

This is an interview with Tedford P. Lewis by Roxanne Farwell for the Smokejumpers Oral History Project at the University of Montana in Missoula on September 26, 1984. OH#133-59

RF I guess we're ready to start. Could you tell me when you were born?

TL Born March 1, 1919.

RF And where were you born?

TL Webster Groves, Missouri.

RF And could you tell me a little bit about your background before World War II?

TL Starting as a child or?

RF Just generally, rural, urban, farm background?

TL Basically suburban background, my mother died when I was 8 and my father married my mother's sister, so that there was continuity in family relationships so it was very comfortable, a great sacrifice on the part of my mother, my stepmother, to come in and take young kids on. Went through normal high school procedures, got involved in children's camp work at the age of 11 as a junior counselor and continued that until I was drafted and did that at the same time that I was doing my college work and along came the war and I had been, what I acknowledge as a pacifist since I was 14 years of age and remember taking the Oxford pledge on the corner on the way home from a scout meeting with four fellows all taking the pledge at the same time, I think I was the only one that became a CO out of that group of four. Um, at that same time, the Congregational Church gave an opportunity for people to sign up as conscientious objectors and they were filing the names of those who signed up with the Department of Justice. At age fourteen, I was unconcerned, I didn't anticipate that a war would ever come along, what was war, you know, to a fourteen year old. My 19 year old brother did sign the form, however. The great significance of this is that my brother, oldest brother, was accepted into the conscientious objection status without any hesitation whatsoever on the part of the draft board. My case went to a Presidential appeal and the State Director of Selective Service, when I went to see him, as a matter of fact, when he first found who I was, said, "Oh, do me a favor. Write a letter asking General Hershey for an appeal... for Presidential appeal." And I said, "Why are you asking me to do this?" He said, "You have the thickest file in the state of Missouri and I think anybody with the thickest file in the state, should get what he wants." And it was on that kind of a basis that the man asked me to do this and finally after a investigation by the FBI for seven weeks, the letter came back from General Hershey to the draft board recommending, not ordering, but recommending, that I be given the CO status. That

took almost a year of time to accomplish, just in the draft procedures. During that time, while I was still working for the camp, there was some considerable confusion over whether Tedford Lewis should really be working with young children. Some parents became extremely excited, and most excitable were the ones who, previous to the declaration of war, had been ardent pacifists themselves. The occurrence of war made many, many people rethink their basic positions. But I took a week out, didn't go to classes, came down for meals and that was about it. Just sat up in my room and just thought and thought and thought, finally came to the conclusion; the occurrence of war does not change one's fundamental beliefs. And after a week of contemplation, that was the sum result; the occurrence of war does not change one's fundamental beliefs. So I went into CPS. First assigned to Camp Kashockton in Ohio doing soil research, water run-off and that sort of thing. Then went out to California when it was hoped by several of us that if we were near the concen-, the relocation centers for the Japanese, that we might have an opportunity to be assigned to work in the Japanese relocation centers. It had been a rumor that this was going to be possible. Apparently the government decided that it was not in their best interest to have conscientious objectors and these dangerous Japanese relocatees together at the same time so that opportunity never occurred, though we did have an opportunity to help in relocation centers on our own time. But....

RF Did you?

TL Yes.

RF What did you do?

TL Um... on two or three weekends, we drove up and were just simply friendly. We would... letters would come into the American Friends Service Committee office in Los Angeles and people in the relocation centers, "Would you please bring such and such a box that you have stored for me?" And, "Would you bring such and such out of the box that you had stored for me?" And so we would drive up with these things and simply distribute them and sit and chat and hear great stories about ridiculous things. Such as the military building the hospital in the [inaudible] Center. There was a Japanese doctor, he was asked to go through and visit the hospital and check it out. He came out and said, "It's a fine hospital, except for one thing, we need some sort of a receiving room." "Oh, oh of course, of course," says the doctor in charge, and, "We'll have that ready for you when you come back next time." So a week later he came back and was checking it out, and as he went in, the doctor in charge of building, a military man, said, "How's this for your receiving room?" And here was a large warehouse room with shelves all the way around. The military had no concept of what a receiving room really was. [laughs] That sort of thing happened just off and on to them. But they endured it with great grace. Great grace. Amazing. So, I was in CPS, and in Southern California I did road work, fought forest fires, and after having told a tale of a

horrible camp-out that I was on where I forgot the salt for the Hunter's stew, they said, "Well, he knows how to put salt on stew, so we'll use him for a cook." [laughs] So I got into cooking which I had never really done before except on an occasional camp out, but I enjoyed that a great deal, did a great deal of cooking in CPS camps from that point forth, occasional or steady. Then along came the situation of; they need some people to smokejump. And during my graduate days, I'd been in a recreation class in which we were considering various forms of recreation, and I suggested parachuting as a form, and had tried to do it. This was in the early days of the war. The professor wanted us to do all the things that we suggested in order to check them out and see whether they really worked. Because of the war, I wasn't able to make a parachute jump in the St. Louis area, so here came my opportunity. I knew how to fight fire. I wanted to make a parachute jump. My parents didn't want me to, my family didn't want me to, but they were not the kinds that put strings on you and said, "Don't do this, don't do that." They let me, let me go my way and so I did. And I recall... I recall about ten of us going down from this camp for our physical exam in Los Angeles. We were all standing around the elevator. Elevator seemed to come and go, and come and go, and finally somebody said, "Did anybody push the button?" "No. Isn't the service committee going to do that for us, too?" [laughs] Apparently, we'd become very dependent people. [laughs] So anyway, I passed the physical and got assigned to smokejumpers.

