RESUME OF SERVICE CAREER

of

ARTHUR JOSEPH JUNOT, Brigadier General

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 9 September 1929, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

YEARS OF ACTIVE SERVICE: Over 25 years

DATE OF RETIREMENT: 1 September 1978

MILITARY SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

The Armor School, Basic Course
The Aviation School, Fixed Wing and Rotary Training Course
The Transportation School, Advanced Course
The Command and General Staff College
The Army War College

EDUCATIONAL DEGREES:

University of Nebraska (Omaha) - BS Degree - General Education
Shippensburg State University - MBA Degree - Business Administration

CHRONOLOGICAL RECORD OF DUTY ASSIGNMENTS (Last 10 Years)

FROM	TO	ASSIGNMENTS
Jan 69	Jun 69	XO, 16th Avn Grp, USARV
Jun 69	Dec 69	CO, 765th Trans Bn (AM&S), USARV
Jan 70	Mar 70	Dir of Mtrl Mgt, 34th Gen Spt Grp, USARV
Mar 70	Jul 71	OPNS Officer, Trans Branch, USARPAC
Aug 71	Jun 72	Student, Army War College
Jul 72	Jul 73	Student, Shippensburg State University

Aug 73	Jan 74	Dir of Pers & Admin, MASSTER, Ft Hood
Jan 74	Jul 75	CO, 1st Cav DISCOM
Aug 75	Jun 76	A/CMDT, USATSCH
Jul 76	Jun 77	CG, TROSCOM
Jun 77	Sep 78	Dep CG, TSARCOM

PROMOTIONS	**DATES OF APPOINTMENT**
2LT	8 Aug 50
lLT	15 May 51
CPT	19 Aug 58
MAJ	14 May 63
LTC	1 Feb 67
COL	12 Oct 72
BG	17 Mar 76

MEDALS AND AWARDS:

Distinguished Service Medal
Silver Star w/Oak Leaf Cluster
Legion of Merit w/Oak Leaf Cluster
Distinguished Flying Cross
Bronze Star Medal w/Oak Leaf Cluster
Air Medal w/10 Awards
Joint Services Commendation Medal w/Oak Leaf Cluster
Army Commendation Medal
Combat Infantryman Badge
Master Army Aviator Badge
Army Staff Identification Badge

SOURCE OF COMMISSION: OCS

INTERVIEW ABSTRACT

Interview with Brigadier General (Ret) **Arthur Joseph Junot**

BG Junot was interviewed by CPT Timothy Sabrowsky on 12 October 1985 in Killeen, Texas. BG Junot received his commission through Officer Candidate School. The topic of the interview was Army aviation logistical support in Vietnam from 1969 to 1970.

BG Junot was involved in direct support maintenance to division and non-divisional aviation elements in the Southeastern portion of South Vietnam, and backup support to the whole area as a battalion commander of the 765th Transportation Battalion. BG Junot was also the Director of Material for the 34th General Support Group during early 1970 which was the operations staff element that was responsible for the execution of the maintenance and supply mission of all organic battalions in South Vietnam. BG Junot provides insight into aviation maintenance support in Vietnam, some common problem areas, how planning was accomplished, workload, civilian contract personnel, requisitioning, security, aircraft recovery, Army technical training, and innovative procedures implemented that cut turnaround time for aircraft being repaired.

BG Junot concludes the interview with his thoughts on the role of Reserve and National Guard aviation logistic assets, the drawdown in active duty aviation logistics, and the future role of the maintainers and operators (the flyers). He is concerned about who will watch over the career development of the maintainers in the new aviation branch.

This is the Army Transportation Oral History interview conducted with BG Arthur Joseph Junot on 12 October 1985 by CPT Timothy Sabrowsky. The interview was conducted at BG Junot's home in Killeen, Texas, and the topic was Army aviation logistical support in Vietnam from 1969 to 1970.

The 34th General Support Group was activated on 17 January 1966 to facilitate aviation logistical support for the increase in aviation activities of the U.S. Army in Vietnam. The number of aircraft in Vietnam, both fixed- and rotary-winged, increased from 510 in January 1965 to a high of 4,228 in September 1969. The deployed aircraft were assigned to a total of 142 company-size units plus a number of miscellaneous smaller detachments. Of the 142 companies, 63 were organic to divisions, brigades or squadrons and had their own organic direct support (DS) supply and maintenance capability. The remaining company-size units were supported by cellular direct support detachments. The 34th General Support Group provided backup support to these company-size units as well as direct and general support (GS) for all aviation activities in the U.S. Army Vietnam. The 765th Transportation Battalion, which BG Junot commanded, was organic to the 34th General Support Group.

Interview

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, how long did you serve as commander of the 765th Transportation Battalion?

BG Junot: From July 1969 through the beginning of January 1970.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, what was the mission of the 765th Transportation Battalion?

BG Junot: The 765th Transportation Battalion provided backup direct support maintenance to the divisional aviation elements employed in the southeastern portion of South Vietnam, principally what was referred to as the Delta area; direct support maintenance to the non-divisional aviation units operating in that area; and backup direct and general support maintenance for the entire area. It also provided direct supply support to all aviation units operating in that southern portion of South Vietnam.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, where was the headquarters for the 765th Transportation Battalion located?

BG Junot: The battalion headquarters was located on Vung Tau Army Airfield. It is interesting to note that, as with many of the other units in Vietnam at that time, billeting was in a commercial hotel in downtown Vung Tau. That billeting was operated on a contract basis for the officers and the enlisted soldiers remained out on the airfield.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, what was the mission of the two general support companies in the 765th Transportation Battalion?

BG Junot: Those two companies had characteristic aviation general support missions for the area that the battalion supported (i.e. to provide backup direct support). These companies generally performed extensive airframe repairs that were beyond the capability or time limitations of the direct support companies and, to a larger extent, repaired components in support of the aviation supply system in Vietnam. The two general support companies were located at the battalion headquarters in Vung Tau (the 330th) and Long Thanh North (the 303rd), which was an airfield serving both Long Thanh and Bearcat closer to the Saigon area.

CPT Sabrowsky: What was the mission of the three direct support companies organic to the 765th?

