

Interview with Mr. John Waugh

Veteran – Vietnam War

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Place of interview: Kinsley High School, Kinsley, Kansas 67547

Narrator: Mr. Jason Wetzel and members of the Composition I Class

Kinsley High School, Kinsley, Kansas 67547

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Narrator: Today is Thursday, February 12, 2004. This is the beginning of an interview with John Waugh at Room 106, Kinsley High School, 716 Colony Avenue, Kinsley, Kansas. Mr. Waugh is 59 years old, having been born on June 6, 1944. My name is Jason Wetzel, and I will be interviewing him along with the rest of the English Composition I class. John Waugh is the principal where I attend high school. Mr. Waugh served in the Air Force during the Vietnam War. His rank was Airman First Class.

Narrator (question deals with why Waugh entered the Air Force):

Waugh: At the time, the draft was in place. I decided that rather than to be drafted into the army and having seen some of those horrific scenes on the TV of ground warfare in Vietnam, that I wanted to join another branch of the service where I felt...that I wanted to join another branch of the military where I perhaps would have greater opportunity for training. At the time I didn't know if I would end up staying in the military after my original four years or not. But I felt that the Air Force gave me greater opportunities for travel and greater opportunities for training. It also gave me an opportunity to call my "own shots" as compared to just being drafted.

Narrator (question deals with recalling memorable experiences):

Waugh: Well, obviously spending almost two years in Vietnam is pretty hard to leave your memory. I guess there are three or four things that I remember about the military. One was I got to see parts of the world that I would never have been able to have seen otherwise. I never would have been able to afford to go see. Being in the Air Force and being a loadmaster on a C-130, which I can talk about later... I got to travel, basically all over. I spent a lot of time in Europe, a lot of time in Canada, Alaska, Greenland...got to go down to the Caribbean Islands. Obviously while in Southeast Asia, I got to go to a lot of places. In addition to Vietnam, Thailand, Laos (which we are still not supposed to talk about today), Malaysia, Philippines, ...Just got to see a lot of places that had I not been in the military, I probably would not have gone there today because either of not being able to afford to go there or in a few cases choosing not to go there.

I think as well as the travel, as I stated earlier, there were a lot of experiences that I went through in Vietnam as a loadmaster on a C-130. As you think back on it, you think that in some cases you were pretty lucky. The plane that I flew on was shot down twice, not the same plane,

but we were shot down twice. Once we had to parachute out; once we had to land on the foam. I don't know if you have ever seen pictures of planes landing on foam or not when they do a crash landing on a runway. But in both cases, I walked out of there. Obviously I was pretty lucky. That was a scary experience.

As a loadmaster on a C-130, the C-130 is a large cargo plane. What a loadmaster does is he basically makes sure that all of the cargo or people on the plane are evenly distributed weight wise so that they are not all on one side or at one end or whatever. Obviously if they are not distributed appropriately, that can definitely impact negatively the ability of the plane to fly straight and so forth. You are also responsible for when you do land at an Air Force base for getting the cargo off in the correct way. We had a lot of situations where we would fly into a base that was under attack by the North Vietnamese. We would never shut our engines off. We would just continue rolling down the runway, pushing supplies and the ammo and stuff out, and would be throwing body bags on. You would basically be grabbing hold of the body bags and tossing them into a pile until you could get them back to an evac hospital. You are never going to forget things like that. We would move entire villages at a times.

Probably in the two years that I was over there, I assisted with or observed probably the birth of 15 children on the plane while we were moving entire villages. I've told other people that it's kind of good training for being a school principal.

Narrator (question deals with emotions experienced while in Vietnam):

Waugh: When I first went over there, a good buddy and I went over together. I remember that we had been stationed at Newburgh Air Force Base in New York, which is about 65 miles north of New York City, and then before you went to Vietnam, they always gave you a 30-day leave. We came back to our homes and spent time with our families and girlfriends, and relaxing. Then we went to California at a base near San Francisco for jungle warfare training (that's what they called it). It's similar to what the guys and gals that are now in Afghanistan and Iraq now go through before they actually go over there. They would teach you how to use certain weapons, certain different kinds of ammunition, you know, etc. then after being there for about a week, we flew to Anchorage, Alaska where it was extremely cold. Then we flew from there to Yokohama, Japan where it was even colder than it was in Anchorage, Alaska. Then when we landed in Saigon, it was like flying into the hubs of hell (pardon my French). It was hot; it was probably about 110 degrees and about 98 percent humidity. I mean you would just stand and sweat. We were all processed in Saigon for a couple of days.