RF And when did you arrive in... let's see, Seeley?

TL Seeley Lake. Oh, goodness! It must have been what? Late June that we arrived in Seeley Lake? Early June. And spent the summer there. There and at Nine Mile. But we were trained at Camp... at Seeley Lake Ranger Station, [and] living in Camp Paxson across the lake from it.

RF And were you trained as a rigger?

TL No, I was not. I think the riggers were probably those who had arrived earlier. We were among the late arrivals and in the second group of trainees.

RF What was that first impression you had when you arrived at the camp?

TL Hmm. Beautiful camp site, beautiful countryside, and a great group of people. I was very much impressed with the diversity of people, but then that was not too unusual because most of the CPS camps did have diverse backgrounds among the people there. But this was a group of people that were all physically sound and this added some sort of a different atmosphere to the camp, because nobody was babying his fingers, or feeling sick at the stomach and couldn't go out for this, or couldn't go out for this, that. This was a group of people that were eager and enthusiastic to be involved in what was going on. And there was that difference in atmosphere about it.

RF Can you describe your early impressions or your early memories of the first contact you had with the Forest Service personnel at Camp Paxson?

TL Mmmmm....

RF Favorable?

TL I guess my first feeling had been, "be on guard." Because in Southern California where we'd worked with Forest Service personnel, several of us felt a little bit "on guard" with one of the men in particular. The first man we had been "on guard" with, but we came to understand why we need not be. So we were... my sense was; "Don't just jump in and accept anything they say, and believe that everything is on the surface, what is." I found out I was wrong. I was... within a few days there was complete acceptance of all the personnel.

RF Do any of the Forest Service personnel stick out in your mind, that you can remember?

TL Mmm, Art Cochran, of course, with whom I had worked. And obviously Wag Dodge, and particularly Earl Cooley. Earl was a really great Forest Service leader. One of a few. One of a very few. In a sense, he was like a leader that we had in California that I was mentioning, who would sit on the hillside above us, squatting down on his haunches, rolling his brown paper cigarettes and just looking up and down and saying, "Lewis, do this. Jackson do that." And just kept his eye on the whole crew, giving orders the whole time. We thought to ourselves, "Why doesn't this joker get down here and do something instead of ordering us around?" So we got on our first forest fire and we were all eager, "Come on, let's go, let's get on that fire and get it out!" And he calmed us down and said, "Wait, it's not time yet, I'll let you know when it's time. You've probably got a half hour or so before we'll be going, so relax." And we kept pawing the ground and finally he said, "OK, now it's time to get it, let's go!" And we went up and we dug ditches and trenched all the way around the fire, as fast as we could. Every so often the Ranger would leave a guard, probably every half mile, and that guard was to walk back and forth and make sure that nothing rolled downhill and got a fire started below. He would sit on his brown... on his haunches, rolling his brown paper cigarettes. We were really feeling browned out at this point, "Why doesn't this guy get up and help with this fire?" And all of a sudden he said in a perfectly calm voice, "Into the fire, men." No screaming, no excitement, more than a very firm command, and done in such a way that we didn't go back to pick up canteens that had been laid down, or jackets that had been laid down. We went right through the burn and into the burned over area. Within 30 seconds the fire had swept up the hill, probably sixty miles an hour, and was engulfing the area where we had previously been. I said, "That's why the guy sits up there and rolls his brown paper cigarettes, that keeps an eye on what's going on and gives us

orders." And I came to have great respect for leaders after that, who kept their eye out for the welfare of the people they were leading. And I had a feeling that Earl Cooley was... well, all the men here, were of that caliber. They watched for the safety of the men and that that was... that was why they were leaders. They knew what was going on and were constantly alert for situations that we might not be aware of. Either because of a lack of knowledge or because we were busy doing something else and somebody had to say, "Here's the overall picture, this is what you do." And it was a situation in which we were trained as intelligent followers. To be ready to take a command, take an order.

RF Was safety and first aid, things like that, an important aspect of your training?

TL I don't recall any first aid training whatsoever, though I'd had first aid in many, many situations previously. I felt no particular need. I had all the first aid training that was then in vogue to give. CPR [Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation] had not come in at that point, but artificial respiration, mouth to mouth, etc., were all part of my background, so I had no sense of missing anything there. Whether others did or not, I don't know.

RF Because I... from what I gather, quite a few of the jumps smokejumpers make, they may only be two or three people, and I suppose if there is an injury it's pretty important.

TL Well, the minimum number to jump was two, so that if one person got in trouble, the other person was immediately there to send up a signal for aid. The plane never left the site until he'd been given the signal that everything was OK, or whatever was needed was dropped or called for. So if a cross-cut saw was needed, they'd drop it off. If special tools of any sort were needed that we didn't carry with us as standard, they'll be dropped off.

RF Can you recall how you felt before your very first jump?