BG Junot: Again, the three direct support companies performed the traditional DS mission. For those divisions operating in our area of responsibility, they provided direct supply support and backup direct support maintenance. For the non-divisional aviation units located in our area, they provided direct supply support and basic direct support aircraft maintenance. Generally, they were overloaded with backup DS from the divisions and probably turned over a larger proportion of extensive direct support to their general support companies than would have been expected in other situations. The three transportation aircraft direct support companies organic to the battalion were the

611th at Vinh Long, the 3U8th at Vung Tau and the 58th co-located with the 303rd General Support Company at Long Thanh.

In addition to those three transportation aircraft direct support companies, an aviation electronics (AVEL) direct support company (a single corps DS outfit) provided those units operating in the southern portion of Republic of Vietnam (RVN) with direct signal support for aviation electronics. Two of these AVEL units were operating within the 34th group--one called AVEL South was with the 765th Battalion and another called AVEL North worked with the 58th Battalion (I guess). Between them, these two signal direct support companies provided all of the aviation electronics US in country.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, the Aviation Materiel Management Center (AMMC) was a component of the 34th General Support Group. What was the 765th Transportation Battalion's relationship with the AMMC?

BG Junot: AMMC managed aviation electronics and aviation armament supplies throughout the Republic of South Vietnam. As a sister battalion, the 765th depended on the AMMC to provide supply requirements for stockage or for a reissue to the supported aviation units in our area of responsibility.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, you were also Director of Materiel for the 34th General Support Group. How long did you serve in that capacity?

BG Junot: That was a relatively short tour. It lasted from January through the middle of March in 1970--approximately 3 months.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, what was a mission of the Materiel Directorate?

BG Junot: The Materiel Directorate was the operations staff element for the 34th General Support Group. It's mission was to oversee the execution of the maintenance and supply missions of all of the organic battalions throughout the country. We provided staff supervision for the maintenance mission and (to a lesser extent) the supply mission, offered technical assistance, and made staff visits to those supported units. We also functioned in a planning capacity for future maintenance operations we anticipated would be required to support combat operations throughout the country.

CPT Sabrowsky: What were some of the factors involved in planning for future operations?

BG Junot: Future operations were kind of "iffy". To the greatest extent possible, we coordinated directly with the 1st Aviation Brigade that represented the balance of the aviation units we supported. We would get a list of impending operations from the aviation brigade and review it to determine whether special support requirements might be necessary. The same kind of coordination was established through the two field forces in order to make sure adequate backup support could be provided to the aviation elements of the U.S. divisions whenever their operations were out of the ordinary.

Large-scale, special operations like LAMSON 2 required a great deal of rapid coordination. Though these occurred after my tour there, I talked with people who were involved and became aware in later years just how extensive those planning operations had become.

CPT Sabrowsky: Can you give us an idea how extensive they were, sir?

BG Junot: They were very detailed and accounted for every eventuality down to arranging for the relocation of units so they could provide better support to aviation units going into a crossborder operation. These plans spelled out the number of aircraft to be provided and were very definitive in terms of stockpiling repair parts. In this way, the planners could ensure that no shortfall would occur in aviation support to the combat units as a result of a shortage in repair parts during a limited term of a large-scale operation. Incidentally, the time for planning was always curtailed so those things were always done at a very rapid pace.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, what were some of the major problems faced by the 765th Transportation Battalion in Vietnam?

BG Junot: The largest problem by far was a highly demanding workload. Aviation units flew their aircraft far more than had ever been supposed possible before we really began to support the Vietnam operation with aircraft. It generated unheard of maintenance manhour and supply requirements. The number of units available to provide the direct and the backup direct support were fewer than would have been necessary if you had simply multiplied flying hours by maintenance manhours per flying hour. So, we were always in the position of taking more time than we should or would like to have taken to repair an aircraft and return it to a user or to repair a component and return it to the supply system.

These setbacks could be attributed to the number of personnel available and, to a lesser extent, the skill levels of the individuals assigned within the units of the battalion. A large number of people we received were coming directly from school and, while technically MOS qualified, their skill levels did not allow them to work as efficiently or as rapidly as people who had accumulated experience in previous assignments in country or in other transportation aircraft maintenance activities in the Continental United States (CONUS) or in Europe.

That was a continuing problem. We were always behind the power curve on getting the aircraft back as fast as the aviation unit would have liked them or as fast as we would have liked to been able to return them.

Another problem that was similar and concurrent, but perhaps less obvious, was the fact that the organizational maintenance performed on aircraft in a relatively large number of the units operating in Vietnam was not up to snuff. As I said, the flying mission required the aircraft to be airborne a much longer period of time than was designed and intended and they, therefore, neglected organizational maintenance.

Those division units that had a DS capability organic to a division neglected the direct support they were supposed to be performing. When an aircraft did come back to a backup direct support unit like the DS companies of the 765th, the end result was that it needed much more extensive work than would normally have been expected for that kind of an evacuation. We had some aircraft that were literally flying wrecks. They practically had to be rebuilt from skid to mastnut, but I hasten to add that there were other units that did manage to do a pretty good job of their organizational and direct support maintenance. When we got aircraft from them, it was a relatively straightforward job of repairing whatever was required and returning the aircraft as a serviceable.

That kind of difficulty continued throughout my tour in Vietnam and was especially thorny because it almost got into a personal contest between the supporters and the operators. You'd go to a unit and tell them, "Hey, you're really not doing your maintenance here and we're having to keep your aircraft longer than we should and longer than you want them down." Then they'd say, "Well, we're doing the best we can," or "The war's on and we can't do any better." It was a continuing problem and it was sort of cyclical with various units we supported.

We also had some difficulties keeping the in-theater supply system full from our theater repair program. The general support companies in the 765th battalion supported the supply system by repairing aviation components and returning them to stock as serviceables. Even though we were designed to be semi-mobile, we did not have to move the entire time I commanded the battalion. None of the units were required to displace for operational reasons. We still were set up in a fairly primitive fashion with the allied shops. At that time, the engine shops were not as efficient as they would have been in a stateside environment, but they were certainly more efficient than could have been expected if they had been operating in an environment where they had to relocate every two or three weeks.

Keeping the supply system filled with critical components was a continuing problem. Depending on operational techniques and what was happening with the overall supply pipeline from the United States, one or a series of components would periodically become critical (from the supply standpoint) in the theater and we would have to react to that changing requirement. I like to think we did fairly well, but I know there were times when we were very short of critical components.

