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Oral History Number: 193-001

Interviewee: Frank B. Bessac

Interviewer: Tim Church

Date of Interview: March 1, 1988

Note: The interviewee refers to a number of place names in China and Inner Mongolia that could not be understood clearly enough to transcribe accurately. These have been marked with (?).

Tim Church: Oral history with Doctor Frank Bessac, Department of Anthropology, University of Montana, March 1—

[Break in audio]

TC: Yes, okay.

Frank Bessac: Well, born 1922, Lodi, California, on a snowy morning, which my mother thinks is remarkable that I remember as we very seldom have snow in Lodi, California. [laughs] This is in a vineyard, the countryside. I went to school at Stockton Junior College, which was the first two years of the College of the Pacific. In order to pursue...keep going, they incorporated this. I went to J.C. because, well, couldn't get a job anyway. Then I stayed on at C.O.P. for my junior year, and the end of the fall of my junior year, it was December 7, 1941. I was persuaded to join the college reserve [Army Reserve?], which meant that they would pick us up when they needed college kids. They did that about a year and a half later—March 1943. We were supposed to become junior officers. I was 21 at the time. The first real American offensive or combat with the Germans was in Africa. The American uniform did not indicate, in this conspicuous manner, an officer. The German snipers weren't killing them off. So they had this bunch of kids that they didn't know what to do with.

After I finished my basic training in Fort Leonard Wood in combat engineers, they asked if I wanted to go back to school, and I did. I qualified for area languages, the Army Specialized Training Program in area languages. Then asked for Chinese because in the central valley there were a lot of Chinese and Japanese. I went to Cornell and studied Chinese intensely for a year. We had four hours of tutorial and two hours of...or six hours of tutorial five days a week, and four days on Saturday in addition to other work for one good year. When that was over, a guy came through, and he said, "Do you want to go to Hawaii to become a photographer?"

I said, "No, I want to go to China."

He says, "Okay." Then almost everybody there and kids from other areas—Harvard, Berkeley and so forth—ended up at Fort Riley on a second basic, riding horses. The horse "calvary", as they said at Fort Riley. [laughs] Cavalry. Then one day on bivouac, got orders at the end the

bivouac in December, I and a couple other guys got order to...three other guys got orders to go into the post and the main headquarters and after [unintelligible]. I remember a big captain who disliked [unintelligible] dropped the orders into the snow and reminded him that somebody in Washington would get very upset if they saw this [unintelligible]. Went in and here was the same guy again from Cornell. He said, "You want to join the O.S.S. [Office of Strategic Services]..." No. He said, "You want to get shot in the stomach?"

I said, "No."

He said, "You want to jump out of a plane?"

I said, "Well, with a parachute."

He said, "Do you want to join the O.S.S.?"

I says, "What's that?"

He said, "Office of Strategic Services."

I said, "What's that?"

He said, "You'll find out."

I said, "Okay." [laughs] I said, "Will I go to China?"

He says, "Yes, right away."

I said, "Okay." So within a few days we were in Washington D.C. and spent about a week being processed and...Well, we had our little testing school of three days and four nights of intense testing. They didn't know you were watched all the time, everything you did. We had a nice week in Collingwood, which was just north of Mount Vernon and then shortly after that...Oh, then we went to Catalina and had two or three weeks of training there, including survival training—the sort of thing that they have now in northern Minnesota. Then orders got snafued somehow so went by boat—[unintelligible] boat to China. In China, they say, "Well, do you want a parachute or a typewriter?"

I said, "I'll take the parachute." So I got jump training in China. Let's see, I was a P.F.C. [Private First Class], maybe I should have had the rank of a technician, T5. You know, that thing just short of a staff, but the acting capacity of a junior-grade officer. I had three Chinese non-coms [non-commissioned officers], and we were doing tactical intelligence. We were also to go in and blow up bridges and everything like that behind Japanese lines. An adventure for at least the four of us. Well, we were supposed to go out there and blown up everything and then merge into the countryside. The merging didn't seem too easy on my part. [laughs] But they kept

calling it off. Night after night, they called off the mission. “You won’t leave at dawn in the morning.” So we’d bring the parachute down, trying to just hold on—the banality—and somebody jumped on the table and said, “The war is over.” That was a cruel joke, but it was.