TL Yeah, I sure can. I was sitting there, as I recall, I was the first one out on the particular pass, and I had my right foot on the step of the plane and I was holding on to the door jams, looking out, and here the tree tops, about 2000 feet below me. And I looked down and I said, "For crying out loud, Lewis, what are you doing up here?" And then I got the tap on the back and I knew what I was doing up there was; get out! But we'd been so well-trained that as soon as the tap on the back came, the whole next process was just automatic. You knew how to go, you knew how to let go, you knew how to tuck your head, you knew the whole process of a safe "getting out". Usually it worked out well. Once in awhile, there might be somebody who got flipped upside down for some reason. One fellow had his... had the hook come off the static line and went out on a free fall without his backpack open. We were sure that he was a goner, but about 200 feet from the ground, out came his chest pack.

RF Much to his relief, huh?

TL Much to the relief of everybody.

RF The radio that he was carrying on his leg was just torn off from the opening shock. But he came out fine. We were all very jealous of him because the Forest Service personnel, Frank Derry in particular, he said, "Well, that man's gotta go right back up again, so he doesn't get afraid." He got an extra jump out of it. That was very disappointing to us, we didn't have that chance. [laughs] I remember another one where one fellow came out and his shroud lines were tangled at the top of his chute and he had about a half-chute and he looked up and obviously he got worried. So he pulls his chest pack, and didn't get the chute thrown out far enough to get out of the current of the pack above him. It just went up and twisted around his lines and compressed his backpack chute even more than it already was. He was coming down pretty fast, and here was Frank Derry out there grinding away taking pictures. I said, "For crying out loud, Frank, do something, don't just stand there and take pictures." He looked at me and said, "Any suggestions?" [laughs] So, the fellow came down in fine shape, wasn't hurt at all.

RF Didn't get hurt?

TL And afterwards Frank said, "Well, you know, if something's gonna happen, we might as well have pictures of it. Not only for our own instruction, but if his parents want the evidence of his last jump, we might as well have it available to them." That was quite right. [laughs]

RF Sounds like quite a character. [laughs] Let's see... do you have any real memorable fires that you jumped?

TL Mmmm... let's see. There were two fires that I jumped on that I recall in particular. One I went out with Phil Stanley and we had an area about 50 or 60 feet wide and about a 150 feet long on the end of a ridge. That was the only clear spot in which we could jump. Surrounding that area, though, was flat, were downed trees that were five and six feet in diameter, laid one on top of the other like jack straws. And that's no place to land. So we had to get into this particular spot or hang up in trees. Phil went out first and took the lower part of this area, I went out second and landed about three feet from the top of his chute. (It's a no-no to land on another person's chute, and I just missed making a no-no) That was the only time I got an injury. A barb went through my face mask and put a tiny splinter in my nose and I reached up and flicked it out and that was it. Major, major, need [for] first aid training. We walked over to the fire and found a fire that was eight feet by eleven feet in size. There was one snag that had caught the lightning that was hanging up against another tree. We very quickly headed out, and I guess before we got out, we had found the Forest Service man with a dog and his son, who had been in there working on it. We

'd gone over and gotten some water at the Ranger Station which was in reality only a half mile away. But nobody had picked it out from the air and we came back really quickly, make the last fire search and make sure everything was cold. We were talking about the war, and about politics and economics, and all the good subjects that CPS men were dared to talk about. Finally I said, "Isn't this where we turn off?" And Phil said, "Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I guess it is." So we turned off and walked down the ridge, and we got to the end of the ridge and we hadn't found our chutes, we hadn't found our packs, and worst of all, we hadn't found our fire. And we said, "Well, now what do we do?" Darkness had come on by that time, so we built our own little fire, and during the night it got kind of cold. The... we were just out in our T-shirts and we had a big pile of wood to keep the fire stoked. The first person who flipped a hand into the fire and got the alarm to wake up because of his hot hand, would get up and stoke the fire and the other person would roll away. And we just kept rolling to and from the fire all night long. Finally morning came and I said, "There's a sugar pine tree, that makes an easy climb, let's go up that." And I climbed up and I looked and I looked, finally I looked behind me and in our enthusiastic conversation we'd walked one ridge too far, and here was the fire one ridge behind us. Fortunately, it was cold. [laughs] That was one of them. And the other one was; where we jumped into a fire and worked pretty hard on it. I guess there were eight of us that were dropped on it. And came in, in the afternoon, we spent the night working. The next morning, in came a group of, probably 30 men with a mule team... the old pack train, and they took over the fighting of the fire, really. We were kind of relieved. I got the honor of being cook for the fire, and I had... I had an easy job. All I had to do was sit around the fire and throw on the food. That was a good one, that was a good one. Those are the two that are most notable that I dropped on.

RF Yeah. How many fires did you jump?

TL Only three. [laughs] No, was it four? I guess there were four, there were four, yeah. I had seven practice jumps, which was the standard and then I had a total of eleven and seven from eleven makes four.

RF Yeah. And you fought other fires from the ground?