One more problem that wasn't related directly to aviation maintenance and supply support was that of airfield security. The battalion was responsible for the security of Vung Tau Army Airfield, but there was no way we could provide adequate security using the personnel assets assigned to us. They were too critical. As I said., we were working night and day just to keep up with the aviation support mission. So, we developed a requirement to set up an unofficial unit to perform the airfield security mission and staffed it through United States Army Vietnam (USARV). This unit consisted of a couple of infantry lieutenants and a number of combat soldiers from various units who were available anywhere from a week to a month because they were waiting for release from active duty or to be shipped back to the States. These personnel were used to man the

guard towers around the airfield to perform the security mission. I found that to be an interesting sidelight and I think we did a pretty good job with that.

CPT Sabrowsky: Was the airfield hit often by enemy fire?

BG Junot: No. The potential was there I guess, but I think we were only rocketed once in my tour there. If my memory serves me correctly, I think that was probably on Christmas Eve. There were occasional threats and rumors that the Vietcong (VC) would mount a guerilla attack. Shortly before I left the battalion, a ground attack did occur. The airfield was infiltrated and some damage was done to aircraft there, but we weren't constantly harassed by enemy fire.

CPT Sabrowsky: Were you concerned about subversive activities by the Vietnamese?

BG Junot: I think we were initially concerned. However, when the rumors of that type of activity didn't materialize time after time, we all became a bit lax and didn't really appreciate the potential for it to occur. Generally, we were so busy with the mission that we just relied on that security detachment to keep it from happening.

CPT Sabrowsky: Earlier in the discussion, you mentioned that the soldiers coining over from the States were not at the MOS level for which the schools qualified them. In other words, they came over with only a basic knowledge of aircraft maintenance. What were some of the programs you used to bring them up to speed?

BG Junot: We generally used an on-the-job training (OJT) program and I hasten to add that the people who came over not fully qualified (that's *my* own description of it) were those who were just coming out of the service schools. For the most part, the enlisted soldiers who had been MOS qualified for some time and had served in other aviation support units were well qualified and could easily meld into the operation requirements of both the DS and the GS units. Those recent graduates from the service school (the Transportation School) had not had the degree of experience necessary to be top-notch repairmen in their MOSs. They had the basic qualification.

The solution to that problem was to provide them with a supervised work environment where they could build up their confidence and expertise in a controlled situation while still performing (to the extent that they were able) in a productive manner and contributing to the output of the unit.

CPT Sabrowsky: Did you use civilian employees extensively?

BG Junot: Yes, we used contract civilian repair technicians extensively throughout Vietnam and all the battalions had them. Dynalectron, Lier Siegler and Lockheed all provided qualified aircraft repairmen and supply technicians who really were the backbone of the aircraft maintenance and supply effort in the Republic of Vietnam. Those people tended to become very permanent. Some would stay for three or four years at a time. They knew where all of the skeletons were buried and the units that

were to be supported. They knew the kind of repair that would be required and generally provided a good basic level of continuity.

In another area, those people were the ones we generally relied upon to establish special repair programs. For example, we (the 765th) acquired the jigs necessary to rebuild UH-1 tail booms from the States--the complete tail boom assembly. At one time, the destruction of tail booms in Vietnam was horrendous. The shipping time alone to the manufacturer or the aeronautical depot in Corpus Christi and back to RVN precluded a realistic repair program for that component. But getting the jigs established in a relatively fixed facility at Vung Tau and assigning these highly-skilled civilian technicians to do that work allowed us to repair the tail boom as a component in theater, rapidly turn it around and keep the stock system (the supply system) fairly viable with those types.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, can you tell us exactly what a jig is?

BG Junot: A jig is a tool. It's a fixture which accurately establishes the critical dimensions of an item which is to be constructed and is a framework upon which you calibrate a piece of equipment. In the case of tail booms, it's a means by which you locate the manufacturer's critical points on that component and then repair it by bending, twisting sheet metal work, whatever, to bring it into the approved configuration for use on the aircraft.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, can you describe how the supply channels worked from the user level to the requisitioner?

BG Junot: Within the system that was operating there and throughout the rest of the Army at that time, direct support units were responsible for providing supply support. I have to differentiate between the division units that had organic direct support units and non-divisional aviation units which did not. The system, however, remained essentially the same. Let's suppose the user required an aviation electronics part and an aviation armament part. The first place that the unit looked was in its own prescribed load list. This list enumerated the stockage of parts authorized at its own level. If the part was there, it was a simple matter of issuing it to the aircraft and putting the part on the aircraft in question. If it was not there, however, that requisition from the ultimate user was passed back to the supporting direct support unit.

In the case of a divisional aviation unit, that agency was the organic DS unit belonging to the division. In the case of a non-divisional aviation unit, the requisition went directly to one of the direct support units (DSUS) in the 34th Support Group. That DSU maintained an Authorized Stockage List (ASL) of parts ranging anywhere from 600 or 700 to 7,000 or 8,000 depending on whether it was a divisional or non-divisional unit. If the part was in stockage in that DSU, then again it was simply pulled from stockage and marked for the requisitioning user. If it was not in stockage, then the requisition was passed back to one of the two depot companies that the AMMC had assigned to them. (One was in Saigon and the other was up in the Qui Nhon area.) They maintained a much larger stock that was the theater stockage for aviation and other repair parts.

If the part was not in stockage in either of those two activities, then the requisition was passed back to the United States to the supporting commodity command. We also had stockage or identification of where the part could be procured or manufactured in response to the user requisition. Cross-searching within country was one of the key activities of the 34th Group and its subordinate units (literally controlled by the AMMC). Before going back to the Continental United States, we first cross-searched for parts that apparently were not available in the established line of supply support for a given user. For example, if one of the non-divisional aviation units I supported in the 765th required a part which was not available at any of my three DSUs, the AMMC could then cross-search the DSUs in the other three battalions in country to see if that part was in stock in one of theirs. If it was, they could direct ship it to the user. That was a very effective program that a lot of people spent a great deal of time developing and maintaining, and it really paid off in terms of reduced down time for non-flyable aircraft.

While not directly a part of your question, the Theater Aircraft Repair Program which was administered, again, by the 34th General Support Group was also related to supply and support. This program covered the maintenance side in support of the AMMC (the supply side) as the unserviceable components removed from aircraft in the theater were selectively repaired by the general support units and by the floating aircraft maintenance facility right there in Vietnam. In this way, they could be quickly returned to the supply system instead of being shipped back to the contractor, manufacturer or a depot in CONUS. The amount of work that could be done to support that program was limited and, therefore, it was continually monitored and directed to repair those items that, at any given point in time, were critical assets for the theater. These items ranged from engines on down to small gearboxes and tail rotors, hubs, grips, those kinds of things.

