodically, every year or so when I passed through Atlanta or Dallas, I would stop and visit my sister and

brother-in-law, and we would talk about things that Hewlett-Packard was doing, and I would tell him about things that we had done, and we bounced ideas back and forth, and that was one I got from him.

Packard had come up with this idea for Hewlett-Packard, and they had done it and he was all enthusiastic about it. So we did it, and we became enthusiastic about it. I've used "I" too much in this brief encounter. When I say I, I'm talking about a great many of the senior officers in the Veterinary Corps. We all got together. We communicated frequently. They had wonderful ideas. I was the Chief of the Corps, and I was the triggering mechanism for a lot of these things that we did. So I say "I", but really it wasn't Frank Ramsey, it was the Veterinary Corps.

By virtue of the training programs we had, I know I wanted to touch on something else—R&D versus food inspection. I want to touch on that in a minute. By virtue of these graduate training programs that we had and other training programs, when I retired in 1985, I walked out of my office and shut the door behind me, and severed connections with the Veterinary Corps and felt perfectly at ease because I knew that there were dozens of officers that we had prepared and trained, and that had come up, and any one of them could do the job that I had been doing better than I had been doing it, because they were better trained.

Some people, when they leave an office, try to hang onto it and go back and check on it every month to see if it's operating right, and so on, and I never once had that feeling. I think that now that the veterinary service is the DOD Executive Agency for Veterinary Service, this matter of being studied to death is a thing of the past. If you're Army, they can cut you, but if you're a DOD Agency, you are almost bomb-proof. So I think the Corps is on a good foundation. It's still performing the same essential functions. Someone has to do them. We have proven that we can do this plethora of different functions in an effective and cost efficient manner.

Assignment of R&D Officers

Backing up though, when I came back from Europe in 1980 and was the Corps' Chief, immediately the assignment of officers arose. A big change usually occurs once a year, but all during the year there are people being changed. We had a senior veterinary officer in Korea at that time, and he was a colonel.

Well, we needed a colonel to go over there and replace that man. In looking at all of the available colonels, we had a considerable number of full colonels in R&D assignments who had more than 20 years service, and had never been overseas. We had a lot of colonels who had been in the food inspection area of the Veterinary Corps, and some of them had one, two, or three overseas assignments.

I soon faced the problem of having to send colonels overseas, and who am I going to send. Well, I felt badly about sending an officer back to Korea who may have already had two or three overseas tours, when out at one of the R&D facilities there was a full colonel who had never been overseas. So I put some of these colonels on alert that they were soon to be tabbed for an overseas assignment. And when I did that, the ceiling fell in on me. The commanding general of the Medical R&D Command came to see the Surgeon General and got him all wired up as to how essential this colonel was to the R&D effort, and then I was called over and the three of us sat in the office, and the Surgeon General asked me why I would do such a dastardly deed. So I told him my philosophy.

I said all these Veterinary Corps officers are citizens of the United States of America. They are under oath, officers of the United States Army. They owe a lot of loyalty to the Army Medical Department. They are members of the Veterinary Corps. Many of them then have specialty training that they have received while they've been members of the Veterinary Corps, most of them, and last, they are individuals. And when we make an assignment, we consider all these factors. And I could not, in good conscience, assign a man to a

repetitive overseas tour when there was another man wearing the same green uniform, drawing the same pay, who has never been overseas a day in his life. And that man is fully trained to do the job, and he will have people to help him do the job, and he can do the job, but it calls for a full colonel.

And so the Surgeon General told me in this particular case you will go ahead and not assign this colonel overseas as a favor to me, please. And then he turned to the major general commanding Medical R&D Command and he said, in so many words, there will be no more such discussions.

A few months after that, the Surgeon General assigned me an additional duty to be the Deputy Commanding General of the Medical Research and Development Command at Fort Detrick, Maryland. For the last two years of work on active duty, I was Chief of the Veterinary Corps, Assistant Surgeon General for Veterinary Services, Deputy Commanding General of Medical Research and Development Command [MR&DC], and acting Department of Defense Executive Agent for Veterinary Services. A lot of different hats but it all worked out. I worked at Fort Detrick three or four days each week and would be in my office in the Pentagon every Friday and many Thursdays. We had a great many Veterinary Corps officers in the MR&DC.