TL Yes, yes. I dropped on one fire in Idaho, near Pierce. After getting it out we walked into the Ranger Station in Pierce. They kept us at that Station for nearly a week, because they were having a lot of fires. They didn't have a capability of dropping onto their fires, but they were having so many that they walked us out to various fires. I recall one that I was sent out to [with a] Nez Perce Indian. We had the trail all marked out on the map, which way to go, and the Indian said, "Well, you know, we could take a short cut here," And I said, "Oh, you think so? Maybe we ought to stick to the trail and make sure we don't get lost." Being a suburban-raised lad, I wanted to take no chances

of missing that fire and walking around it, like we had previously. He was very amenable and he said, "Okay, whatever you want." And we walked on the trail and caught the fire and put it out. After we had the fire out he said, "Want to take a short cut back?" And I said, "What's it gonna be like?" And he said, "Well, on this first hillside you can see it. As we get to the top, there'll be a little bit of brush up there, we'll have to work our way through, but not seriously. On the far side, it's going to be clear walking..." He described the trail that we would have all the way back. He had never been in this particular area before in his life, but every step of the way was exactly as he described it. He knew the countryside, he knew what to expect from a hill that sloped south from a ridgetop, from everything, and he could predict. And I said, "Uh, after this, I better listen to the (inaudible) to the Native Americans. [laughs]

[Unknown voice] Did you stay at the camp until the end of the camp... until it closed?

TL I was there only for the first year. With \$15 a month, we didn't have much money to buy clothing, and I could see winter coming on. Then, I had no winter clothes whatsoever, and I said, "I'm not prepared for a Montana winter." So I asked for a transfer back to California and said, "I'll go to my summer retreat and then I can come back here next summer maybe." And so I got my transfer back to Southern California, and just at that point... just, I guess within two days after it [my transfer] had come in, then come two truck loads of clothing that had been found in a military warehouse. Clothing left over from World War I that were being donated to the fellows in the camp. Wool undershirts, wool trousers, heavy boots, everything we could possibly have wanted to see us through the winter. But my transfer was already in and I couldn't change it, so I went to California. Just before, I applied for working the East coast, I'm not sure, but I was in California for just a month or so and then was transferred again to Pennhurst State Training School. This was a horrible situation where the Director of the program, actually was relieved from his duties because of reports that were written up by the 29 CPS men who were there, of all the things that were mishandled in the institution. Funds were not properly used, kickbacks, various problems. Pennhurst has, since that day, been a constant name in medical circles of how not to run a medical institution. And I had a medical problem there with (inaudible) duct cyst that had resulted from a couple of us horsing around on the way back from a fire. The doctor said I should not return to smokejumpers and consequently, I got my roommate, who was Fred Rungee interested. He went out and took my place as a smokejumper. But I couldn't go back for medical reasons. In the long run, there was never any reason why I shouldn't have, but the doctor wanted to keep me handy to look at.

RF Your experiences in the smokejumper camp... how did that CPS camp then compare to some of the others that you were in? I'm

thinking of things like, if you had a problem that needed resolving, was the procedure the same. If you had some sort of beef with the Forest Service or something? Some concern... or with CPS, how did you go about it?

TL Essentially so. Camp Directors were generally extremely carefully selected by the Administrative Church Organization. The Reverend was our camp director, and was as good as any that were around. Others were comparable and skilled (inaudible), and I would say administratively, all the camps I was in were extremely well-run. With good opportunity, if there were any beefs, to have them worked out. As a matter of fact, I don't, I don't recall any beefs that I had or was involved in, with any of the camp situations I was in.

RF Uh, did you feel that opportunity for religious services and practices were adequate in the camps?

TL Mmhuh, mmhuh. Uh, it was a very diverse group of people. From a few folks that were not necessarily atheists, but non-practitioners of any particular faith. They were humanitarian pacifists, one might say, or social pacifists. Not on religious ground. Fortunately for them they'd been able to persuade their local boards that they were sincere. At that time, Selective Service regulations did not legally make adequate conditions for them, but several got in. So we had people that ranked from a socially-oriented, non-religious pacifist to people who are deeply committed born-again Christians. Nobody was denied an opportunity to worship his... he individually might wish to worship. Generally, there was some sort of a religious service available, on Sunday mornings in particular. Some camps there was a quiet reading and at Quaker camp, there was simply a quiet gathering for an hour in which people spoke as the spirit moved them. Other camps, the Brethren and Menonite camps, there would be a preferred service as one might find in... in any "normal" community church. At no time did I feel any impinging upon anybody else's beliefs. Questioning. Thoughtful asking about this and that and the other thing, but never any condescension towards anybody else's beliefs.

RF How did the CPS experience affect you after World War II?

TL Well, let's go back to before World War II. I remember my uncles who I adored very much, taking me out to lunch after he heard that I was a candidate for CPS camp, and he said, "You know, when the war is over, you're not gonna be able to find a job if you go this route. People just aren't going to want anybody who hasn't done his duty to his country." And I remember as we crumbled soda crackers over our ice cream, there were no nuts to put on, and this was about the last time I saw him before I went into CPS. He did his level best to get me to change my mind, purely and simply, not because he agreed or disagreed with my position, but looking forward to work opportunity after. I'd had some little trouble with the camp situation I was in previously, and had fought my way through that successfully, so

that there were no problems but... ultimately no problems. But there was a great deal of concern among people close to me that this was something that would have an effect. That they... toward the end of the war, before being discharged after the war was over.... Actually, I decided that everybody else in the country had had an opportunity to go overseas and have their look around, and it was my turn now. So Howard Schormer, with whom I was in camp in Pennhurst had suggested that I go to New York, and gave me a list of various people that I might see, various schools. Including the Near East College Association. I went up and down missionary row and many of them wouldn't have me because of my beliefs. Some of them I wouldn't have because of their beliefs, but I got on swimmingly with the Near East College Association and we... I recall during the interview, the man saying, "Well the fact that you've been in the CPS camp is a plus in our wanting you as part of the staff out at the American University." So instead of being detrimental to my future activities and employment, it seemed to be actually a plus. I think it's rather interesting that, you know, those of us who went the route of CPS, apparently pursued occupations where, generally speaking, it was not detrimental to our employment.