CPT Sabrowsky: Were there any aviation parts that were very difficult to obtain?

BG Junot: At one time or another, a number of different aviation parts were difficult to obtain for various reasons. One time, engines were in very short supply. Engines are always intensively managed items but, even with the intensive management, would sometimes be scarce. Then, as I mentioned earlier, all of the available assets in the theater would be directed to repairing the unserviceable engines on hand and returning them to the supply system. Incidentally, when we repaired engines awaiting retrograde in the Theater Aircraft Repair Program, we made a strong effort to select the unserviceable engines which would require the least amount of repair effort (in terms of manhours) so that we could return them to the system quickly. We then saved the ones that were most badly damaged or required the most effort to return to service and forwarded them back to the Continental United ' States. At other times, rotor blades, gearboxes or main rotor grips were particularly bad problems.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, were the supply and logistics channels used effectively in Vietnam?

BG Junot: The aviation supply channels were pretty effective. There were ups and downs but, for the most part, the interest level at all echelons enhanced the system's

ability to provide repair parts and maintain aircraft at a flyable level much better than other kinds of equipment in country. Now within that statement, the supply system that operated within and among the units (subordinate units of the 34th Support Group) was much more effective than the supply system that was the extension of that organization down to the aviation operating units. The AMMC maintained cognizance of ASL stockage and all of the DSUs in the 34th Support Group. They published a daily critical items list. They were able to locate critically needed repair parts and direct them to be cross-shipped from one unit to another user who was in dire need of that particular part. However, when a repair part was issued by a direct support unit to a using aviation unit, it was then dropped from accountability and considered to have been consumed.

If that using aviation unit was stockpiling or hoarding parts, ordering the wrong parts or operating ineffectively at retrograding unheeded or unserviceable parts, then they would in fact be denying other using units the use of those items. Since there was no real direct visibility within the 34th Support Group structure regarding what was stocked at the using unit level, there was no way to determine with any degree of accuracy where those things were and to make any real effort to get them transferred laterally. I guess some effort was made within the aviation battalion structures to cross-transfer critically needed items. For example, one aviation company in a given battalion would provide needed items to a sister company if it became aware of the need. The awareness of the need was the thing that was sort of hit or miss when you got down to the using organization level.

CPT Sabrowsky: What constituted a critical item, sir?

BG Junot: A critical item was an item that was in short supply for whatever reason. The purchase of repair parts was based on the predicted life. Periodically, the life of a repair part was less than what was predicted and for these components there were not enough in the supply system to meet the demand at a lower usage level. At other times, something would happen at the manufacturer's plant or at the supporting commodity command where the numbers of parts that were supposed to have been purchased were not made available at a given time so, again, availability at the user level was not what it should have been. That's what determined a critical item.

To a lesser extent, the cost alone of the larger and more expensive components could classify them as critical. For example, aircraft engines were almost always considered to be critical items and were intensively managed regardless of the level within the supply system. The philosophy there was that these were very expensive items and should only be bought in the quantities needed to keep the pipeline filled and serviceable components on the aircraft with very little excess in the system. We did not want to bring the cost up too much.

CPT Sawbrowsky: Sir, when you talk about critical items and intensively managed critical items, what is meant by intensively managed?

BG Junot: Intensive management is simply maintaining a heightened level of visibility for the assets that are available to you. In the case of aviation repair parts, intensive management extended outside of the theater back to the supporting commodity command because of high cost items, low density items, high usage rates and low usage life.

During the Vietnam operations, a system of closed-loop conferences was developed to address those particular kinds of items--engines, transmissions, major components, gearboxes and rotor blades. Representatives at the closed-loop conferences included the users in the theater of operations in Vietnam, the supporters in Vietnam, representatives of the supporting commodity command and the intermediate aviation logistical staff elements at USARV, Army Pacific (ARPAC), the Department of the Army and the AMC headquarters. All those people would get together periodically and compare notes on availability (the numbers that were available), locations of parts, number of serviceables and unserviceables and what action should be taken by any or all of the attendees to enhance the availability of serviceable elements of that particular item.

CPT Sabrowsky: Was the supplied parts priority system used effectively? Was it abused?

BG Junot: It was abused almost continually, and I have to add as an aside that it probably still is to the extent that people think they can get away with it. From the standpoint of the supporters, the basic philosophy for aviation support in Vietnam was that the user shouldn't be questioned. If he says he needs it, he really needs it. if it is not available or is a controlled item because of its critical status, then the priority list would be established. The impetus of support is still to forward the item to the user.

The users rapidly recognized that they could take advantage of this system (if they were so inclined) and could easily order items that they were not authorized to stock, a greater number of items than they were authorized, more items than they needed and, in a lot of cases, items they could not fit on the aircraft they were operating. This type of maneuvering greatly compounded the problems of the supply system. Once those excess or unneeded items got down to the user level, they were pushed aside for the most part and forgotten. So, it was a real chore to get them retrograded back into the supply system as serviceables to be used where and when needed. In a number of instances, the transportation of a serviceable component back and forth through an unneeded series of gyrations would break it. Instead of having a serviceable engine or gear box, you then had an unserviceable one which had to be repaired before it could be issued to someone else.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, could you describe the operations of the Redball Express?

BG Junot: Redball was a means of prioritizing transportation of critical items. I believe that it also applied at least peripherally to the prioritizing of the requirement for that item. Generally, the Redball was concerned with items that had come from the Continental

United States and were not available in theater. With the long transit time, it was also a means of designating those items that then became eligible for direct handling (airshipment) for nonstockage at intermediate levels so that the parts were earmarked directly for the DSU supporting the unit that needed them. As I said, the requisition back to the States was prioritized and the shipment of the component to the user was prioritized.

CPT Sabrowsky: Did the general support and direct support units have the facilities to store repair parts adequately?

BG Junot: It varied. As I mentioned earlier, the DS and GSUs within the 34th Support Group for the most part operated at fixed locations. The extent of their storage capability in some measure depended on how much local construction was authorized and the time available to do it. That storage ran the gamut from very rough shelves in a Quonset hut to very modern and effective storage systems in buildings. The location was the key though. We really weren't as concerned about the kind of storage that was used as we were about maintaining an adequate location where we weren't losing parts. For many other types of supplies, reports came pouring out about tens of thousands of a particular item that had been in short supply just six months ago being found in the back corner of some warehouse because they had been mislocated. That happened occasionally in aviation supplies but certainly not to the extent that it did with some other kinds of supply.