I can remember going through the "shot" clinic because I don't know if you have ever seen it. When you go into a country like that, particularly if you will be exposed to diseases that you would never be exposed to in this country, and so you go into this "shot" clinic. I don't know if any of you have seen a "shot" gun before or not, but they have multiple syringes in this shotgun. With one injection, you can get injected with 15 different types of medicine to combat 15 different types of diseases, such as malaria, etc. This "shot" gun, as they actually call it,

actually puts the insulin into your arm with air pressure, not a needle. They always tell you, “Don’t move!” when they do this. If you do, it will rip your arm. The guy in front of me moved, and then he passed out after it gouged that deep in his arm. I will always remember that.

Then I got transferred up to what my home base which was about 100 miles south of the northern most U.S. base, which was DaNang, but I was stationed at a place in Thuy-Hau. It was right on the South China Sea. When I got there, it was basically a base that people had barely started building. About all that was there were a couple of dirt runways. They were in the process of building permanent housing. All of this, interestingly enough, was being built by civilian contractors. You talk about guys that were making a ton of money. I mean they were making “beaucoup” money, building this base, working for the U.S. Government. They were actually civilians; they weren’t military people. As an example, a person driving a tractor pulling one of those iron-roller types of things behind it, I think he was making over \$3,000 a month, tax-free. It was obviously huge money for these guys. They were willing to go over there and spend two or three years, building military bases, just to save up all this money. They would get a couple of what you would call R and R’s or recreation kinds of things away from Vietnam wherever they wanted to go – Japan, you name it, for a couple of weeks just to usually drink a lot and get away from the combat zone. For those guys who chose to do that, I never did see a lady over there doing it, but it was huge money that they were saving tax-free for investing back home. Some of those people, I can’t imagine but that they didn’t save enough money to start their own contract firms, construction firms, etc., etc. back here with all of that money that they were making. I know a friend who was making over \$5,000 a month of our taxpayers’ money, tax-free. That is something I will always remember.

Narrator (Questions deals with food):

Waugh: I will tell you what I can tell you without being offensive. Most people usually when they got into a country (not all, but most), there was such a change in diet and such a change in the climate. The overall stress of being in a combat zone that, speaking for myself, some of the best friends that I made during the first couple of weeks were in the outhole A-hole john because I was there all of the time. Your system just couldn’t accommodate all of that change. The food wasn’t all that bad. It was your typical military food ... a lot of hamburger gravy on toast, and all of that kind of stuff. As we were there longer and longer, it got better and better. I will always remember since we were right up there on the South China Sea, I remember at night a lot of times in the mountains to the west of our base was where all of the Viet Cong people were. I don’t know if you have ever seen any of these old pictures or whatever, but they had what they call a Huey gun ship which was another type of cargo ship. Basically on each side of it on the body was this huge Gatling gun. When they would shoot this Gatling gun, thousands of rounds a second it would just light the forest afire. The ammo was so hot when it was hitting the ground that it would set the trees and the foliage afire. There were a lot of enemy soldiers there obviously. They even had battleships then over in Vietnam. I don’t think they use any more battleships now in our Navy. They are all mothballed now, I think. But they had some

battleships off the coast about 20 miles. At night they would be firing their big huge guns on these mountains behind us. You could just hear that shell going over the top of us where we were sleeping and just exploding in the mountains. After a while, you just kind of got used to it, just kind of drawn out the sound of the helicopters, drown out the sound of the guns. I still consider myself very fortunate even though I became very close to being killed or severely injured a few times that I was grateful that I wasn't a Marine or an army soldier pounding through that jungle. You've seen some of those Vietnam movies. Some of them are very realistic. Some of them are extremely realistic. The one that came out here not too long ago with Mel Gibson (I can't think of the name of it right now – some of you have probably seen it) (*We Were Soldiers*)--- that's a very realistic Vietnam movie from my understanding of what it was to be like out there in the jungle with your army buddies, your Marine buddies fighting off thousand of the enemy.