The only way I was able to function in these positions was that I had an outstanding group of officers on my staff at all times. They included Col. Richard G. Oakes, Col. Peter S. Loizeaux, Col. William K. Kerr, Col. John Barck, Col. William H. H. Clark, Col. William B. Smith, Col. Wayne Derstine, and Col. William P. Yonoshonus, during the period 1980 to 1985. They came and they went, four were there at all times. No Corps Chief ever worked with more outstanding men.

Most of the R&D activities to which veterinary officers are assigned are at Aberdeen Proving Ground, or in Washington, or at Fort Detrick, in that general area. So I called the senior veterinarian at each location and told them that I wanted to meet with all of the R&D veterinary personnel, and I went out to Fort Detrick, and we had a meeting, and I told them that I understood there

was a lot of discussion buzzing around among that group when I had attempted to assign this colonel overseas, and so I told them that I was new in the job but that I wanted to share with them my personal philosophy and let them know how things were going to be. And so I proceeded to tell them what I told you a while ago, that they're first of all citizens and so on, and I said, "Now, we will be assigning officers who are, or who have been, or who are going to be in R&D Command to overseas assignments."

"We will make every effort to make it a cooperative, open-ended, convenient assignment. If you are on an R&D assignment and you've been there two years and you have two more years to go, we're willing to wait until you finish those two years, and then assign you overseas. If you have a research project ongoing and it's essential that you remain with it for six months, we'll wait six months."

"You are free to tell us when it's convenient for you to go overseas. You tell us. But you'll all be going sooner or later." In the group there were a number of senior colonels, a number of whom had served in World War II in the Navy, in the Army, and then they had come back and gotten their DVMS and advanced training, and they were now occupying positions such as the head of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology. Colonel Dick Garner would have been one such officer.

He and several others stood up and told this group an overseas tour won't kill you. We all had overseas tours, and it didn't hurt our career at all. It will open your eyes and broaden your perspective, and let you see a little bit more of the world, and you'll be able to come back and do your job better. And if you can't stand a one year, or a two or three year absence from your R&D assignment, why, you're not very good at it to begin with. So it won't hurt you. Bedlam broke loose, and I just sat back in the corner and listened to them, and boy, there were arguments all over the place, almost fist-fights.

As a result of that meeting, we had a very limited number of resignations, a few of them. And I brought in a Colonel Pete Loizeaux who had been in

R&D, and I brought him into my office as my deputy. So I had an Air Force man in there, and then I had an R&D man in there. And the R&D people then felt like they had a voice in my office.

We started assigning these R&D people overseas. A lot of them got out of veterinary school, and thought, oh boy, the glamour of R&D. So they wanted to get R&D and they did it for two or three years. Well, then we sent them overseas maybe to Germany and they commanded a veterinary food inspection unit, and they did all the things I'm telling you about, and they got to see all of the country, and they got to go to the conference.

And quite a few of them decided they didn't want R&D. They wanted to go into food inspection. That's where the fun was. And so over the period of the five years, that storm abated. It came to a roaring furnace fire back in late 1980, and then it burned down, and that became my accepted policy. I believe that at least one Chief who followed me continued that same policy, and I hope it's still continuing to this day, but I don't know. I haven't asked, and I really don't know. But a dichotomy within our Corps had been created, and an elite group of R&D veterinarians had established itself who looked down on everyone else, and they felt that the food inspection specialists were inferior, and that they were not pathologists, or microbiologists, or physiologists, or what-have-you, and it just tore the Corps apart there for a while, or it was about to tear the Corps apart.

Quarters at Fort Myer, Virginia

In 1981, a year after becoming Chief of the Veterinary Corps, I was offered quarters at Fort Myer. It cut my daily commuting time from Vienna, Virginia, to the Pentagon and later to Fort Detrick, Maryland. I greatly appreciated this opportunity and was told this was the first time quarters at Fort Myer were provided to a Veterinary Corps Officer.

After moving in I learned the previous occupant had died in the quarters which were then placed on Engineer hold for over a year for rehabilitation.

At that time, I was traveling much of the time around the United States of America and the world visiting military installations. Each time I returned to Fort Myer, I heard from my wife another account of the weird happenings in these quarters.