RF You said the American University in Beirut?

TL Yes.

[Unknown voice] What did you do there and how long were you there?

TL I was there for two years. The war, the Palestine... I went out in '46 and my job was basically to teach 15 hours a week. But there were a lot of other needs that came along. One was to be a dormitory supervisor, which meant being tied to the campus 24 hours a day, seven days a week for one week out of a month. There was need for a hiking club, a skiing club, uh... camping group, photography club, handicraft club, and all these things interested me. So I took on these various activities, wound up sleeping about four or five hours a night, but having a marvelous time doing. One of the first jobs that I was assigned was to break a strike among the seniors in the secondary section who were just rebelling at the dining room situation. I said, "Well, what's the... what's the problem?" Nobody on the staff seemed to know; "But go find out." So I went down and called them all together and said, "Fellas, tell me your beefs. What are they?" "Just one. Have you eaten in the dining room?" "No." "Why don't you come on down with us tonight, [unintelligible]. ([name spoken] was a teacher, the way they referred to a teacher as kind of an honorable title) I said, "OK." So I went down, "How do you like our silverware?" The silverware had formerly had been silver-plated, but it was so old that it was all brass and if one has eaten food off brass dinnerware, he knows exactly what the students were talking about, because it changes totally the flavor of the food. I said, "I think you've got a point." Let's give them [the staff] ninety days. You know, they don't even know what the problem is at this point." So they had ninety

days. We give them the edict; New silverware in ninety days or we'll reconsider the strike position. I was on the students' side, and the staff knew I was on the students' side, and within ninety days we had new silverware. Problem resolved. [laughs] During the month before May 15th, the famous May 15th, 1948, when the British were supposed to evacuate Palestine, some students came to me and said, "[Teacher], should we sign this petition?" The petition was written in Arabic, and I said, "Well, tell me what it's about." "It's a petition that we be allowed to take vacation for two weeks from May 1st to May 15th, and then come back and take late examinations... so we can go down and see our families." And I said, "Well there's no reason why you shouldn't be given an opportunity to take late exams, but if you go from May 1st to May 15th, I doubt that you'll come back to the University at all. You'll be caught in the mesh in Palestine." And they said, "Well, what can we do? Some of us have not heard from our families for six months, and many of us have no money. We have no way to stay on in Beirut. We're trapped." And I said, "Does the administration know about this?" They didn't know. So I went to my superior and he happened to be out playing tennis. I went to Dr. [inaudible], who was the acting President for the University at that point and [inaudible] said, "We are totally unaware of it." Nobody had brought this situation to the attention of the staff, anywhere up and down the line, so he immediately called King Faisal in Jordan, and after half hour of trying to get through on the telephone arranged for a courier to carry men off from Palestine up through Ahmad, Jordan, and then back into Beirut. This worked for the next month so that most of the students were able, through that, to get communication back to their families in Palestine, because the mail was being dropped on the road coming up the Mediterranean coast by [inaudible] members. So that was resolved. And then we tried to set up a situation in which the Palestinians who were in Beirut could tell of the problems, and Lebanese and Syrians who came from families that might be able to help in this situation, but, uh... meet and try to work out some sort of a resolution to this particular problem. Then on May 13th, a Saturday, two of us had taken space on a boy scout trip going down to Sidon. We were just going to sight see and the scouts were going to do likewise. Then, it was about 1 o'clock in the afternoon that we were approximately half way between Beirut and Sidon, and we saw hoards of people coming up the highway. We saw buses with people literally hanging on the window bars with no support for their feet. Lying on the fenders. Hanging or lying on the roof. The buses were loaded to the gills. We said, "What's going on?" And immediately we... "Ah, these are Palestinian refugees." These were the very first of the Palestinians to flee their country. I said to the boy scout leader, "Don't you think there may be something for us to do down here?" His immediate reaction was, and a typical Arab reaction, "Well, we're on a pleasure trip and I wouldn't dare have the boys do anything menial." And I said, "Oh come on, these are your brothers." And finally he agreed, "Well, OK. If I could find something to do." We stopped inside and saw Dr. White and he said, "I don't know what's going on. I'm aware of the turmoil, but I don't know what's going on." He

said, "Let me call Sidon, and see..." or, no... "Tyr... and see what we can find out." And he said, "There's need for people to work [inaudible] in the hospital in Tyr. There's a doctor, a nurse, and a nurse's aide. The nurse and the doctor have not had any sleep for 48 hours and the nurse's aide is the only one who has had rest. They have people lying on the floors, without beds, being brought in. The operating room has not been sterilized for 36 hours and there still carrying on operation. They just don't have time to get in to sterile the situation. There's need for help." So we went out, and the scout leader had changed his mind at that point and decided, "No, he couldn't take the fellows down." But two fellows had come down ahead, pardon me, four fellows had come down ahead and they had said, "We're not tied to the grou. We're free." And I said, "Climb in the bus." Returned to the scouts and said, "If any of you have any extra blankets, any clothing that you're not going to need; throw them in the jeep and we'll take it down, because we're sure that it will be used down there." No scout had more than one blanket to finish up the weekend, everything else went into the jeep, and the six of us went down to Tyr. The first group to give aid to the Palestinian refugees came from five different countries, consisted of two Christians, two Moslems, and two Jews.