Then I got shipped to Beijing, and that spring in ’46...Well, George Marshall, I guess he had just been made Secretary of State, he was trying to establish a truce between the Chinese Communists and the Chinese Nationalists. The outlines of this laid out, then there was a truce mission in Beijing led by a [unintelligible]—Chinese [unintelligible] general—and Zhou Enlai’s wife was his helper. There had been complaints of Chinese Nationalists by the truce violations. So I and another guy and a radio man and some Chinese people that had connections with the Chinese Communists with the [unintelligible] Army went down into this area—[unintelligible] Nationalist—and investigated this. Got shot at a few times by the Chinese Nationalists. The Nationalists had just been foraging. They weren’t being sufficiently supplied. They ran out of food in the countryside, but it was still a violation. Then I came back.

In the meanwhile, the Mongolians in Mongolia in the north, what is Manchuria—it wasn’t Manchuria now—then Western Manchuria, Mongolia, and occupied area—had set up a movement for autonomy. They kept debating and talked to many people, and my unit said, “Go on up to the headquarters of this Chinese Communist area, Qing Xiao Qi (?), degraded area that they called it, base area, and find out what’s this all about.” So I went up there, again with a radio man—I and a radio man—and the intermediaries between ourselves and the Chinese Communists to Kalgan, which is north of the Great Wall, northwest of the Great Wall and [unintelligible] it’s called in Chinese. Met with the commanding general and the fellow who was the chairman of their autonomous group. They hadn’t heard of this other one. Haven’t I told you this story?

TC: No.

FB: No? They said, “Well, you go north and find out what’s happening. We don’t know what’s happening. You go straight north, not to this area, but the area that we should have control over. Take your chief. Putter on up.” The next morning, this Mongol who was a very [unintelligible] Mongol...there were people had been under Chinese acculturation for 500 years—southern part of the Mongolian-Chinese interface. We saw his truck leaving for this meeting that was being held to bring news to them. Anyway, we bundle off in ours, and got to this place called [unintelligible] in Inner Mongolia and looked around. This is just a border near Mongolia, and we wanted to know what was happening, well, for the West or North or both.

We didn’t have enough gas in the Jeep, so I thought, well, the American government wants to know, they can send a plane, and by god, they did. They got a plane and landed on this abandoned Japanese airstrip, then took us two or three hours—a couple hundred miles—northwest to a place called Bei Tim Yao (?)—Chinese—on the Geigin (?) in Mongolia. Well, it’s the place that the monks in the monastery in the mountains with the outlying field. Settled down. Pilot said, “Jump out quick, don’t want to cut the motor.” So we jumped out, stayed

there for about a week, and they came back and picked us up. We went around and saw that there was actually no government at all. People were just cooking along. But this got me interested in Mongolian as well as Chinese.

Then a year after that, I went on the G.I. bill. Studied in Beijing at a Chinese university. My classes were really independent studies under the auspices of Chinese scholars and a very famous Mongol who later immigrated to the United States. Towards the end of that year, there was this China relief mission that was being set up under the ECA, Economic Cooperation Administration as a pre-runner of A.I.D. [Agency for International Development]. There had been partial drop for two years in North China, which was affecting the Mongolian areas that were at least partly cultural. They were going to set up a mission in Western Mongolia at a place called Balto (?). They asked me to be executive officer, executive director, something like that. So I said okay, went out there for about six months and banged around this part of western Inner Mongolia. It's west of the present capital of Inner Mongolia in the grasslands. I saw a lot of Inner Mongolia by truck, and then spend about a month delivering...two or three weeks delivering grain to this one [unintelligible] administrative unit. There were no roads so we went on horse and delivered our grain. Americans were beginning to care, I guess. There were all sorts of clothing in packages, which were sent in too.

When I came back from that, I received a Fulbright. Well, I was all set to settle down. I didn't want to settle in Beijing. I wanted to go up along the border, where it was partly the border between Mongolia and China, and continue my studies in language, and at the same time make a sort of a, as we would say now, anthropological survey of the area. But before I did that, I thought I should go down to Nanking. There were two girls there, and I liked them both. I couldn't make up my mind, which I liked better. I went down to see them, and I still couldn't make up my mind. Was all set to come back, and the American Consulate—embassy—said they wouldn't allow any Americans back to Beijing because [unintelligible] was coming in. They then wanted me, and I'm not sure that [unintelligible] above board.