Doors were being opened—or closed—during the night. Lights were being turned on or off. Bugle-like sounds were faintly heard at night. The commode in the bathroom of the master bedroom upstairs would flush during the night. Footsteps and a creaking wooden floor could be heard from the large attic storeroom. One night a German sled about five feet long, which was firmly in place on the flat top of some china barrels in the attic storeroom, “fell” off and slid some 25 feet across the room. I personally heard the sled thump and slide, the commode flush, the bugle-like sounds, the footsteps and the floor creaking and found doors that had opened or closed.

We were never able to account for any of these happenings, but it made life there interesting. We never felt uneasy or threatened, but that flushing noise would surely wake me from a sound sleep.

American Veterinary Medical Association

You asked me what else happened during that period while I was Chief. Well, there was a major thing that happened, and it lasted a while, but in time it ended, and many of the most vociferous objectors later on told me that they agreed in the long run that they thought it was the right thing. The Veterinary Corps is interesting because if you are a civilian veterinarian, you are a small animal practitioner, or you are a large animal practitioner, now many of them specialize. Some are bird specialists. Some are reptile specialists. Some of them are pig or poultry specialists.

Some veterinary animal practitioners, and some of those in R&D looked down on veterinarians in other facets of the profession. There are many veterinarians in the field of education teaching at the veterinary colleges and the medical

colleges. There are veterinarians in federal programs. The Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service has just selected a veterinarian as his deputy.

Veterinarians manage most state meat and poultry and egg inspection programs. Most states have a state veterinarian in control of animal diseases, zoonotic diseases that are transmissible to man.

A civilian veterinarian may function in these facets of the profession, but they're functioning in one facet, and they do that all their life. If you are in USDA meat inspection, you're doing that one thing all your life. If you are a small animal practitioner, that's what you do. But when you come in the Army in a 30 year career, you will find yourself doing small animal medicine for X number of years, you'll find yourself still caring for horses and large animals on military bases. You will find yourself doing food inspections, all the different facets of food inspection.

You may find yourself functioning in the preventive medicine field. You may find yourself teaching in one of the army schools that required a veterinary staff officer. You may find yourself doing R&D for X number of years. You may get in it and stay, or you may get in it and be there five or ten years. You will find yourself, whatever you are doing, doing administration, which many civilian veterinarians do full time.

If you have a career in the military veterinary service, you are going to perform in a great number of the different facets of the profession, whereas if you have a career in civilian veterinary medicine, you're going to perform normally in one facet. The Army is a great career choice.

During this last five year period, we had another problem area that arose with the AVMA. Prior to the 1960s, there were few, only 26, veterinary colleges in the United States. There were not a great many veterinarians, and in many areas of the United States, there were no veterinarians, or maybe one veterinarian.

Let's take Fort Hood, Texas. A large military camp, a lot of military people there, many of them had horses, many of them had pets. There was one civilian veterinarian and he was a large animal practitioner. He didn't care what the military veterinarian did.

The military veterinarian always, wherever we are, we have a small animal clinic where we register all the local animals and immunize them against rabies. We provide minimal care to those animals. We can't be in there operating all day long because we've got too many other functions we have to do. But we do those minimum things essential to a good preventive medicine program on that base.

Today around Fort Hood there are approximately 20 veterinarians. They have packed in there. Most of them are making their livelihood off of these military families. They started objecting to the fact that the base veterinarian was immunizing and registering all the animals for rabies, and providing some other veterinary emergency type care. They wanted to close that clinic. Well, you know, they should have realized that if they closed the clinic and divided what he did up among 20 of them, it was not going to make them rich. It would increase each one of their pocketbooks just marginally, one-twentieth. But our installation commander did not like that. He wanted the military veterinarian in control of their animal population.

This became a very sensitive area between the military veterinary service and the American Veterinary Medical Association. There were a couple of years of letter writing; civilian veterinarians writing in and publishing letters in the AVMA Journal, letters to the effect that my salary, my tax dollars, are being used to pay the salary of this military veterinarian who is competing against me and taking bread out of my mouth, that type of rationale.

The Chief of the Veterinary Corps is a delegate to the AVMA House of Delegates, by the way. Finally we got with AVMA and they appointed a committee, but really the committee ended up being one individual, and that

individual and I exchanged drafts for months, and we finally reached a mutually agreeable draft of a military veterinary clinic policy. The AVMA presented it to the House of Delegates and they voted to approve it. And so far as I know that policy that we established still exists today, 17 or 18 years later.

