

## Interview with Jim Jamieson

27 October 1995

### START OF INTERVIEW

Interviewer (I): Okay Jim the first question I have for you is of course a basic questions, when were you born, where were you born?

Jim Jamieson (JJ): born December 4<sup>th</sup> 1946 at Fort Eustis Virginia, which is outskirts of Newport News it's an Army Base. That makes me almost 49 years old up to present and I'm from a military family so that pretty much covers that question.

(I): What were you involved in when Vietnam first got started?

(JJ): I was going Grand Rapids Junior College

(I): So you were attending college at the time? What year were you in? Do you remember?

(JJ): 19... I graduated from Rodgers High school in 1965 and that September I went to Grand Rapids Junior College and then I had my draft notice come up and a few of my friends and I we decided that we were going to be drafted anyway so we went down to the draft board and we found out when we were going to be drafted and upped out due date. We found out that we could get a hundred twenty day notice so that we knew exactly when we would be going in, so what we did is we finished that semester at school and then we got part time jobs, and we just kind of I might say loafed around we took a break working part time because we knew we were going to be in the service July the 12<sup>th</sup>.

(I): So July 12<sup>th</sup> 1996 is when you left for Vietnam?

(JJ): That's when we left for Fort Campbell, Kentucky for my basic training. 101 Air Born yeah. And then from there we went to Fort Sill, Oklahoma for AIT training and was put into field artillery and took ranger training there and they came out toward the end about the last week and a half to two weeks of AIT they had pretty much a listing of where we might end up because we were draftees so out of 212 of us there was approximately 130 that volunteered for Vietnam because the guys didn't want to take a chance on going to Germany for 18 months or going to Korea for 13 to 18 months. Of course, we were all pretty much gung-ho, by then, invincible we thought that the bullets could bounce off our chest anyways so we wanted to volunteer and go to 'Nam and get it over with so that's what we did.

(I): So that was your basic feeling about, since you weren't drafted and went down there early, I understand that but your basic feeling about 'Nam is you were gung-ho you wanted to go serve your country basically had a lot of pride there.

(JJ): Yeah, exactly like I said I was from a military family my dad was still in the service he served nine years he was in the whole four years for World War Two and in Germany and Italy and he came back and was stationed in Virginia and I was born there. My uncle is in the navy, my uncle is in the Air Force, and some are in the army. I was always brought up that if you love

your country you fight for it if not you leave it. Right or wrong, whatever the reasons are that you would be there for the flag and for the country. That's the way I was raised.

(I): Okay now before Vietnam, was it even an issue before you left for Vietnam before you went down and volunteered before being drafted what were your basic feelings about Vietnam?

(JJ): Pretty much like everybody else. This was the early sixties, 61, 62, right in that area of course Kennedy was assassinated, the racial thing was going on, the country was in somewhat of a disarray. Hearing what, of course being in high school, trying to pick up on what was going on we were lead to believe that on the news reports and so on that we were stopping the progression and threat of communism. That's pretty much being a high school student, that's what we thought Vietnam was all about.

(I): So you weren't really for America's involvement, you weren't behind America being in 'Nam from what you were learning from the TV and from what you were learning in high school.

(JJ): Certainly, I was behind in. They the support of the country to stop communism after all Kennedy threw a blockade on Cuba turn back the guided missiles, stopping communism, why wouldn't we think that stopping communism in Vietnam would be any different? So yes, I was behind it.

(I): Now you were just talking about Kennedy, how did you feel about the government's sole involvement in Vietnam? I'm talking when I mean government I'm talking about Kennedy, I'm talking about LBJ and I'm talking about Nixon briefly describe how you felt each of those presidents handled their situation.

(JJ): Kennedy was handling that quite well, he had realized that we couldn't win the way we were going about it so he was fixing to withdraw the troops he was going to make an announcement, of course I find these things out later, but he, he was going to make an announcement before Thanksgiving that he would start to bring the troops back but shortly before that he was assassinated in Texas and there was a lot of people in our government, in congress, even the Vice President, Lyndon Baines Johnson did not want to bring the troops back. He thought we could win there by putting in more troops, more ammunitions, stepping up the involvement of the United States and of course that goes back and forth for quite a while. Only bombing areas around Hanoi we felt as people over there that, that wasn't the way to go. If you're going to bomb somebody, you go right to the heart if you're going to fight a snake you need to cut its head off. So we figured that he should have went to Hanoi and bombed Ho Chi Minh himself but later we realized that's the political thing, you bomb non-civilian targets, railroads, air fields, factories that type of thing as the least amount of civilian targets as possible. Lyndon Baines kind of botched all that and he wouldn't let his advisors, not his advisors, the military people fight the war like it should have been fought. It was a political thing, we couldn't go into Cambodia even though we were there, our units were into Cambodia back and forth when they weren't suppose to be, I was one of them. So he kind of pretty much took over from Kennedy and ran the war as a political stepping stone as opposed to Kennedy was trying to fight it as a military encounter. Nixon had realized that we couldn't win and we were putting too many resources in there, the public opinion of the United States was quite large against having our people over there and sending more people over there, and he realized that so as a political move for him he decided to withdraw and try to save face and make it honorable for both sides. That was Nixon's role in it.