CPT Sabrowsky: Did the 765th Transportation battalion and the 34th General Support Group use the Vietnamese locals as employees?

BG Junot: We did employ some local nationals but, for the most part, they performed housekeeping duties. At group level, they opened some secretarial positions to local nationals (primarily to provide a bilingual capability within the group headquarters). Local national involvement was limited to those two types of positions at battalion level. I am not aware of them working in the maintenance and supply operations at battalion level.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, in your opinion, were all aviation repair parts managed...

BG Junot: Yes, I think so and I meant that statement in the context of the relation of management of the aviation affairs to management of other supplies in that theater. I think that the aviation supplies were better and more effectively managed. I have to add though that, in the process, we expended a great deal more energy and used a lot more personnel resources to achieve that. The cost and the criticality of the end item asset we were supporting, however, justified the use of additional resources to provide that level of management.

CPT Sabrowsky: Were the methods for managing aviation repair parts developed by the military or were many borrowed from the civilian business sector?

BG Junot: They were almost completely developed by the military to meet military requirements. Certainly, some of the technical actions performed to actually repair broken components were developed by the manufacturer and, in that context, by the civilian. The military had considered and rejected, in part or as a whole, various maintenance and supply systems employed by the airlines (for example) and by small, base-fixed operators as inappropriate to fulfill military requirements for a series of progressively more complex capabilities supporting the end item aircraft as it's deployed in the field.

Although we didn't require it to any great extent, they also looked at the ability of the unit not only to perform a maintenance and supply mission but also to operate as a tactical Amy unit. In other words, the unit should be able to move to communicate, hide itself and move in support of one unit or another depending on where the concentration of firepower or combat forces was going to be.

Generally, the system itself was peculiar to the military and many of the changes and improvements that were later documented from what was actually done in Vietnam were also based on that military requirement and the military effort that went into satisfying it. By the same token, when you look at procedures such as the three-level maintenance system currently in effect for Amy aircraft, these periodic inspections are the kinds of things that airlines do, but we do them differently for a different reason.

CPT Sabrowsky: By 1970, the operational ready status of rotary-winged aircraft increased and these are categories now not operationally ready through supply from 7 to 5 percent and not operationally ready through maintenance from 21 to 20 percent. Despite the fact that aviation assets increased by 730 percent from 1965 to 1970, the increased state of readiness was attributed to new aviation support concepts used in Vietnam. In your opinion, what were the major contributing factors in this increase?

BG Junot: The dedication and experience developed by providing aviation support in that particular combat theater was to a certain extent standardized and improved (where improvements were necessary) and those innovations devised by dedicated, technically qualified and competent people on the ground were incorporated. When you bring in all of that and loosen up the structure of providing support, dedicated and capable individuals have the flexibility to do things as they need to be done rather than being confined to very limited parameters of operation. Then you get a better product.

Couple that with the fact that the supply system from the Continental United States had begun to year up significantly by that time. The closed-loop conferences also helped provide a more effective support system as aircraft parts managers throughout the entire supply system were talking directly to each other on a recurring basis and working together at a table (so to speak) rather than through long-range communication processes. I think these factors all contributed to the increased support capability.

CPT Sabrowsky: How were the aircraft repair parts delivered from the depot to the user or at user level?

BG Junot: We used a variety of means. Routine replenishment requisitions were satisfied by putting the repair part into a unit bin at the direct support unit. The user would empty the bin at his convenience (usually on a periodic administrative flight basis) and bring those parts back to the unit. Routine repair parts came from the depot companies to the direct support companies to replenish their ASL, a routine type of transportation. We also established a dedicated airline of communications for the movement of repair parts with the CV-2 Caribou (an Amy aircraft that now belongs to the Air Force). That route was generally for high priority items. The routines moved by road, available airlift, the Air Force schedule or logistical airlift within the theater--any of those means. The key being that they were routine and there was no real urgency to move them any faster.

Nonroutine requisitions, those that were Not Operationally Ready Supply (NORS) and were grounding an aircraft, were moved by the fastest available means. If the item was available in a direct support unit, the DSU would probably use one of its assigned aircraft to fly it directly to the using unit. More frequently, the using unit would take one of its mission aircraft and make a special trip back to the DSU to pick the item up after telephonic communications established the fact that the part was there awaiting pick up.

Similarly, the dedicated Caribou would deliver those parts requisitioned from the depot company of the AMMC back to the direct support units or their DSU would fly back to pick them up. We also maintained coordination so that one of the established Air Force aircraft flying the log routes could take them if its schedule was the fastest way to go.

The AMMC headquarters maintained a small traffic element whose mission was to evaluate the availability of immediate transportation and to satisfy those kind of parts agreements (and they occurred quite frequently). Engines usually required priority transportation because they were almost always in short supply.

The system was very effective. From the standpoint of utilization of transportation assets, it probably was also very costly. However, the end item being supported was a high-cost, low-density item and it was doing no one any good sitting on the ground awaiting a repair part. So the expenditure of that priority transportation was probably well justified.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, what about the removal or retrograde movement of unserviceable or unnecessary parts from the user to depot to CONUS?

BG Junot: A real can of worms. As we expected, the users were much less concerned with retrograding unserviceables and unneeded serviceable repair parts back at the DSU than they were with getting the parts needed to fix the aircraft on hand. So, we made a constant effort to try to inspire the using units to locate, segregate and properly pack and transport or call for transport for those parts that needed to go back (both serviceables and the unserviceables).

Far more often, an aircraft would show up with a load of serviceable and unserviceable parts--many not properly identified and tagged--and just dump them at the direct support unit. In many instances, you're talking about expensive and critical parts, and the difference between classifying serviceables or unserviceables could be the difference between getting an aircraft flyable that afternoon and not getting it flyable for a week. So the DSUs were stuck with the responsibility of evaluating (or categorizing) and segregating the myriad of parts that came in. Then they would put the serviceable parts back in the supply system and identify the unserviceable and get them retrograded back so that they could eventually become serviceable.

As I said before, much of the stockage of serviceable repair parts in our Army system is derived from the repair of unserviceables. if the unserviceables are not moved to repair stations in theater or the Continental United States in a timely manner, then the front end of the system dries up and pretty soon no serviceable parts are available to be issued.