The other thing that I came to realize, and I think anybody who was over there will tell you, the North Vietnamese soldier was an outstanding soldier, very good soldier. They knew what they were doing. I am glad that I never had to be one of those tunnel rats, one of those who had to go down into those tunnels, and deal with what was down there, explosives and stuff like that. But I think that is part of the problem, and I am not going to make a political statement here, but that is part of the problem when you go fight somebody on their turf. We were fighting the North Vietnamese on their turf. That is kind of like what our soldiers are facing now, in Iraq and Afghanistan. They are fighting them on their turf. That is what making winning that conflict or the fact that we didn't win the Vietnam conflict, in my opinion, impossible. You are fighting a very good soldier; they know what they are doing; they are willing to sacrifice anything to win, including their own lives, as is happening in Iraq today and Afghanistan. They are extremely passionate about what they are doing, whether it be for religious reasons or other. But the North Vietnamese soldier was a very good soldier.

Narrator (question relates to how the Vietnamese people felt about the presence of the Americans):

Waugh: I think for the most part we were accepted. Vietnam, at the time that I was over there, and some of this you may know already, but the history of Vietnam was probably prior to the Americans' coming in there, it was very much a French-dominated country. It was settled in many cases by settlers from France, Indochina, and the same thing that happened to the Americans happened to the French before. There was just so much resistance to the French that they finally got beat. There's no other word to say it. They got beat, and left. So there is a lot of influence of the French in China or in Vietnam, I'm sorry. Saigon, at one time, was considered one of the most beautiful cities in the world, one of the most exotic cities in the world. There are a lot of, at least when I was over there, there were a lot of Vietnamese people who you could tell by looking at their appearance that one of their parents had been French. They are called Eurasian, part European and part Asian, extremely handsome, beautiful race of people. But on the other hand, the true Vietnamese or Oriental people look down upon them

because they are not pure Oriental. Same thing happened to several American soldiers who had children with a Vietnamese woman, whether it be with a Caucasian person or with an African-American person or whatever. Their children tended to be looked down upon by the pure Oriental people.

I never really ran into a situation where I had a lot of violence or anger or anything shown to me because I was an American. I cannot say that that was the case for everybody. I just simply say that was the case for me. Vietnam is an example similar to Afghanistan is today, and a little less so Iraq. Obviously the United States went to Vietnam for, I think, a couple of reasons. One, I don't know if you have heard the term, the domino theory. Well, there was this thinking that if Vietnam got overrun by the Communists, then so would all the other countries around Vietnam: Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and eventually Korea and Japan. That was kind of the political domino theory that was out there, which was proven to be false. After the U.S. got ran out of Vietnam, yes, it's true that the Viet Cong came in, but look now who have relationships with; look now who we have trade with – the North Vietnamese in Vietnam, 30 years after it's all over. And it hasn't caused Thailand to be run over by the Communists or these other countries. So that proved to be false. Obviously any war that happens, whether we like to say it or not, whether it be Vietnam, whether it be South Korea, or whether it be the Korean War, or the current conflicts that we are involved with right now, there are some people on both sides that are making literally billions of dollars, based on arms sales. There are people in this country, that are literally making billions of dollars off the Iraq and Afghanistan conflict, and the same thing held true for Vietnam.

When I wasn't flying, which is what I was doing most of the time as this loadmaster, I would be assigned to run this huge forklift. Probably the seat of this forklift was as high as that ceiling. You could turn it this way, that way, you could do just about everything with this forklift to unload cargo out of either trucks or whatever. And we would go south about 50 miles from our base in a convoy to a big naval base called Carmeron Bay, which was a huge naval base again about 50 miles south of where I was based. And these bit Navy cargo ships would come in there and unload all their ammunition and their k-rations, and anything that you would need to support a war--tires, you name it. You could literally see hundreds of crates and stuff get dropped on the ground, busted right open, and stuff like that. In fact, then, and this is in the middle of the 60's, it was costing over two million dollars a day just to run Cameron Bay, just one base. It was costing over two million dollars a day. I can guarantee that that price wasn't being paid by the South Vietnamese. That was being paid totally by the U.S. Government. So, just think in terms of what it takes to supply an invading army, so to speak, which is what we were, to keep them fed, to keep them clothed, to keep them housed, to keep them with ammunition, to take care of all of the medical, that alone and all of the fuel, for example, for trucks, planes, and all of that kind of stuff, literally hundreds of millions of dollars, on a fairly regular basis. So there is money to be made in war, folks, whether we like it or not. You can say all that you want to say about the political stance. Is it the right thing to do, or the wrong thing to do? I am not saying one way of the other. I'm just saying that there's money "in them hills."