(I): What was it like you're first day there?

(JJ): The first day there that was Tan Son Nhut

(I): Can you say that again please?

(JJ): Tan Son Nhut

(I): Okay

(JJ): That was my first day in Saigon, my very first day was at Pleiku, Corps two headquarters, it's up in the mountains northern Vietnam. My very first, very first afternoon there just before dark there we were rocking in the motor, that's quite an experience when your 19 just turned 20 years old and you leave the United States just 18 hours previous to that you're in California and 18 hours later you're in Vietnam and people are shooting at you for real, they want to kill you. That's our real wake up call.

(I): What was it like you're last day?

(JJ): That was even scarier. Well of course the last day, well let's call it the last day in the field because they take you out of the field and you have to back to a basecamp and then you have to ETS out of the service or out of the warzone, you have to get your papers in order and you're medical shots and you're gear has to be turned in and weapons and so on. But the last day in the field, I was supposed to leave the field December the 10<sup>th</sup>, December the 9<sup>th</sup> we were overrun the division of north Vietnamese and Vietcong we lost four of the six Howitzers all our ammunition that was in ammo trailers our fire direction control center, Captain Pierpont's quarters were demolished the mess hall, just everything, we just got overrun and took several casualties. Luckily, nobody in our unit got killed but several injuries, wounded and so on. The first of the fourth [Unintelligible] they had several casualties, guys got killed, tanks were rocked, 7 guys not 50 yards from me got killed on tanks so that was the scariest part right there.

(I): So the last day

(JJ): So on my last day I was suppose leave on December the 10<sup>th</sup> and on December the 9<sup>th</sup> which was that night of December 10<sup>th</sup> through midnight all night long we were being overrun and rocketed and I fired over 15,000 rounds of 50 caliber machine gun and ammunition and we had quite a few bodies stacked up out on the perimeter. I don't know what the exact amount was, but there was a lot of destruction that night so they held me over for three days before we could get back into basecamp. All of our vehicles were destroyed and stuff like that.

(I): So you're last day was then was actually December the 12<sup>th</sup>, is when you finally got to leave?

(JJ): Yeah, Right

(I): How did you feel about the American uprising protesting against the Vietnam veterans that were over there fighting for the United States, and there calling you baby killers, and they are calling you names, their making fun of you, when you're over there killing, not really killing, I don't want to say killing

(JJ): Well that's what we were sent there for

(I): Yeah, How did you feel about that because I know that the veterans over there got word back on the American uprising and the things that were being said about the public.

(JJ): Oh sure, well there's a Stars and Stripes newspaper that is put out by the military and there were articles and photographs about the protesters there's was letter from home and some guys got video tapes from home and we could watch those things and we were awfully upset. We were over thinking we were doing the right thing, and I still think we were and people back home protesting us being there, most of them were college kids, draft dodgers, and it was bad because some of the reserves that were in our units were activated and one of them was a high school English teacher he was first Lieutenant. Sharp guy, really neat guy, and he felt real bad because the people he was trying to teach were doing the protesting and it put everyone in a hard position. We were pretty upset with the country being over in Vietnam we felt as though we had no support at all from the people back home other than immediate family.

(I): So basically the only support you felt being over there as a soldier was from your family. You didn't feel any support from the United States as a whole?

(JJ): Nope. Of course you hear a lot of the negative stuff, people would send us articles from different newspapers calling us names but you have to remember that a lot of newspapers are liberal anyways, almost all of them, so they are going to take a different slant to things anyways.

(I): What was it like coming back from Vietnam? How did you feel, did you feel proud or did you feel embarrassed?