As a whole, the U.S. Army in Vietnam did not do very well retrograding aviation repairables. Most of the fault, at least in my mind, occurred at the user level because of an understandable but costly lack of interest in shipping them back rather than getting them forward.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, did the Army realize prior to Vietnam that helicopters would be tasked so demandingly in future conflicts?

BG Junot: Yes, I believe the forward-thinking leaders in the Army recognized early on that Army aircraft would perform a much more important mission than merely observing artillery strikes, calling in fire and providing administrative transportation, That foresight was the basis for developing and conducting the air assault tests at Fort Benning, GA. This relatively small group of forward-thinking individuals managed to convince the Army that we really needed to investigate the optimum use of aircraft in support of combat operations in the Army. If a Vietnam had to occur, it was providential that it occurred when it did--at least from the standpoint of the growth and development of aviation support in the Army. The number and complexity of the missions, the kind of support and the advantages of Army aircraft were so evident and were developed so rapidly there that the growth in aviation was mercurial. It just zoomed up. If we had not had that kind of an environment, the same end result would have been achieved but, in my mind, would have taken considerably longer to develop or at least to be supported.

CPT Sabrowsky: Vietnam seemed not only to be a ' test ground for aviation itself but also for aviation logistical support. Was aviation logistical support confined to the laboratory before that?

BG Junot: Yes, I think so. Within the Transportation Corps, the aviation logistical support of in-theater airline of communications had always been an element of doctrine. The hitch came in executing the doctrine and getting the lift assets released from direct support of the combat elements to provide that airline of communications. It's relative

priorities again. In Vietnam, sufficient aircraft were available so that it wasn't a case of one or the other. Both could be accomplished simultaneously at only a slightly lessened level of effectiveness for each.

CPT Sabrowsky: A concept that proved to be very successful and cost effective was the helicopter recovery of downed aircraft in both friendly and enemy territory. By 1971, the CH-47 Chinook recovered downed aircraft worth approximately 2.7 billion dollars. Was the value of recovering aircraft by helicopter recognized prior to Vietnam?

BG Junot: Yes, one of the primary missions of the heavy lift helicopter (both the CH-37 Mohave and its successor the CH-54 Tarhe) was the recovery of downed aircraft. Aircraft recovery was not the only mission requirement in the use and development of those birds, but it was one of its primary duties. I think the extent to which aircraft could be recovered under an amazing amount of hostile fire was primarily proven in Vietnam. We would have written off many of the downed aircraft in our war games and other scenarios before we actually saw them successfully recovered on the ground. So, it was a very effective means of conserving the aviation assets available in a combat environment.

CPT Sabrowsky: What types of helicopters were used to recover aircraft?

BG Junot: We used everything that was available. The heavy lift companies, CH-54s, recovered the heavier birds including an occasional downed Air Force or Navy aircraft and Amy fixed-wing aircraft up to and including the Mohawk. CH-47s were used to recover Hueys and light observation aircraft. The Hueys themselves were effectively used for OH-6s and OH-58s.

Generally, the scenario would be that aircraft downed for problems such as engine failure, malfunction or combat damage would be secured by the combat troops in the area. The crew chiefs were trained to do the initial preparation for aerial recovery. Notification channels were already established with the direct support company that had the recovery mission or, in the case of a downed aircraft beyond the lift capability of the UH-1, the nearest supporting CH-47 or CH-54 unit. In other words, you preplanned the recovery mission to a great extent. The crews from the DS companies of the designated recovery aircraft were prepared with the necessary slings and were trained on what had to be removed and how to remove it. They had the tools available.

The recovery missions were usually executed very quickly. Once the downed aircraft was secured, the recovery aircraft came in. The crews did their basic work in preparing it for recovery, such as tying down blades and putting the sling onto it. The recovery aircraft hovered in over the aircraft, lifted it up, brought it back to the nearest supporting direct support unit and dropped it off. Then the repair cycle began--very effective.

CPT Sabrowsky: Did the North Vietnamese realize that the U.S. would try to recover aircraft that went down and did they set up any type of ambush?

BG Junot: Yes, a downed aircraft that was left for a significant amount of time before recovery operations commenced would frequently become bait. In most instances though, recovery was almost a second-nature operation for the unit that was flying the aircraft. In a combat assault, for example, a long line of UH-1s was depositing troops and CH-47s had probably already been laid on to provide re-supply with an ancillary mission to recover UH-1s that might be downed. So, ambushes were rare when recovery occurred quickly after the aircraft went down.

CPT Sabrowsky: Were there any types of aircraft that you did not try to recover?

BG Junot: Not as a matter of policy. In the case of large, fixed-wing aircraft beyond the lift capability of the recovering helicopter, no effort was made. Although, I can remember one instance where mechanics removed both wings from a downed naval aircraft and recovered the fuselage. The wings were later brought back under a CH-54 in specially-made wing slings, but that operation was an exception. Generally, if the lightest configuration of the aircraft required major disassembly to be within the lift capability of the recovering bird, we didn't fool with it.

CPT Sabrowsky: Were the crews of the downed aircraft recovered at the same time as the downed aircraft?

BG Junot: No, the unit to which the aircraft belonged generally took care of that. For the most part, an aircraft belonging to the direct support units that supported the flying unit would recover the downed aircraft and another bird would recover the crews. The crew chief for the downed bird, however, would normally stay with the aircraft until the recovery crew arrived.

CPT Sabrowsky: Another innovation to first appear during the Vietnam conflict was the Floating Aircraft Maintenance Facility (FAMF). This facility was a Navy seaplane tender converted into a floating depot for aircraft maintenance. The U.S.S. Corpus Christi Bay arrived on station in Vietnam on 1 April 1966. By July, production reached 34,000 manhours per month of manufacturing, disassembling, repairing and rebuilding operations. The 34th General Support Group reports indicate that this facility alone was responsible for an additional 120 aircraft available daily in Vietnam. Sir, could you describe some of the operations the FAMF performed?

BG Junot: The FAMF was basically a very effective, relatively small-scale component overhaul facility. The tools, calibration devices, equipment and personnel skills included in the manning of that ship were designed to allow it to, in many instances, totally remanufacture high-value, low-density aviation components ranging from engines to some of the smaller gauges and gearboxes. They were mission tasked to support the in-theater component repair program for those items that had, for whatever reason, become critical in terms of supply in the theater and that task changed frequently as the critical repair parts list changed. Their biggest assets were the level of competence and experience of the troops who manned that battalion and the tools, equipment and

calibration devices provided onboard. For the most part, they did not work on end-item aircraft.