Narrator (question concerns keeping in touch with family):

Waugh: Yes, we did. Of course, you could write the old snail mail business. E-mail wasn't available at that time. We could make phone calls. When you made a phone call, it was over some kind of two-way radio system. If I was talking to my mom, as an example, I would say a sentence, and then I would have to say "over." Then she would hear what I had to say, and then she would say something, and then she would say "over." So it was really antiquated, but it was better than nothing, obviously. And we got mail on a regular basis. We would get care packages from home on a regular basis, you know – fresh socks, those kinds of things. The climate was incredibly humid, and incredibly wet.

You basically wore those combat boots that had a leather-sole type of thing. But then they had a webbing up the side. If you had a full leather boot on, they would just rot out. This webbing would allow this boot to breathe. Those were very highly valued boots. The home base where I was, we had a division which is a large number of soldiers of the Republic of South Korean troops about two miles from our base because they were over there fighting the Vietnam War also. It was really interesting because those guys would give you about anything for those boots. So they would come over and they would want to trade and barter, so they would bring our guys cases of steaks, which for us was awesome compared to c-rations, or whatever. So we would give them cases of boots. So we would do a lot of bartering and trading. We would start up a fire with some wood that we could find, barely get those steaks warmed before we would start diving into them to eat them because we were so hungry from eating k-rations all of the time. The South Korean soldiers were really something. I'm sure that you've heard about or read about the Geneva Convention, which is a long standing set of rules about how prisoners of war are to be treated. Least some members, anyway, of the Republic of South Korean troops there, they didn't really, I mean U. S. Soldiers for the most part, I think, were or abided by the Geneva Convention. You've heard some incidents about My-Lai and some of those other places where villages were allegedly shot up with innocent victims and all of that kind of stuff, but the South Korean soldiers were basically over there to survive. They would do whatever it took to survive; they could really care less about the Geneva Convention to the point of interrogating prisoners by taking them up in helicopters and throwing them out. I never saw that, but I heard about it.

Narrator (question deals with entertainment):

Waugh: There wasn't much, to be honest about it... a couple of USO shows that came by the area. Other than that, during the almost two years that I was over there, I took a one-week R & R to Tokyo, Japan, which was getting on a plane and flying to Tokyo, buying some clothes, going to a few bars... just out of the combat zone. Usually you went with somebody, so you weren't alone. I went to Malaysia once, which was a beautiful country. It is now one of the countries where they say al Qaeda is. I went to Australia twice. I loved Australia. I went to the Philippines a couple of times; I hate the Philippines. I went to New Zealand once. I got to see a number of places that I would never have seen otherwise. If I could afford it, I would live in New Zealand in a heartbeat; it is absolutely a gorgeous country, beautiful.

Narrator (question deals why Waugh did not like the Philippines):

Waugh: I don't know why I didn't like the Philippines, but to me it was just because of where I was, but it was kind of dirty. It was kind of ...didn't seem to have a great deal of interest in how you as an American were or were not. You know that they were after your money. I just didn't like it, personal preference, I guess. I'm sure that there are other people who did; I didn't.

Narrator (question deals with how long he was on leave):

Waugh: Probably the longest that I was ever gone on leave was around ten days by the time that you flew, spent time there, flew back. Some of those trips that I mentioned just a little bit ago were actually while I was on duty. It's kind of funny. One of the officers (I wasn't an officer; I was an enlisted man)...they wanted to do a liquor run for the officers' club one time. So off we went to Australia, picked up a planeload full of different kinds of liquor, and flew back. I guess they had to pull some strings somehow to get that done, but I got to see Australia. I did that once while I was on the States' side too, and they flew down to Jamaica on a liquor run.