(JJ): I felt very proud until I got home. I came home in December it was, when I left Vietnam it was approximately 115 to 120 degrees I came home to Michigan, Grand Rapid, Michigan, it was seven below zero, I was sick, I had a cold, I had to layover in Okanogan because the plane landing gear wouldn't lock down so it was an emergency landing and it took me 3 or 4 days alone just to get home. When I got home, my dad was very proud he wanted me to wear my uniform and took me to a local tavern that he went to and wanted to buy me a drink because I turned 21 in Vietnam and he wanted to buy me a drink. When we went in people were calling me baby killer and that got my dad all upset because he was a proud military person and the town of Grand Rapids back then was considerably smaller than it is now, but even a town that size has a couple three colleges around it but still the full protesting was going on. Eventually I just told people I was from Florida because I had a real dark suntan and they wanted to know where I got the tan so I just told them I was in Florida because it got to the point where you can't fight everybody and when you're ganged up on its just easier just to swallow your pride and put your tongue in your cheek and forget about it for a while. I was home for a thirty-day leave and that's what I ended up having to do.

(I): So was it harder coming back fighting the people of America more so than fighting the Vietnamese.

(JJ): Much harder fighting our own people because in Vietnam, you could fight back and here you couldn't fight back, you could try and tell them how you felt about it but they didn't want to hear it, they didn't give you a chance. They would shout you down, they didn't want to listen and people would ask you questions about the Vietnam war and you would think "oh this person really wants to know", all of the sudden when you told him some things he didn't want to hear

they would change the subject or just totally ignore you. Once they found out you were in Vietnam they pretty much stayed away from you.

(I): Okay were the events that the United States heard from Walter Cronkite on TV every week and the news articles they were getting back here, what I'm trying to get at is the murders of the innocent people and the baby killings. Was it over exaggerated or was it right the way it was played in America?

(JJ): I think it was over exaggerated. I'm sure there are atrocities that go on in all the wars, but the atrocities that weren't talked about or shown on our TV screens is because we have censorship laws and if we show something that is condemned or shown as propaganda and we can't do that so what happens is that the civilian population over here was not shown the atrocities that the Vietnam did to our people, what they did to their own people for crying out loud. Then, how they would go into a village and capture and kidnap kids from twelve years old on up to their twenties and thirties, anybody that could fight and then they would shoot a couple of the older folks, the senior folks and tell the village if they say anything or give them away that they would come back and wipe out the whole village and sometimes they did that just to prove a point. So when they would capture our guys they would skin them alive they would cut their intestines out, poke their eyes out, all kinds of torture with sticks and you know so when our guys would get a chance, when we had captures at Vietcong some of the guys went a little crazy and did their own atrocities so like I say that's war, it's been that way for thousands of years.

(I): You kind of answered this question earlier but even to the point of where the early 70's, 71, 72, I know you weren't there but do you think that America really at that point really had a reason for being there when it was very evident that the Vietnamese were never going to change their ways, Communism was going to be the only way, well the one thing for sure with that would be, right after we finally withdraw they went back to communism and right back to their old ways that we were trying to solve for them in the first place.

(JJ): Yeah well not necessarily because when we left in 73 or 75 or whichever one it was, I'm not exactly sure, but when we had left and Saigon became Ho Chi Minh city and it became all one country most of the population had thought that the United States and probably around the world that it was for nothing, but when you look at the bigger picture of it now, the capitalism is beginning to run rampant over there you cannot give people a little bit of freedom, you cannot do that they will, they will fight you. They have had a taste of capitalism and its working over there and some of our corporations are moving over there and another example of that is East Germany when the Berlin wall came down, they got a taste of freedom and the right to decide for themselves and you can't give people a little bit of that and expect to take it back. South Vietnam enjoyed capitalism and freedom when we were over there, when we left they went back to communism and they didn't like it and eventually they began to fight back and that's what you know. Communism does not work anywhere in the world, no place. It's only manifested and keeps growing on by a dictatorship.

(I): So you thought that's why a lot of the Embargos we have with Vietnam right now are being lifted, like the one most recently just was lifted was in 1992?

(JJ): Its being lifted because of the political, a lot of people don't think that's good but I do, and if it helps get our MIA POWs back. That's a big thing especially with me I can't stand Ross Perot simply for that reason, back in 1986 the things that he did but if it helps get our people

back and open up treaty with south Vietnam, you know, we did it after WW2 we did it after the Korean War were doing it with China, I think we should do it with Vietnam as well, it will just spread capitalism a lot more throughout the world.

(I): So you don't feel in any type of way that Vietnam was an economic war to put America back on its feet since every war clearly for the United States is a money making plan, even though we have a reason, war makes the United States richer.