I don't think a word in it has changed. We word-smithed every word in it, and we fought to keep as much as we could so that our veterinarians could have the potential of some hands-on veterinary practice on animals while they were in the army. And they fought as hard as they could to keep us from doing anything. So the policy was developed finally.

Many other activities took place during those five years and I will briefly discuss some of them.

Memorabilia and Souvenirs

When I first reported to the Office of the Surgeon General in Washington, it was located in the old Main Navy Building, which was a series of two-story buildings on the Mall near where the Vietnam Memorial now is located. On my second tour there we were in the James Forrestal Building across from the Smithsonian Museum. At both locations our office joined those of the Chief of Chaplains, whose office was filled with souvenirs and military memorabilia of all kinds from around the world dating back to 1776. In comparison, our Chiefs' office was cold and uninteresting and presented a poor welcome to visiting officers and others. With great difficulty, I wrote a letter to senior veterinary corps officers all over the world encouraging them to submit items, with donors given recognition with brass plaque, to decorate the Chiefs office on a permanent basis. When I departed in 1985, we had received a number of interesting items which greatly enhanced the appearance of the office and gave a sense of permanence and pride to all.

The Total Army Concept

There were a number of veterinarians and veterinary service enlisted

personnel in United States Army Reserve and United States Army National Guard units across America. In the first months after I became Chief, I met and talked with a number of them. They all felt neglected, ill-informed, and that they were not considered equal in any way to the active duty personnel. I had a Reserve colonel (veterinarian) appointed as the USAR/ANG Consultant to the Office of the Surgeon General. He served his annual two weeks of active duty in my office. His job was to serve as a conduit between the USAR/ANG veterinarian personnel and my office. Col. Richard Keagy did a superb job. We helped them obtain equipment, publications, and in any other way we could. For the first time, whenever the active units held a training conference or meeting of any kind, the USAR/ANG units were invited. We were successful in having veterinary USAR/ANG units included in overseas two week training exercises in Honduras and other overseas locations. We were practicing the Total Army concept before it became a central theme of the Army. This action proved to be a morale booster for both the active and reserve units.

Warrant Officer Food Inspector Career Field

At the conclusion of twenty-five studies of the Veterinary Service, the Congress decided to abolish the Air Force Veterinary Service and transfer their mission and functions to the U.S. Army Veterinary Service. Some members of Congress were never able to understand why Doctors of Veterinary Medicine (animals!) were involved in food inspection activities worldwide. It was directed that we give up 50 Veterinary Corps officer spaces and replace them with warrant officer food inspectors under the control of the Veterinary Corps. This directive was pending when I became Chief. Within one year we initiated the Warrant Officer Food Inspector career field, developed a training course for it, held a selection process and selected fifty candidates, sent them through Fort Sam Houston Academy of Health Sciences, commissioned them, and had them on active duty. Most of them were former senior NCOs in the Veterinary Service.

Distinctive Insignia

Many branches of the Army had their distinctive insignia which fostered recognition and esprit-de-corps. We in the Veterinary Service had nothing. We began to discuss this and in time prepared a request to the Army Institute of Heraldry for a distinctive shoulder crest to be worn on the shirt or coat epaulets. We provided a draft drawing of some of the items identified with the Veterinary Service, and in time the Institute returned a drawing which we approved. Since that time, officers, warrant officers, and enlisted personnel of the Veterinary Service are authorized to wear this distinctive crest. It was a small thing, but another morale booster.

Meals Ready to Eat

Another item I forgot to mention was that the U.S. Army Natick Research and Development Command, Natick, Massachusetts, is responsible for developing clothing, doing the R&D to develop items of clothing including new boots, uniforms for soldiers, and they also are responsible for developing food, the rations. They develop the rations for the astronauts. They've developed rations that are put on life boats, on every ship at sea. They develop rations that are put in aircraft in the event of a crash. When the plane crashes, they've got some rations.