[END OF SIDE A]

[SIDE B]

TL So that was my post-CPS employment, a little bit of add-on, too. (laughter)

RF And then you returned to the U.S.?

TL Returned to the U.S. The situation out there got to the point where it was difficult to teach in this environment. And with [inaudible], I had volunteered to spend a year on my own, without pay, working with the refugee program. But we got nothing going, so I came back to the States at the end of that school year. Stayed around for a couple of months. Left on July 4th, as a matter of fact, to return, and came back through Turkey, and the Balkans. Through Europe... and took a boat from England to the States. Sort of bummed my way back. Had an interesting experience in Yugoslavia. The group that originally planned to go from Beirut included four people, and we were to pick up a fifth person in Istanbul. The person coming through from Istanbul was the son of the cultural attache on the U.S. Embassy, spoke [inaudible] very fluently, and the two fellows that were going to come along were set up for teaching in New England. They got worried, "Oh, what if our visas don't come through?" We requested visas for our Balkan transportation to be delivered in Istanbul. "What if our visas don't come through, we better not take a chance." So they went straight on across. That left a British girl who was going over to meet her fiance in Paris and myself, as the only two coming up from Beirut. We got to Istanbul, waited for three weeks for Cliff Gurney to come and he didn't show, so we finally went on by ourselves. We changed

all our money then to Turkish lire, at that point, and we had to go back to get money of our own country in order to buy our transportation. This was one of the regulations. So we went to the U.S. Embassy and they said, "Oh, you don't want to go through the Balcans, you can't anyway." "Oh yeah, the first one of the (inaudible) Express is going to go next Thursday." "Oh!" So we were delivering information that they honestly did not have. And they said, "Well, no, no you better not go that way, regardless." I said, "Well, I don't have enough money to go any other way. I got money waiting for me in Rome, but I don't have it here. Do you want to advance me the money for a sea passage instead of a railroad passage?" "Ah, well, maybe we'll let you go by railroad. We'll give you the monetary exchange." They didn't want to kick out. They said, "But be careful, you know, going through those countries, if you hang your feet out the window, they'll cut off your feet to steal your shoes." We said, "Well, we'll be careful." We got into Bulgaria and stopped in a little town and had probably three or four hours to spend between trains, this was a border town. We were getting hungry and looking around the town we'd seen one building that had truly been loved and cared for. It happened to be the Baptist Church, beautifully painted, everything just right, not another building in town had a scrap of paint on it. We finally found a man that we assumed to be a policeman, because he had a little hat and a badge and a pair of shorts, no shoes, no socks, no shirt, but he did have a badge. We made inquiry of him through sign languages and, you know, we're all human beings and we have the same needs regardless of what tongue we speak, and it was very easy to get him to understand we were hungry and where could we eat. He took us to a little restaurant. We were the only three people that went in, we asked him if he wouldn't join us. We had a bowl of goulash, which was all potato except for one little cubit of meat, set on top like a cherry on an ice cream sundae. He excused himself and said, "Let me go get some bread." There was no bread in the restaurant. So he came back with a loaf of bread, which we ate. I guess we ate two thirds of the loaf of bread for lunch. After lunch was over, we found that he had brought down the only loaf of bread that was allowed his family for an entire day. These were the people who were going to cut off our feet in order to steal our shoes. We got on into Belgrad, and it was our tradition to immediately go to the U.S. Embassy whenever we got into a country like that and report in, and we did. The First Secretary met us at the door and said, "My God, how did you get here?" We said, "From Istanbul." "How did you get in from Istanbul?" "On the train." "Oh, well we'll have to shut that entrance, too!" The U.S. Embassy had guards in Trieste to keep people coming in from Trieste, U.S. citizens to come in from Trieste, from getting into the country. This was during the famous U-2 days and U.S. passports were being stamped not valid for travelling in Yugoslavia. It turned out that I was the only U.S. citizen in Yugoslavia aside from three Embassy personnel. This fact and the fact that I had talked about my experiences in Yugoslavia, well, added a little bit to my FBI file, I'm sure. [laughs] But one more interesting thing, this isn't really smokejumping, but let's get into the historical