Anyway, whether I was being singled out because I then got offered to head this China relief mission, the Mongolia Grant—be the director of it. I said okay. Set that up, and then discovered I had glaucoma. They said, well, you can't qualify and so forth, so I ended up going to West China and being operated on—my eyes. Then in the spring of 1949, in Lanzhou (?), [unintelligible] of China, and then to the Mongolian banner of Aoshna (?) in the city of Ingain (?). At that city...city...It was this little walled administrative unit for shops and so forth. There was a meeting of the Mongols who were unsatisfied with the autonomous movement so far, and they set up a provisional, independent Mongolian governance. I'm not quite sure of the term. I attended those meetings, and then everybody was [unintelligible] because the Chinese Nationalists were being defeated and fall back and [unintelligible] on the area. Defeated troops were something you don't want to contend with. The Chinese Communists were coming. I wasn't afraid of them, but I knew that I wanted to go out through Chinese Turkistan and over the passes of the Hindu Kush and India. [unintelligible] had done that, so I'll do it to.

To do that, it ended up, I could either have gotten on a plane which would take me back to the States or gotten a camel across the desert. So I and a friend, who was associated with the cooperative school then and the Consu Peninsula (?), you know how it goes up like this between Mongolia here and Qinghai (?) there and Turkistan in front of it? He, by the way, as far as I know, is still in China. He stayed behind. It took us about three weeks on camel going across the Alashan Gobi. Came out and I got a truck ride across the [unintelligible] and into Hami (?), first big town in Chinese Turkistan. I think I got a Sino-Sylvia friendship—a ride in a Sino-Sylvia friendship plane to Urumqi. And Urumqi, where I thought I was the only American for 1,000 miles. I planned to go across the mountains and over Hindu Kush—across the [unintelligible] mountains and then around to Kashka (?) to the west to the oases and then through Hindu Kush to the Punjab.

When I got there, the [unintelligible] came to meet me. He said, “Are you Mr. Bessac?”

“Yes.”

He said, “I’ll take you to the American Consulate.” I was surprised. I thought the American Consulate had left a year or so ago, but they were still up there. Doug MacKiernan. A few days later the whole area had Chinese Communists, which again didn’t both me particularly, except that I felt sure that I was headed back to Beijing and that would have cut short that trip. But he said, “Well, do you want to join the Kazakhs?”

“Sure.” That took us on that long horseback ride back across the Zangarian (?) Steppe to the north of Hami (?) and up and over the mountains and down to the Kata Gobi (?) and out in this little place just to the north of the Tibetan Plateau. The next spring we went out over. So that’s the end Doug was killed by a Tibetan guard, then I [unintelligible] by Russians and went on and eventually got back to the United States in the fall of 1950.

Now, the situation in Mongolia, and I think the most interesting thing to my mind was the emergence of the autonomous movement which comes largely from the Mongolians and also help our people...furthered by people like Professor [unintelligible], the social anthropologist in setting up the [unintelligible]. But many of the basic ideas were worked out in Inner Mongolia. Well first of all, the autonomous government should be able to relate directly to the central government, not through provincial governments. That secondly, that they be able to control the movement of other peoples onto their land, so you wouldn’t have great influx of Chinese onto their land. Then third, is that the basic language that should be that of the region—of the region which the autonomous government was founded. In other words, be Mongolian or later should be Tibetan out through grammar school and then pick up Chinese in high school, okay. The general, that there should be freedom of religion and general social, political non-interference by the central government. All the big ideas that [unintelligible] be progressive.

TC: Did the Mongol people welcome the Communist takeover, or were they pretty fearful of what they’d do?

FB: The Mongols, I'd say on the whole, the Mongols didn't discriminate between one Chinese and another. For a while, the Chinese were not discriminating against...they were being pure Han chauvinists.

The Mongols considered their greatest enemies to be these Inner Mongols. I think I can make that generalization. Their greatest enemies to be the Soviet Union, or the Russians, and then the Chinese. In this place Dolomper (?), which was as far as the chief went or had the pickup to take us further the north, there was a monastery, and the Russians had decided to sack and burn it. Then the troops of the Mongolian People's Republic surrounded it and protected it. So you have this Mongolian People's Republic were acting protectively towards the Mongolians. I think the Inner Mongols even had guns [unintelligible]. The Mongolian People's Republic also wanted to be friends with China to sort of even out the [unintelligible]. Well, that's too severe for [unintelligible]—their overtures of the Mongolians.