Another thing we do is inspect all of these rations I just mentioned on a routine basis, make sure they are still good, and if not, that they are rotated. Natick develops these rations and we have veterinarians working on the staff there at Natick who have graduate degrees in food technology, to help them develop rations. So they developed what is called the Meal Ready to Eat [MREs]. This meal was developed and the components are produced in different factories all over the United States, and then those separate components are shipped to ration assembly plants. We have veterinary service personnel stationed in those ration assembly plants to inspect them and make sure that they contain what they're supposed to, and that they're properly packed, and packaged to endure the required years of storage. In our inspections around the world, we began to

find problems with these MREs. We were finding the OD colored plastic bag over each of the 12 separate meals swollen. No one could determine what the problem was.

I retired in February of 1985, and in the summer of 1986 I was called back to active duty to head a study group which went all over the United States to inspect these MRE's, both at the component producing plants and at the ration assembly plants, to determine what was causing this problem because we felt like we had a basically good ration. But all of a sudden it was beginning to swell.

This MRE, Meals Ready to Eat, study team consisted of approximately 20 individuals representing every possible facet of the food industry—food packaging, food technology, food micro-biology, etc. We had them all, and it was an outstanding group of individuals. Most of them were civilians. Colonel Jack Barck, Veterinary Corps, participated in this study as the invaluable operations officer who coordinated our travels, and arranged airplane tickets, rental cars, hotels, typing of reports, mailings, and communications. The study would have been impossible without him.

This study lasted over six weeks. We covered most of the United States, and finally did identify the problems with the Meals Ready to Eat, and prepared and issued a written report which outlined in great detail the causes of the problem and what corrective measures were needed.

Initially there was some concern about the MRE's plastic pouches, packing, and packaging materials. The study concluded there were no problems in these areas.

The MRE's were developed by the U.S. Army Laboratories, Natick, Massachusetts, under more-or-less laboratory conditions and careful, step-by-step inspections.

The MRE's purchased by the DPSC for long term storage were produced by a

number of low-bidder companies with varying experience. Some minority contracts were awarded companies with no experience in food production, handling, or sanitation and were indirect causes of the problem.

Direct causes of the problem were:

1. Inadequate management, supervisory, and quality assurance personnel in some plants producing the twelve main-entree meal pouches.
2. Failure to properly seal the twelve main entree pouches due to overfilling, food being caught in the seal, improperly adjusted sealing machine, lack of or inadequate inspection of the seals.
3. Once sealed in the pouches, the entree items are then cooked in pressure-sealed retorts. Some of the “swellers” had not been cooked at the proper time or temperature.
4. Some of the main entree pouches were scratched, cut, or perforated by other pouches, conveyor belts, or by rough handling.
5. Some of the manufacturers of the main entree items did not have properly trained, experienced, equipped, or empowered in-plant quality assurance inspectors. It is noted that the Jolly Green Giant plant in Minnesota had the best QA inspection program. Each pouch inspector had a 12 inch magnifying glass enclosed in a neon tube ring on a flexible arm to inspect every single pouch for improper seals, cuts, scratches, abrasions, or perforations. It is further noted that the pouch seal corners and edge were extremely sharp and could make “paper cuts” if handled roughly or allowed to drop off a conveyor onto other pouches.
6. Some management personnel appeared to be in the business only for profit and did not seem to care about delivering a quality product; they were in the minority.

These were the main causes of the “sweller” problem which I remember. There may have been some others.

Once the causes were identified, the necessary corrective actions became self-evident.

The final report produced by the study team is on file in the offices of the Quartermaster General and the Chief of the Army Veterinary Corps and elsewhere.

The findings of the study were provided to Veterinary Service food inspection personnel and are used in performing inspections of these MRE's during production, at assembly plants, while in storage, and at time of issue.

The MRE “sweller” problem was solved in less than eight weeks, start to finish. Since that time, the MRE have performed outstandingly in Desert Storm, Somalia, Haiti, Grenada, Panama, Kosovo-Herzegovinia, and Afghanistan, and anywhere else U.S. forces are deployed.

The U.S. Army has obtained, compared, tested, evaluated, and tasted the field rations of every other modern army in the world and concluded the MRE is the best by far. I concur.

These corrective measures were implemented fully by the Army and by the various contractors, and when we had *Operation Desert Storm*, all of the participants in that operation subsisted on the Meals Ready to Eat, and for the first time in recorded military history, a prolonged military operation took place without a single known case of disease due to food-related causes.