CPT Sabrowsky: In other words, just the components of aircraft?

BG Junot: Just the components. They culled out (or had culled for them) those unserviceables which were in most critical supply and most closely matched their capabilities. In other words, they were more capable of performing component repair than the shore-based general support company. so we'd send them the more complex repair jobs and the GS units would perform the more simple ones.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, what was the relationship between the 765th Transportation Battalion and the FAMF?

BG Junot: FAMF and the 765th were co-located in the Vung Tau area. 765th had its headquarters, a GS and two DS companies on the ground in Vung Tau and the FAMF hung on the hook in Vung Tau Bay. Because of the component repair capability each possessed (FAMF's capabilities, of course, being more complex and extensive), we worked very closely together in the theater craft repair program. The 765th personnel sorted out unserviceable components into three piles (for lack of a better description). One pile was to be shipped back to CONUS because we had no capacity, capability or urgent need to repair them in the theater. The second pile was to be done by the general support company belonging to the battalion because they matched the capability there. The third pile consisted of components which required a higher level of skill or equipment or calibration devices not found in the GS company and were allocated to the FAMF for repairing.

CPT Sabrowsky: One advantage of the FAMF was that it was capable of moving to where it was most needed. Did the Corpus Christi move very often?

BG Junot: No. Other than the monthly cruises to shake down the ship's systems, it moved infrequently. Once a month, the ship would be taken on these overnight cruises up the coast (probably as far as Qui Nhon or Na Trang) and be back by morning. The capability existed for those troops on board to do a certain amount of component repair work while underway. They did that on these overnight cruises--they would still be repairing components. She'd head back to the Vung Tau Bay and drop anchor again and they'd have more serviceables than they had when they left.

CPT Sabrowsky: Was the crew of the Corpus Christi Bay manned by Department of the Army personnel ?

BG Junot: The ship's crew was contract civilian--civilian captain and crew. All of the members of the first Floating Aircraft Maintenance Battalion were Army personnel.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, considering the mission of the FAMF, was it a critical target of the enemy?

BG Junot: Probably not. If the enemy had really made a concerted effort to damage or destroy her, I suppose they could have. For the most part, security measures were exercised through visual means--a walking guard in the evening and an occasional small boat patrol out at Vung Tau Harbor. However, there was little direct enemy activity on shore or in the water in the whole Vung Tau area. As I said earlier, I can remember only a couple instances of significant enemy activity there and that was short duration.

CPT Sabrowsky: Did the Corpus Christi Bay have a helipad? In other words, were component parts delivered by helicopter?

BG Junot: Sure, she had two pads--a bow pad and a stern pad. I landed on both of them many times. They were very small. The stern pad was the larger and could take CH-47s. The crew really hated to bring a Hook on board because of the downblast; it just disrupted things terribly. It could also take two Hueys at the same time, one forward and one aft, and that was a frequently used means of delivering repairables or picking up critical serviceables from the ship. A crew boat was used as a more normal means of delivering things and made scheduled runs from the ship to shore.

CPT Sabrowsky: Did both the ship's crew and the maintenance personnel live on board the ship or did they live on shore?

BG Junot: Quarters were available on board ship for both the Army maintenance personnel and the ship's crew and, for the most part, they did live on board. I guess they always did. Other than a temporary transient facility, there were no facilities for them to live on shore. There was no need for it. They ate very well.

CPT Sabrowsky: This was a 24-hour operation, I assume.

BG Junot: Yes, she was rigged and manned for 24-hour operations and worked that schedule.

CPT Sabrowsky: Were the facilities aboard the Corpus Christi Bay used by both Navy and Air Force or was it strictly a Department of the Army asset?

BG Junot: Strictly an Army asset. If you're interested in whether they were able to repair aircraft components belonging to the Air Force or the Navy, the answer is generally no. Where the Navy, for example, was operating UH-1 gun ships in the delta, we may well have been capable of providing them with gearboxes common to both those gunships and the ones the Army was operating. For Air Force or Navy fixed-wing peculiar parts, however, I don't believe she had any capability to do that.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, what were the lessons learned in Vietnam concerning aviation logistical support?

BG Junot: I think the primary lesson we learned was that the helicopter is a much more hardy beast than we had planned on or anticipated. There were instances where

helicopters took an amazing amount of combat damage and were still able to fly sufficiently well to get the crew back and return to be repaired so they could again be put into useful service. In that same vein, we also learned (rather slowly I'm sorry to say, but we did learn) that aviation using units--the units whose mission is to fly--did have the capability to perform a somewhat higher level of maintenance than we had anticipated without degrading their basic combat support mission. Those maintenance functions that had previously been their responsibility could have been expanded to include some of the functions which were allocated back to the supporting unit because we previously thought they couldn't perform them. I think the big result we see there is that, some time after the Vietnam operation, the structure and traditional levels of Army aircraft maintenance were modified down to three levels. The first was unit level that included those operator and current unit maintenance functions that had previously been first and second echelon and some of the direct support functions that had previously been performed by a separate unit. The inter-mediate level of maintenance took up most of the old direct support requirements and some of the general support maintenance functions and the general support level was eliminated, in fact, supporting depots either in the theater or back in the Continental United States.

We didn't really learn anew, but we revalidated the fact that the supply system is a constantly changing matrix of conflicting requirements and the user really will not actively support the retrograde of serviceables and unserviceables, even though he knows that is the basket from which his future serviceables eventually comes. You've got to constantly work with the operator to encourage and, if at all possible, force him to classify and retrograde aviation repair parts as effectively as possible.

We revalidated the well-known adage that states "the better your coordination, the better your system is going to operate." We established a number of coordination systems, closed-loop meetings and aircraft intensively managed item conferences that forced a closer coordination between all of the organizational elements involved in supporting the supply system and thereby enhanced the availability of supplies throughout the theater. This coordination in turn cut down the cost of total stockage.

I think we validated (to a reasonable extent) the fact that computerization of supply and maintenance systems is reasonable. It's a valid requirement and it's achievable. The record since then strongly supports this claim. Now our systems are fully automated, much more so than they were in Vietnam. Those early efforts were the first step towards that.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, do you feel that the Army is becoming too technical and the equipment the Army is planning on deploying to the field is too complex to be used efficiently?