On the whole, I would say that the Mongols didn't welcome Communism, but they welcomed the means by which they could attain autonomy. And if the Chinese Communists were going to do this, so much the better. Or not so much the better, but okay. The Chinese Communists were going to do it. The Mongols set the thing in motion themselves. The Nationalists always said, well, Chiang-Kai-shek had this one-track mind—unify China—and then you had change that after the Sian Incident. Remember where the Chinese Communists captured [unintelligible] First fight the Japanese then unify China. Fight the Japanese, then unify China, and then we'll talk about Mongolia. Well, many Mongols didn't want to talk with Chinese Communists. They would rather have worked, I'm sure, with the Mongolian People's Republic, not because of [unintelligible], but because Communism [unintelligible]. I think that the greatest complaint might be that the leadership of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement was not sufficiently Mongol.

[End of Side A]

[Side B]

TC: So the Mongol project and the China relief mission was basically just to provide food and some clothing to drought-stricken areas?

FB: Yes. As far as the American government.

TC: But the American government didn't see Mongolia as strategically important? What was their attitude toward the—

FB: When I was working...well, they sent that [unintelligible], but I never got much in the way of what they thought. Later on, I think there was some encouragement for the formation of a provision over there, but I don't know because by that time I had very little connection with the American government for a year at least, and only through the China relief mission. As far as I know, the American government thought the Mongols [unintelligible]

TC: Was the Mongol project continued after you left or was that—

FB: You mean the—

TC: The China relief mission?

FB: China...Well, that merged...no...Well, yes. After, there was somebody else who took over, and they transferred to Ding Ai Ing (?). [unintelligible] was taken by Chinese Communists, and they drove the trucks and everything out to Ding Ai Ing (?), and they did something with it there. But by that time, they were not doing very much. They were outside of the specific area where they could do the most aid.

TC: During that, oh, I guess 1950 or so, were the U.S. and Chinese officials operating on a pretty normal basis or was there a lot of confusion, or were you even connected enough?

FB: 1949.

TC: 1949.

FB: Were the Chinese officials—

TC: Yes, was there kind of a state of panic because of the Communist advances?

FB: I think that there was a great fragmentation and had been before. The Chinese Nationalists had [unintelligible] over...not quite as much as usual, over local governments. The head of the Aushman Banner—Dawa (?)—was acting fairly independently. He [unintelligible] this meeting of the Chinese Nationalists, [unintelligible]. You had general feelings that it was [unintelligible]

Chinese Nationalists. Well, let's see, they had some doctors associated with the relief mission, but they were being paid by Americans. Had almost evidence of Chinese Nationalists at all. No army, no soldiers. That was true for the west also. In Xinjiang (?), there were Chinese Nationalist troops who then decided that if they were going to survive, they better become Communists. [laughs] All routes out were cut.

TC: I've read that some of the native Tibetans after the Chinese Communist takeover were pretty...they fought against it pretty fiercely. Was there that type of thing in Mongolia?

FB: No. Well, there were particularly brigades that were [unintelligible] the Chinese [unintelligible], but they retreated and headed to the west. What happened is that the members of this [unintelligible] fighting in Manchuria left after the Chinese Nationalists were defeated there. They and the members of this independent government went to the Mongolian People's Republic where they thought that they would find refuge. But the Mongolian People's Republic wanted to be friends with China, so they turned most of them back. Even then, the leader of this movement had...I think you would say, very naturally was working with the Japanese, and "Don't listen to the Chinese when the Japanese are here," because he liked the Japanese. He was a counter against the Chinese. The worst thing the Mongols endured was the Chinese taking over their land. When he came back, as I understand it, he was the head of the Inner-Mongolian Autonomous Movement [unintelligible]. He remained the head—expanded it. He asked Prince Duc (?) for more cooperation, and Prince Duc (?) said "No, but I'm not going to oppose." Anyway, he was a prisoner, but he was very much looked up to. He had been the sponsor, protector, of this [unintelligible] previously. He was settled down and wrote his memoirs and retired. Some of the others, I guess, were shocked.

TC: You yourself didn't fear the Chinese Communists even though you were in the past connected with the U.S. State Department and all that?

FB: Oh, no. Lots of people were connected with the State Department.

TC: You mentioned a lot of White Russians.