There was one air base in Saudi Arabia at which the base commander was so pleased with the performance of his people that he told them that on a certain day they were going to have a unit party, and he ordered his procurement officer to go out on the local economy and procure various food items for this party. They had a party, and they all partook of the food provided, and a high

percentage of the unit was unable to function because of intestinal disorders for quite a time, and this individual was in a hard position to explain what had happened to his men. But it was really a pleasure to read about the results of that war insofar as the nonexistent casualties due to food poisoning.

We in the Veterinary Corps felt that we had all played a very major role in this by ensuring through our inspection throughout the procurement, transportation, storage, and the issuing of these rations that they were safe for consumption, and I think the fact that we had no food-borne disease casualties, it's hard to put a dollar value on that figure. But when you think of the hundreds or thousands of people who normally are made ill in military operations, and this was prevented; there is a tremendous savings there of manpower and dollars.

Q: I think it's an amazing story, just the idea of having a war and never having any food problems.

A: Yes.

Q: You ducked out of the office and got to be a civilian, and then came back on active duty. How long did you stay on active duty?

A: Something over six weeks. We were traveling for about six weeks, and then we spent some time writing our reports, and then we went into Washington and presented the report to the Quartermaster Corps general officer, Maj. Gen. Ed Honor, who had initiated the study. By the way, he and I had gone to the Army War College together, so when he ran into this problem, my name came to his mind. Some of the benefits of the War College and Command and General Staff College are the friends one makes while there.

Q: Did you have any other problems while you were Chief of the Veterinary Corps? I know you probably had lots of them, but any outstanding that you would like to mention? When you left as Chief, who took your place? Were you able to brief him, in other words? Did he get in so you could brief him?

A: Yes. Brig. Gen. (Ret) Robert R. Jorgensen (Chief Veterinary Corps, 1985-1988) followed me. We had worked together for years. When I left Europe to come back to become Chief, he replaced me most ably in the position I had been occupying in Europe. So we thought alike, and that's one thing I touched on early on. When I left office, I closed the door behind me and forgot about it because I knew that the Corps, to which I had devoted 31 years, was well able to continue, and it did, and it has, and it is still functioning superbly today.

Jorgensen was followed by Brigadier General Robert E. Via, Jr. (Chief Veterinary Corps, 1988-1990).

Q: So then if you look back over that 31 years, is there anything that you might have done differently as you think about it?

A: I'm sure there's a great many things I could have and should have done differently, but there were a few things, such as the Combat Casualty Care Course, that I wished to initiate and was unable to do so.

When I came into the office of the Chief, I had a list of things I wanted to accomplish while I was there, and I ran through that list and that took about four years, and then when I finished that, that's when I had the strategic planning conference. I had run out of ideas, so I wanted to get ideas from other veterinary officers, and we did get a lot of ideas, and started on a new list of things, a to-do list. I'm sure that each successive chief did the same thing.

Many of these things that I've touched on were problems in 1916, and some of them are still problems today. Many of the Chiefs faced the same problems that I faced. We each had about a four or five year period to serve as the engineer of the train and keep it on the tracks, and I'm sure we all did our best to do that, and do anything we could to improve the train as it ran along.

The veterinary service performs a great many essential functions in the armed forces today in a highly effective and cost efficient way. This is becoming

more and more recognized. We must continue, forever, to explain these functions to both the military and civilian communities.

As we discussed earlier, there is still a black hole of a lack of knowledge about this, and that's why I started the program of having each veterinarian brief each installation commander periodically, or whenever the installation commander changed, brief them on what we are doing for them, and this has tremendous results within the military. We need to do the same thing in the civilian community, but every little fringe, every little facet of activity in the United States has their own parochial interests, and everyone wants to feel more important, and more recognized, and all you can do is just keep plugging away and do the best you can at the time.

Retirement, 1985

I retired in 1985, and came back to San Antonio, Texas, where I stayed for a couple of years. I then moved to my home-town where I graduated from high school, Uvalde, Texas, and since then I've been ranching and farming continuously. I had an Exxon filling station and a convenience store for two years. I bought it as a non-brand name station, and then got Exxon to take it under their wing as an Exxon station and improved the business considerably, and I ended up selling it to my son-in-law, so he's now running it very successfully.