BG Junot: No, I don't think we have much of a choice in that area either. I agree that the level of technology and the materials the average soldier is required to use to perform his mission have increased tremendously in just the last few years, but I see no alternative. If a soldier is required to be able to see and fight at night, for example, he

needs some technical assistance in order to be able to do that. The state of the art that allows the achievement of that user requirement governs the level of technical complexity of the equipment. We have no real choice but to train people somewhere in the system to be able to maintain the equipment or to develop a system that is either less expensive or so complex that we can't afford to fix it and we just throw it away and keep building new ones.

Somehow or other, the user's requirement is the one that has to be satisfied. The supporter is then faced with the question, "Is it feasible to train the average soldier coming to work in that support activity to perform the maintenance and, if so, at which level? Will it be done at user level or at some intermediate level in the theater? Or will it have to come back to the depot or into CONUS to be repaired?" Those are all serious questions.

We have no choice but to use whatever technology is available to meet the user's requirement for mission accomplishment. We're going to spend a whole lot more time and money training people. We are probably going to spend a good deal more money influencing designers to build technologically complex equipment so that the majority of the maintenance can be performed at a user level by simply switching out major components. Then we would let fewer people, maybe even the manufacturer himself at some point in the rear, do the actual repair work on the very complex components. We have no choice but to do it. The Russians are doing it.

CPT Sabrowsky: Do you think the Army made a mistake sending soldiers just out of Advanced Individual Training (AIT) to Vietnam and expecting them to work at the level they were supposed to have been trained to?

BG Junot: Yes, I think the one-year tour is very ineffective. The six-month command tour was even less effective, but those were policies that were foisted on the Army. I think we really had no choice but to implement those. Again, we've got to make do with what we have. If we're required by our national government to operate in that kind of environment, then we simply have to accept the fact each new soldier coming over is going to go through a period of reduced capability, regardless of his job. He will gradually increase his abilities up to a point where he is operating at full capacity and then we will get full use out of him.

That's a problem for the people pushers. They need to recognize that and exercise stricter control on numbers and types of qualifications of people who are sent into such a theater. I would personally be much happier with a policy that assigned people to a combat theater for two, three or four years-whatever the duration of the war is. You either win it or you stay. I don't think that's too popular an approach in this country given the latter parts of Korea and the whole Vietnam operation, but I would be happier with it.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, do you see the United States Army Reserve and the National Guard playing a large role in aviation logistics in future battles?

BG Junot: Not only in aviation logistics, but in all of the other logistical applications throughout the Army. I have some reservations about it. These reservations aren't about the competence or effectiveness of the Reserve and National Guard units because I think that's top notch. I think the emphasis on including Reserve and National Guard units in the "One Army" concept over the last few years has been very effective and those people are very well trained. Unfortunately, much of the training in a large number of those units is still accomplished on equipment that does not accurately simulate the first-line equipment that they'll be expected to maintain when they get into an operating environment.

Secondly, the race for spaces in the Army of Excellence has been such that the big losers have been the active duty support units. The maintainers, suppliers and combat service support units are the ones that have lost spaces, inactivated units and had their missions transferred to the Reserve and the Guard. In many cases, these units are the ones that need to deploy simultaneously with and, in some cases, ahead of the combat units that are going to fight in the war.

I seriously believe the shortcomings of this system will not be easily overcome in a wartime situation. These shortcomings are not caused by Reserve and Guard units who don't want to go or are incapable of doing it but simply because they're not fully ready. Until the word arrives at the unit, these four guys over here and those two ladies who are pregnant over there have not made any preparations to go. So, they'll just not deploy and there'll be vacancies. Then the unit will not be able to operate at full capacity. That's the kind of concern I have about that. However, I'm very pleased with the improvements that the active Amy has made in its relationship with Guard and Reserve units over the past few years. They have trained with them, encouraged them to a higher level of competence and provided them, in many instances, with first-line equipment to train with. I believe there's a shortfall there in the Guard and Reserve's ability to meet timely deployment schedules.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, do you think the educational programs sponsored by the Army are keeping abreast with the technical advances in aviation and aviation logistics?

BG Junot: Yes, I think the aviation logistics community within the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) schools system has made great advances in the last few years in that area. Couple these advances with program managers' recognition that they need to provide early developmental models of aircraft and support equipment to the schools so training can be accomplished prior to the fielding of the first operational aircraft. That training used to be a very knotty problem. We would have equipment in the field and people who really knew how to maintain and support it and, in some cases, how to operate it, were not going to be there for three or four months or sometimes as much as a year. I think we've pretty well solved that now and the system for doing it is pretty well documented and established so that we won't have too many problems in that area in the future.

CPT Sabrowsky: Do you think the U.S. Army will employ as many civilians in future battles as what they had in Vietnam?

BG Junot: More. I think that civilian presence is incumbent in the acceptance and use of the higher level of technical complexity and equipment we've got to fight with. I think we're going to find that we need representatives from the manufacturer and contractors to do maintenance and overhaul work in the theater of operations in order to support that supply system as it has to be supported. But, I also think that we'll be able to find those people and that they'll be available to do that work.

CPT Sabrowsky: Sir, do you have any final thoughts or comments on aviation and aviation logistics?

BG Junot: Generally, the support of the aviation mission in Vietnam was as good as it was because of the level of competence and dedication of the officers and soldiers in the transportation aircraft support units assigned there. Transportation officers have been responsible for supplying, fixing and returning serviceable items to the user since ordnance turned over the aircraft maintenance and supply mission to the Transportation Corps in 1953. There's always been a subdued level of friction between the fighters on the one hand and the fixers on the other. They get along well at the bar, but there's always the stray idea that, "You guys are maybe not quite as macho or as gung ho as we are. We fly them and all you do is fix them." Whether that's true or not (and I don't think it's true, incidentally), that friction did not have any impact on the very competent and effective transportation officers because they were members of a separate branch. The fighters on the one hand were infantrymen, armored folks, artillerymen or whatever. The transportation officers had a separate branch that was looking out for them. They didn't suffer from a career standpoint from that real or imagined slight lowering of level in the pecking order if you will. Now, all of those officers are lumped together in the aviation branch. I'm not sure, but that little bit of friction is still going to exist and now I'm concerned that there will be no separate entity to watch over the maintainers within the aviation branch. They will be competing directly on a one-on-one basis with the same people who are looking down their noses at their maintenance compatriots. I hope that doesn't occur but I'm concerned about it and I think the aviation branch would really be ahead of the game to take a look at this and take whatever steps can be taken to keep that from happening.