FB: The O.S.S....As a matter of fact, about three years ago [unintelligible] concerned with [unintelligible] anyway at the University—foreign relations. He was asking me...He said that when he went to Europe and talked to people about...and he would talk about the anti-Japanese war, and they were talking about the war against the Germans, they said, "Where was O.S.S. in all of that?" because O.S.S., they were the ones working with [unintelligible]. They were the ones who worked with the Italian resistance and in Greece. As a matter of fact, when I got to Kulin (?), the campaign in Greece was over, and they just took these guys, I guess they gave them a month or two furlough and then sent them to China and they started all over again. But they'd been through it. I explained, "Well, given enough time, that's what would have happened." [unintelligible] just had this opening [unintelligible], which was working for the Chinese Nationalists in this parachute commander unit. There were O.S.S. people working

with the Chinese government. Some of them [unintelligible]. But no, not anything as far ranging as had existed in Europe. But, see, the Chinese Communists knew this. They didn't get angry at Americans until about '49. They felt that the truce mission, that the Americans were no longer being neutral. They were beginning to help the Nationalists. As far as I was concerned, the turning point was when I decided to join the Kazakhs, who were anti-Chinese and the Chinese Communists, and I gloated to myself that all this time, I had been neutral. Now I was sitting in a cottonwood tree at this time, looking up [unintelligible], if I were caught people might be glad.

TC: You mentioned some White Russians in Mongolia. Was Mongolia kind of a—

FB: These were people that, for instance MacKiernan, that he met in [unintelligible] and Turkistan.

TC: I see. So Mongolia wasn't really a haven for White Russians or anything like that?

FB: Yes, yes. I had a friend working with us in the China relief mission who was a Kazakh Tatar. That's the closest it got to White Russians. [unintelligible sentence].

TC: Your interest in anthropology then grew out of your study of the language?

FB: It started at Cornell, my first anthropology [unintelligible] was Lauriston Sharp, who got a degree here for [unintelligible] and [unintelligible] Asian studies and something. I just talked to a friend at Cornell. He says he thinks Lauri would like to come and talk, but would need some people to do it. [unintelligible]. Somewhere between 75 and 80. They had a historian, anthropologist, and somebody in charge of language speaking at Cornell. Sharp...at that time, most places didn't have anthropologists. My B.A. degree received in 1946 by applying my work at Cornell and taking an exam on a course that I had somehow missed was in U.S. History.

TC: Let's see. So it's my understanding, then, Mongolian people were pretty much more concerned with people taking over their lands and ideological—

FB: Yes. Now, I remember when we went to Bondegegnson (?), this place we flew to, through Auta [unintelligible]. We went on a 20-mile camel ride to this encampment and talking with the people there. There was a young man that we talked to, and there was a representative of this Xin Jong Qi (?) liberated area. They didn't have much power. The government kept going the way, which [unintelligible]. This fellow said, "We need to break away from this Prince Duc (?) way of governing things, fighting with the Communists, doing more," and so forth. He was complaining. I think the general feeling among the Mongols, and this is true [unintelligible] just wanted to be slow and steady, that they wanted to go away from more...as quickly as possible, move away from control through the old aristocracy to a democratic process. The actual [unintelligible] I think sometimes would resent it because it was carried out brutally. [unintelligible] particularly if they were carried out by people who [unintelligible]. But, any

movement that could help keep going or establish an autonomous government would be welcome, or independent would be even better, since the Chinese were also [unintelligible].

TC: Well, it seems to me that from what you say, the Mongolian people are a lot more politically active than I ever thought. Was that typical of the average Mongolian, or were you just talking about the more educated?

FB: Well, I don't know that it's typical of the average Mongolian, but they were thinking.

TC: Did they understand what was going on in the rest of the world as far as Communist takeover [unintelligible] in China and Korea, et cetera?

FB: Well, no.

TC: They just knew that their—

FB: They knew the Japanese had left. Of course, I worked in a lot of areas where other Japanese [unintelligible] later on. They knew that the Mongolian people [unintelligible]. I think that they generally, sort of secretly welcomed that. They were afraid of the Russians.

TC: Was that fear of the Russians an old fear, or was that from experiences?

FB: Old fear. The Russians reciprocated, had a terrible fear of the Mongolians [unintelligible]. You'd see places where they made reference to the Mongolian Autonomous Republic, and some Soviet Russians, I suppose, had come along and carefully taken out the Mongolian part. It was so finely stitched in, taken all that out, but you can still see the outline. It was just a boureat (?). The old scars are still there. The Mongols looked down upon the Chinese, and the Chinese looked down upon the Mongols. That stuff had been building up for a long time.