Narrator (question deals with humorous stories):

Waugh: I suppose there were light-hearted moments even in Vietnam, but nothing that really sticks right there. Probably just some of the fun times with some of my buddies that I flew with when we had some off-duty times Europe, or Greenland is really cold; I don't ever really want to go there. Probably some of the relationships that I made with some people that I still communicate with after all of these years---because you have those really memorable kind of experiences where we walked out alive and you still kind of laugh about it.

I know Gentry spoke earlier about what my emotions were like. I think after a while you kind of tune it out. You know that I happened to be in a group of people that flew that transported a lot of dead and wounded people. After a while you just don't let it get to you out of, I think, survival. I think after a while just for your own sense of self-survival emotionally if nothing else. It doesn't mean that you aren't going to try to help someone else whose arm has been blown off or whatever, but after a while you tune it out.

I would say that when I came back a lot of Vietnam veterans or veterans from any war that matter, I think...for some of them it is a real struggle when you come back because you don't feel like you have a support system in place from family or friends or work, from the military itself or whatever. If you allow it to, that's my term – if you allow it, it can really get to you. I mean I know buddies who probably went temporarily insane for a while after they got back, just the memories of all of the war. You know, all of the killing, all of the blood and guts, you know, and so you have to find something else to do to maintain that energy and...I think it is important to talk about it. I think it is important to have someone to visit with about it, whether it be through a religious, through church, or through your family, or whatever. But at some point in time you have to go on, or it will get the best of you. You know; it could destroy you.

When I came back, we flew into, straight from my base at that time, which at that point in time had a major concrete runway, you know, all of this other stuff. It was a straight flight back to Seattle, Washington. That was the time when it was obviously a lot of differing opinions about the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. There were a lot of people that were very much in favor of it, very supportive of U.S. soldiers, but there were an awful lot of dissidents. I'm not saying one way or the other. I'm saying that there was a wide discrepancy of opinion in terms of support in this country about that war. I can remember getting off the plane and being spit on by people who were outside the fences.

Narrator (question deals with the degree of his personal agreement with the war):

Waugh: Let's put it this way. I was in the Air Force. I knew that I was going to go. I knew that at some point in time I was going to be sent to Vietnam because everybody was getting sent to Vietnam basically. So my buddy and I, we just kind of decided among ourselves to, say, hey look, we know that we are going to go, so let's pick and choose when we're going to go. So we kind of did that. I had already chosen to join the military as compared to going to Canada or going to Mexico or wherever. I had chosen to go to the military. I'll go back a little bit.

I graduated from high school and went off to college. I was in a small four-year Catholic college for the first year, and then went to K-State, totally screwed off a whole year at K-State because I didn't apply myself. I just goofed off; my head wasn't in it. So I went back to this small four-year college again. I did OK, but my head and my heart just weren't in being a college student. I wasn't using my talents or my abilities at all. I know that I was probably going to be drafted, so I chose to join because my choice at that time would not have been to defect or go to Canada or whatever. I must say with a great deal of pride after I came back and got out of the military I made the dean's honor roll every semester because I applied myself. I was ready to go to college and do the work and work towards my eventual career. But...once I got back, and having been there and kind of being aware of it, seeing all of the waste and seeing all of the killing, and seeing all of the damage being done, and so forth, I pretty much became anti-Vietnam. It was against the war itself. It wasn't against the people who chose to go. It was more against the higher ups, the politicians, the whole bit picture scene as compared to a man or to a woman who went over there and fought for what they believed in. I would never do that.

Narrator (question deals with talking to others about war experiences):

Waugh: You mean about what I experienced? For a long time, I didn't talk with very many people about it. Then as time went on, you know, if there was a person that I felt I could really trust and who was genuinely interested, I would share with them what my thoughts and feelings were. I don't if that answered your question or not.