I have two sons who now live in College Station, Texas, and they're 40 years old. One of them graduated from A & M and another one came very close to graduating, but they both enjoyed about all the education they could endure, I guess, and went in business in College Station and are both doing very well. One of them is married and has two grandchildren. The three of us, my two sons and I, have gone into the real estate business there in College Station. We have rental apartments. One of my sons, Ramsay A. Ramsey, works full time at managing these apartments, maintaining them, renting them, and doing whatever needs to be done, and that has kept him busy. I went up there about every three months for two or three years and I would stay a week and work



Brig. Gen. Frank Allen Ramsey: In retirement at Uvalde, Texas

with him, and then I began to feel like I really wasn't needed, so I've quit going so frequently. I go about once or twice a year now, mainly just to visit.

My other son, Randal R. Ramsey, has a fence building company and is doing very well with a 20-year reputation for fine work. He builds cedar fences, decks, bridges, and gazebos.

I'm still farming and I'm still ranching. I have a brother who lives 65 miles north of me, and ranches. I had four sisters. Two of them have passed away, and two of them are still living in Uvalde. One is married and one lives by

herself on our family home place. I check on both of them every day and help them whenever they need it.

When I retired from the Army in 1985, I came back to San Antonio, Texas with my wife, and we lived there for about 2.5 years. In the Veterinary Corps, especially during my last 15 years, I did a lot of traveling. I think when I retired and was home 24 hours a day, seven days a week, it became an untenable situation for both of us. So I was divorced in 1988. Several years later I remarried, and the lady I remarried, Mary Lou Cain, has a son and daughter, both approximately 40 years old, and they each have two children. The daughter-in-law lives here in Uvalde and we have her two grandchildren here with us, an 18 year old girl and an 11 year old boy, and we see a lot of them. My stepson lives in Seguin, Texas, and he has a boy and a girl, and we see them often.

So life goes on, and enjoyment of retirement is just not appreciated by anyone until they do it. But when you've been getting up at 5:00 in the morning for 30 years and then all of a sudden you can sleep as late as you want, it's a pretty good feeling. I still get up fairly early every morning, and still am able to put in a good day's work. I'm still in reasonably good health, so I think I'll continue to enjoy life for a few more years.

I'm sure there are many areas that after being retired 15 years I can't think of. I don't know whether any of them are of historical significance or not, but if I think of any, I'll try to write myself a memory jogger and perhaps we'll have another opportunity later on.

Q: Thank you very much, General Ramsey. I appreciate it.

A: Thank you. This is a wonderful project you are engaged in. I wish that when I became Chief I could have had access to accounts like this from each of my predecessors. I believe they would have been of great benefit. I certainly do appreciate your hard work on this project.



Glossary

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| AMEDD | Army Medical Department |
| A&M | (Texas) Agricultural and Mechanical |
| A&P | Atlantic & Pacific |
| AVMA | American Veterinarian Medical Association |
| BASEC | Base Section |
| CCCC | Combat Casualty Care Course |
| CDC | Combat Development Command |
| COMZ | Communications Zone |
| CONUS | Continental United States |
| DOD | Department of Defense |
| DVM | Doctor of Veterinary Medicine |
| EM | Enlisted Men |
| GAO | Government Accounting Office |
| IG | Inspector General |
| JFK | John F. Kennedy |
| MC | Medical Corps |
| MD | Medical Doctor |
| MEDCAP | Medical Civic Action Program |
| MEDCOM | Medical Command |
| MFSS | Military Field Service School |
| MR&DC | Medical Research and Development Command |
| MRE | Meals Ready to Eat |
| MSC | Medical Service Corps |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NCO | Non-commissioned Officer |
| NCOIC | Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge |
| NODEX | New Offshore Discharge Exercises |
| OD | Olive Drab |
| OTSG | Office of The Surgeon General |
| Ph.D. | Doctor of Philosophy |
| PM | Preventive Medicine |
| PMO | Preventive Medicine Officer |

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| POL | Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants |
| QA | Quality Assurance |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| SS | <i>Schutzstaffel</i> |
| SHAPE | Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe |
| TA&M | Texas Agricultural and Mechanical |
| TDY | Temporary Duty |
| TO&E | Table of Organization and Equipment |
| USAR/ANG | United States Army Reserve/Army National Guard |
| USMA | United States Military Academy |
| USDA | United States Department of Agriculture |
| USAREUR | United States Army, Europe |
| VC | Veterinary Corps |
| ZI | Zone of Interior |