TC: I suppose the Chinese government officials were irritated the Mongolian people to no end with their bureaucratic demands.

FB: Yes. What irritated the Mongols was the steady loss of land to Chinese settlers who would be moving...some of them would move in because a Chinese general or some local guy would gain power over this land and encourage settlement. Then, after that, they'd change what had been a Mongolian land to a Mongolian banner to a Chinese county. Sometimes, shortsighted Mongolian princes would want to keep down taxes—expenses—so they'd bring in Chinese and tax them [unintelligible]. When the Chinese became the majority, then they moved out too, and the Autonomous Movement people, starting way back with Prince Duc (?) and the Japanese, wanted to prevent that. I remember in '48 when I was working out of Balto (?) in the summer, the relief mission going northward in the Mongolian area, and Prince Duc (?) had maintained this strip of land between back where the Chinese settlers lived and back where the

Mongols...where nobody was supposed to live. So he could control it. I supposed it was 10 miles in width. It was very interesting because it was full of gazelle, just lousy with game.

TC: You traveled extensively through Inner Mongolia. Was that lack of game typical, or even in the mountains, had the game been hunted out?

FB: No. It only disappeared in the great big flow of Chinese coming in and shooting everything in sight.

TC: For food or just shooting it for—

FB: For food. [unintelligible] two years ago, gazelle [unintelligible] all been shot up back in '58, '59. Then Cultural Revolution was discontinued, and Mao had his push toward raising grain and other raising grain out in the [unintelligible]. All sorts of stupid things.

TC: Do you still have friends in Mongolia that you keep in touch with?

FB: Not that I keep in touch with. If I look them up, I have done that, but I didn't want to embarrass them. There are probably a few people who...Well, let's put it like this, I don't know how many are [unintelligible]. There's a fellow who is an anthropologist who went to Inner Mongolia on sabbatical last year. He told me that [unintelligible] that they liked very much what I had written and some had known me. So there are people there.

TC: So the Chinese government has opened up Inner Mongolia somewhat to study?

FB: Oh yes. I'd like to go there under a Fulbright, get some funding. Spend a year, see what—

[Background conversation]

FB: Take a survey anyway.

TC: Yes. See what changes have been brought about. I think the *Life Magazine* article mentioned that you met the Dalai Lama twice, I believe it said.

FB: Oh yes, Lhasa (?).

TC: Lhasa (?), yes. Is that the Dalai Lama that is still alive in India, I believe, exiled?

FB: Yes, he was a child then [unintelligible]. Tibet was still being ruled under regency at that time, but they speeded it up and made his coming of age as soon as possible so that he could be in command to deal with the Chinese Communists the next year.

TC: Now the Western literature has mystified the Dalai Lama. Was there that sense of meeting somebody mystical or important?

FB: No. [unintelligible]. By that time, I'd seen lots of mysteries. Sure, he was important, but very...I didn't talk to him. Very gracious towards me.

TC: Do you feel that the U.S. government today should be more aware of minorities...not minorities, but different ethnic groups in dealing with China?

FB: Sure. [unintelligible] their internal affairs [unintelligible] point out, you criticize us and we'll criticize you. Stop being so defensive. The Chinese are very [unintelligible]. Every time there's at least one article on Tibet, they're very defensive. They haven't been acting towards it as they should [unintelligible]. In a way, they're just coming out of the Cultural Revolution [unintelligible].

TC: Mongolia back in the late '40s and '50s, you did most of your traveling by horse and elephant?

FB: There was a lot by old truck and Jeep. In Mongolia, it's grasslands. There's a truck road that could take you most anywhere if you don't mind bouncing. In this one banner, I had to go by horse because, obviously, there had been a policy of no roads. It was a way of keeping out the Chinese. The most southern in China, in China east of Chenhi (?) and Turkistan (?) is the most southern Mongolian area. By these means, they could maintain Mongolia. They were sedentary pastoralists who did some agriculture, generally on the side. They'd been swamped if there had been a road [unintelligible] had people up there eating off [unintelligible]. Without a road, why, [unintelligible].

TC: Well, I think that's just about it.

FB: Yes.

[End of Interview]