report. We were assigned an interpreter for the three days that we were in Belgrad, and on our way back from... the third day we were having lunch with the First Secretary and before leaving, he said, "I'd like to say something to you, and it's this: First, if you write anything or talk anything about your experiences here, please do not name or identify by location or any other way, with any of the people to whom you've talked. The well-known writer who has written on the inside of Yugoslavia was admonished the same way and he did not heed the admonition and as a result, two Yugoslav citizens are dead and a third one has disappeared. Please don't let this happen as a result of your visit here. And the other thing is, remember that as a representative of the U.S. Embassy, I've been able to take you just to certain people and you have not seen all of Yugoslavia by any means, and there is a great deal of good and constructive activity is going on that I have not been able to show you." And... this is just a peak of question in my mind, here's a man who is chief interpreter for the U.S. Embassy. What are his loyalties? And so I thought, "At lunch, I'll raise the question." So I did, and the First Secretary said, "I am delighted he thought to say this to you, because I might not have. But it is recognized that Marshall Tito has done more good for Yugoslav people, than all the leaders of the two hundred preceding years." And this was the statement from the First Secretary in the U.S. Embassy, and of course, when I repeated this in talks back in St. Louis, there'd be an FBI man or some government agent sitting in the corner hearing it. [laughs] My father got telephone calls three days in a row from somebody who wouldn't leave his telephone number. On the third day, recognizing the voice he said, "This is ridiculous for you to keep calling back when my son isn't here. Let me take a message. Who are you?" And with a direct question, the fellow didn't quite know how to respond and he sort of stumbled and stuttered and said, "Mmm, umm, well, just tell your son a government man called." No more conversation from the government man after that, he didn't call back. We're far away from smokejumping, do you want to get back to it?

RF I'm trying to think of...

[Unknown voice] May I ask a question?

RF Okay, sure.

[Unknown voice] Do you recall...?

TL Let me introduce, this is Roy Winger who is sitting in the background, the director of the camp and that's why I had to say such nice things about him because he's already in the room. [laughs]

RW I appreciate that. [laughs] Do you recall early in our experience at Seeley Lake, a group of girls and their leader from here on the campus that, at Montana State University, asked if they could come up and visit with us for a weekend, it could have been that some of our men initiated this visit, I've forgotten

the beginning of it.

TL I think that's correct. [laughs]

RW Were you there at the time?

TL I was indeed and enjoying it thoroughly.

RW Would you give your version of that? How it started and what happened and what the consequences were?

TL Well, there was a fellow named Dr. Batey, who was running the girl's co-op house on the University campus. I guess the girls were kind of starved for some male relationships and the men in the camp were obviously starved for some female relationships and it seemed like kind of a natural for the groups to get together. Dr. Batey very comfortably arranged for a weekend trip with the girls to the camp for a party. I assume it's the party weekend that you're talking about.

RW Yes.

TL And many of us had been in on the campus and had dated different girls and so that it was not a group of strangers that were coming out, it wasn't like the U.S.O. group of girls entertaining a group of men that just come into town and flown through.

RW As a, as a camp director and married man, you see, I didn't know that.

TL [laughs] So it was arranged that we would have a party. There was some consternation because there were some people who wanted to dance and there were some people to whom dancing was not a moral thing to do. How does one handle this kind of a situation because we had this divergent belief and all people are holding their belief in deep sincerity. Well, the result was that we decided not to call it dancing, but to have it folk games. So we had circle dancing, and square dancing, and we could hold girls' hands in the process. It was all in the name of folk games and everybody was quite comfortable with this approach to it as long as we didn't use the word dance. Well, the formal part of the party was over and we'd had our folk dances and we'd had our refreshments. I don't recall just what the refreshments were. And the girls were staying around, and so the fellows were staying around, and somebody turned on some ballroom dancing music. We sort of comfortably fell into ballroom dancing because we thought everybody who was concerned was away, and you know, nobody was going to be offended. Apparently someone heard the music and discovered that we were dancing and this being Menonite background camp, they had their legitimate concerns that we were doing things "that we should not be doing". There was a bit of consternation, as I recall, and some ruffled feelings, and all in good spirit, we got together and we said, "OK, we're sorry." And they said, "Okay, we

understand our beliefs are different." Things were smoothed over very comfortably, but it gave us a good lesson, you know, "When we were having folk games, let's have folk games. Let's not change the rules after everybody else is supposedly off and gone to bed." Is that what you were thinking about?

RW No, I didn't remember that part.

TL Oh, you didn't. [laughs]

RW And a... that is, I didn't recall any discussion about the dancing, that must have gone on in the camp meetings and I had nothing to do with that. The big concern was whether these women could take over the cabins, where the men slept, and the men would sleep out under the trees. And as I recall that's what happened. That was the thing that the Forest Service men were concerned about. What would... whether this was going to turn into a big, wild party or whether it was going to be done with good decorum.

TL Well, now that's a part of the story you're going to have to tell about because....

RW We're worried about different things. [laughs]

TL [laughs] I don't even recall sleeping out under the trees, I don't recall where the girls slept, as a matter of fact. It was of little importance to me. [laughs] And I was never aware that the Forest Service personnel had any concern about it whatsoever.