But you know, all in all after all of those experiences, I would have to say that my four years in the Air Force were a good experience for me. They helped me grow up. I obviously learned a lot, saw a lot of places that I would never have seen otherwise. I probably experienced

some of the things that I alluded to that I just as soon would not have, but they are part of what has made me who I am today. I would probably have to classify myself as a person who doesn't really believe in the value of war because I have seen it. I have seen what it does to everybody. I particularly understand what the soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq are going through today by fighting the very committed enemy on their turf and on their terms. I don't believe that's a war that can ever be won.

Narrator (question deals with similarities between the wars of Vietnam and Iraq):

Waugh: I think there are some definite similarities. Vietnam was a country, after being settled by the French before us, that, and I guess that I feel this way because I used to teach social studies...I think that democracy is the hardest form of government there is to do well. I think you have to have a well-educated, general population in order to have democracy work. OK? But you have a country like Vietnam was, or Afghanistan is now, where most of the people cannot read or write, they are very, very poor. OK? That's not the general type of population that can effectively support and participate in a democratic form of government. So one of the reasons outside this domino theory and some economic reasons of the powers that be, politicians so to speak, went to Vietnam was on the theory of the South Vietnamese ought to have a right to choose. They ought to have a right to choose between communism and democracy. I'm not sure that they were ready to choose yet because of the fact that they were a very undereducated, poor, general population. You know...they were rice farmers. They were people who sold things on the side of the street, on the side of the road.

Back to Brandi's question about humorous, one of the things that I was asked to do, challenged to do, so to speak, was when I wasn't flying or running this forklift, we were working in this huge, huge warehouse where all of the supplies were coming into this base were stored. Even though we didn't have e-mail back in those days, we still had antiquated computers that would assign stock numbers to certain parts and stuff like that and tell you where to put these items in the warehouse. Most of the labor, so to speak, the hard labor, in that warehouse were Vietnamese peasants. One of the challenges was to teach non-English-speaking Vietnamese English. That was a challenge. I tell you that if you think learning Spanish is difficult or French is difficult, try learning Vietnamese. Or try learning most Oriental languages just because...a slight example all of the adjectives in most Oriental languages, Vietnamese for sure, is in how you say the word. It's the inflection that you give the word. So you can say the same word, spelled exactly the same way, and by how you say it, it will mean "beautiful woman," "young woman," "old woman" ... I just use that as an example. That's the inflection that you give it with your voice. So imagine trying to learn that language or teach them English. So it was quite a challenge.

Narrator (question relates to any medals or citations that Waugh may have received):

Waugh: Yes, they are home in a box somewhere. I don't ever pull them out and look at them.

Narrator (question relates to how spending time in the military has helped Waugh as a person):

Waugh: I think it really helps me to deal with stress really well. No principal's job can compare to the stress when you are living and working in a combat-survival zone. I think that at the time it helped me to grow up a lot, certainly helped me focus my efforts after I got out of the military, on school and on education, and on really moving forward with my life, and getting into something where I could really work with young people, like you guys.

Obviously the GI Bill helped to pay for most of my college. So purely from a financial viewpoint, it was an advantage to me to be able to rely upon those funds in addition to working full time and to being married at the time and being the father of young children at the time. It helped defray a lot of expenses. It would have been a lot more difficult had I not had the GI Bill funds to do so.

It was a challenge for me to decide whether I wanted to get out of the military or not. When I came back, I finished my last year at an Air Force base in Kansas City, Missouri called Richards-Gebaur, which is kind of south of Kansas City, Missouri proper. At that time, not just me... they...there were just tons of guys who were getting out of the military who had been in Vietnam. They were saying no more of this; I'm not going to do this anymore. The same thing happened with Afghanistan. You might have heard some of those things on the TV or whatever. The National Guard that is over there now, or some of these other people---there's no way that they are going to re-up. But at the time of Vietnam, they were really wanting people to say stay-up. So imagine in 1969, being offered, because I already had almost two years of college—that was another reason, but I was offered officers' candidate school training, complete my college education free of charge, and \$50,000 re-up money in 1969. That was really hard to say no to. But I was just so tired of war, of the killing, and of the military stuff.

It was so different in Vietnam in terms of the relationship of the officers because I was an enlisted man, and I hung around with full colonels all the time. It was just Jack and Joe. There was no saluting being done. There was none of this stuff that goes on Stateside. You didn't have to worry about the proper salutes, the proper terminology, you know—all of that kind, but it was survival of the fittest. Yes, the full-bird colonel tells you to do something, you're going to do it if you're an enlisted person. But it wasn't that kind of officer-enlisted relationship that you see Stateside when you're in a war zone. It's completely different.