RW Another incident that it seems to me to have involved you. This was out at Nine Mile. It seems to me you were out on a very difficult fire and you came into camp in an afternoon, very dirty and black and tired. In the meantime, a letter had come from some dear soul, a Menonite minister, and we had put this letter, as we always did, on a big bulletin board outside. Some people stopped to read this new letter that had been put up there and it started out, "To the saints in CPS", and somebody like you came up and read this letter... dirty and tired, and read, "'To the saints in CPS.' Is that us?" [laughs]

TL [laughs] That may have been I, but I don't recall. I don't recall any of us feeling that we were saints. I do recall one fire that we were on in Southern California where we were mixed with soldiers who had been called in, this was a major fire. And after the fire was over, the soldiers came up into our camp. Just why, I don't recall. But we had a day together, and we had a good baseball game in which the CPS men challenged the soldiers. And... excellent spirit. And then that evening we sat down and had long conversation with them and the general feeling among the military personnel was; you know, we're both in this for exactly the same reason, the major difference is that we are taking different roads to the same end. And I thought that was a very interesting outcome of... perhaps an oversimplified statement by the military men, of the differences between the CPS

and the military.

RW I heard a story similar to that that was told by a man who later became Vice President of... of Antioch College. Do you remember his name? He was from a friend's camp and he wrote about an experience in California where CPS men were called out to a fire and they had to go out, and then in the evening, dead tired, they were sitting around the fire and talking about their experiences. And one fellow said, well, he was... he was a... he had committed some kind of crime, and in fact, he had... was in prison, but he was released to go out and fight this fire as a trustee from the prison. And another fellow said, well, he was just back from the war in the Far East, and he came back because he had cleaned out a hole of Japanese people who had demilitarized position. He was back in order to receive a medal of honor for this bravery in cleaning out this machine gun nest, or whatever it was. And then finally came the CPS man, and he said, "Well, that's interesting", he said, "because I'm here from a CPS camp and I got into this CPS camp because I refused to kill any Japanese." So, they had all these various reasons and were there in great fellowship, talking about how they got at this point to fight the fire.

TL That reminds me of a trip back from Pennhurst State Training School to St. Louis when I had a furlough. Hitchhiking from Philadelphia area to Harrisburg was extremely difficult, so I bought a train ticket to get to Harrisburg and then was going to hitchhike from Harrisburg to St. Louis. I was sitting on the train and I had a seat by myself, and in front there were two girls and on the arm of the seat was a soldier. And I said, "Hey, if you want you can turn the seat around." These were the old cars where you could get two seats to face one another or however you wanted them. And so, he said, "Fine." At that point somebody called from the back of the car and said, "Hey, aren't you from St. Louis?", and I walked back to check out the situation, found out, in fact, that we didn't know one another, but he thought he had recognized me. When I got back the seat had been faced around and the soldier was sitting beside one of the girls, and obviously I was sitting beside the other when I sat down, and the soldier and this girl were into rather heavy public lovemaking and going about as far as one could in public. Finally they broke away, and I said, "Let's find out who everybody is." So the soldier started out; he was being transferred out to a California station. And the two girls identified themselves as having just put their husbands off on the ship going to the European theater. They couldn't... they were within six hours of having left their husbands, and here's this one girl seeking solace from a soldier. Then I said, "I happen to be a conscientious objector and I'm going home on furlough, and I'm going as far as Harrisburg." "Well, what are you going to do from Harrisburg?" "Hitchhike." "Well, why are you hitchhiking?" "I don't have money to go any further." And the soldier said, "Everybody's got money, the war's going on." I said, "Well, CPS men don't, conscientious objectors do not. We're working for somewhere between \$2.50 and \$15.00 a month, depending

upon the camp we're in and that doesn't allow much for transportation, or anything else." And our conversation wound on from other things... the whole time, he was sort of, looking at me as if I were some strange animal out of a zoo. And he actually had said ,at one point in the conversation, "Gee, I always wondered what one of you guys looked like." [laughs] And as the conversation went on, he said, "I'm gonna ask you one question and if you don't answer it right, I'm gonna knock your goddamn block off." And I said, "Well, if you do, if that's the option you take, I have a hunch that there's going to be sufficient disturbance that the conductor is going to come and want to put somebody off the train, and if it's my block that's knocked off, I have a hunch it's you that he will want to put off the train. I know you have to get out to California and if I have anything to say about it, you can stay on the train. But go ahead and ask your question and I'll answer it as truthfully and honestly as I can." He said, "Do you really like those Japs?" I said, "As a matter of fact, I've never met a Jap, or a Japanese as I prefer to call them," and I said, "I have a hunch that if I did, I would have no dislike for them whatsoever, I have a feeling that the primary struggle is not between Japanese citizenry and U.S. citizenry, but between the governments, the political and the economic forces that govern our two countries. So consequently, no, I have no hatred for the Japanese people." With that, he stood up, started to take off his coat and he saw me still sitting there and I guess it was at that point that I said that I would try to have the conductor keep him on. I... "Oh what's the use." [laughs] He put on his jacket, he sat down and started necking the girl next to him. [laughs] I got off in Harrisburg. [laughs]

RF Oh boy.

RW You have to get to class.

RF I think I do. Well, thank you very much.

TL You do indeed, you do indeed.

RF Yeah, well, thank you so much, that was....

TL Thank you, this has been a great opportunity to....

RF It was a very easy interview for me, I didn't hardly have to say a word. [laughs]

RW He's got a lot more he could tell you, if you've got another hour.

RF Well, I'm glad we could fit this in. Thanks for calling me last night.

RW Surely.

TL Well, thank you for giving me the opportunity to record some

of this, it's a worthwhile project you're doing.

[END OF TAPE]