Narrator (question deals with possibly seeing existence of mass torturing):

Waugh: Iraq is probably a better example of that than maybe Vietnam was. I was never made aware that these huge killing fields in Vietnam where there were mass graves. There may have been. I know there was in Cambodia and Laos. I know that for a fact. But certainly to use Iraq as an example, except for some people in that Sunni triangle area, those people are basically free from tyranny. They are free if they are one of those groups of the Shiites, of being massacred, killed, and tortured, slaughtered so you would have to say that's a good thing. There's no question Saddam Hussein was a bad person, or is a bad person. And he's still alive. Getting rid

of him is a positive thing. Again we're not talking Vietnam here but I think in Iraq a vast majority of the resistance being done now is not being done---is being done by people outside of Iraq---al-Qaeda people, those extremist people who don't want to see democracy take over in that country at any cost. If you're willing to get into a pickup loaded with TNT and drive through a brick wall and blow yourself up because you feel like there's something better for you and for what you represent, that's pretty fanatic. That's pretty fanatic. Right now, most of the people killing are Iraqi citizens as compared to the American soldiers. You know there are still some being killed. It's just going to be a really long haul.

Narrator (question deals if American forces should be there):

Waugh: I've always felt that all along that ideally we should have done this in cooperation with support from other countries. I don't think that -- I mean are we the most powerful nation on the face of the earth? Yes, we are. But does that make us responsible for policing the world? I don't think so. I think that we have to do so in cooperation with other countries who feel the same way we do.

Narrator (question deals with America might be taking on too many responsibilities):

Waugh: I think so. Maybe that's...maybe depending on how you look at it, that can be a plus as well as a negative. We as a nation obviously have an interest in making sure people are free and have the right to choose. I'm not sure sometimes if we really use good judgment before getting into situations like we are in now. It's kind of like I spoke earlier---Saddam Hussein is a horrible person and did horrible things as well as the people who work...his sons and his henchmen---whatever- and they obviously needed to be taken out of power. I think it's going to be a long haul. You know...there originally was talk we would be over there for a year. That ain't going to happen.

Narrator (question deals with how his military service has affected his decisions):

Waugh: Am I liberal or conservative? I like to consider myself an independent. As I have gotten a little bit older, see I'm not old yet, I maybe tend to go closer to the mid-conservative compared to the liberal, but I still try to vote for the person. You know the presidential race or a congressional race or whatever; I try to do my research. I try to find out what this person really stands for and what this person would really do for us. Then I try to vote for that person whether he or she is a Democrat or a Republican or an Independent. I've never, when they ask you to pick your party...I've never done that. I've always written down Independent. I've never stated that I'm a Republican or I'm a Democrat. That's just me. I've never gotten too heavily involved in political campaigns.

I'm old enough that I can remember back in the younger days. I can remember that I was a big John F. Kennedy fan, Bobby Kennedy fan. A lot of people my age were because it was a

very idealistic time. It was kind of like that Camelot in our country. We had come through the Korean War, some presidents that weren't too exciting, just some other stuff, and here came JFK---young, bright, intelligent guy, who came from a great family. I was a great fan of the Kennedys. I can remember washing dishes at Kansas State University in the fraternity house as a pledge the day that he got shot. You know how you can always remember some things. I can remember over the radio the announcement that John F. Kennedy had been shot in Dallas. I don't think that I ever watched so much TV for four days in a row as did everybody else when that happened. Then I can remember watching TV when his brother got shot in Los Angeles. I can remember Martin Luther King getting assassinated.

I still believe this very, very strongly that I'm old enough that I used to teach social studies...my favorite time period to teach was the decade of the 60's. I believed that any society that can make it through a decade like that that was filled with so much turbulence, so much violence, so many assassinations of leading people, Vietnam, all the college riots...if you can survive that as a society, you are strong. You really are because most societies, had they gone through what our society did in the 60's, would have drastically changed for the worst. I see this as a very strong statement for who we are as a people.