(JJ): Oh sure, in the United States we prosper very well during the time of war and I use the word war, the Vietnam war it was still called military police action, but it was a war, even though we didn't fight it properly, we didn't fight it militarily, we let the politicians dictate how we were going to fight this war but yeah I agree even though it was a political scheme of things and a lot of people got rich off it being a patriot that I am, I believe that if the initial attempt was to go over there and stop communism and it's taken a few years but we stopped it, they haven't expanded anyplace, communism is getting smaller and smaller throughout the world.

(I): Which president best supported you, not you but best supported the American troops in Vietnam and why do you think that president is the one that did the best work?

(JJ): Boy that's tough, well it wasn't Lyndon Baines Johnson, probably Kennedy, the short time he was president. Nixon supported us when he withdrew out of the country, he got us out but the actual support for the troops, I think Kennedy was the best. In today's, the political scheme of things, Kennedy would be a republican so I think that's why quite a few of the democrats didn't like what he stood for.

(I): Did you even feel that you would honestly get rewarded for your efforts in and for serving your country with the pride and the honor that you did from Vietnam?

(JJ): Yeah when we were there we all thought that, the government tried to patch things over by giving us a bonus. It was \$600 to try and buy you out but that was, it was nice to get but it was basically a bribe, the country supposedly gave us a thank you and so on but the sentiment throughout the United States is that the people who fought in Korea and Desert Storm and WW2 and Grenada, they all got much more respect and still do to this day than the people who fought in Vietnam and Ronald Reagan is probably the only president that backed the troops and made all the troops feel like they were elite and something to be proud of.

(I): Do you think the Vietnam memorial wall, I believe was 1982, was when it was put up, but do you think it was long overdue?

(JJ): Long overdue. I've been down to Washington to see the wall and it's a moving experience, which you don't know how moving it is until you were in Vietnam and you can see the names up on the wall that were your friends that were killed over there, your high school buddies and your college buddies and just friends from other schools and the guy you had served with, their names are up there yet and they were from other states, California, Texas, south Carolina, they're there yet too. So it's a real moving experience. Yup long overdue.

(I): As far as the POWs and MIA, do you think America should have made more of a continued effort of trying to get our Americans out of there that there is evidence of people still being there to this day, 1995

(JJ): Yes

(I): Do you that's just, just a little bit ago when you said that Desert storm, Korea, has gotten more fanfare for their involvement for their wars than you guys did with the Vietnam, do you think that kind of point to this by saying as the government saying that it really wasn't that important after all by not putting a continued support for the POWs and MIAs?

(JJ): No I think here again it's a political thing not to go after the MIA POWs I still think there are guys over there, I think its relaxed in that we don't put more pressure on Vietnam and have the other country's put more pressure on them, Ross Perot like I said before in 1986 supposedly from his own words, if you read the book *Kiss the boys goodbye* he states from there that he went to the congress, he had photographs and maps and evidence of guys that were still alive but he wanted to lead the contingency over there he wanted to in control of it and congress told him no, the defense department told him no, they can't have civilians leading our people over there, but if he would give up the information that he had that they would see what they could do about it and he wouldn't turn that information loose, he says if he couldn't lead it then he wasn't going to do it, so he was still the narrow minded little squirt then that he is now and that's why I can't stand Ross Perot for the way he treats the military and our guys that were over there, he had all the money and the information but he wouldn't be willing to serve the country by helping out any way. How I felt about the MIAs and POWs, I think that the government should continue to be very aggressive in trying to get the guys back or at least their remains, I think probably as the guys die or are killed they send bones back, that's another thing we haven't found out yet, is how old these bones are, are they new bones are they old bones, one bone, two bones, you know whatever, it would be interesting for the public to find out. I know it's morbid and if the family would even want it, I don't even know what the family know, but are these caskets fresh bones are they the bodies you know, that's something the government knows but we don't and I think that's something that should be let out to the civilian population.

(I): This is a question I probably should have asked earlier but what military intuition were you serving under?

(JJ): I was in the army; it was the first Infantry division, the Charlie Battery 8<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup>, that 8<sup>th</sup> battalion and 6<sup>th</sup> artillery, I went over at a 75<sup>th</sup> ranger and then they gave us new orders and then I was in field artillery, 11 and half months out in the field with the Big Red One.

(I): So you were actually in 'Nam for a total of 11 and half months?

(JJ): No I was in Vietnam for 12 months, 3 days altogether.

(I): How did you feel about serving under an army institution such as the Big Red One with such history and strong power that went behind the Big Red One, what did it feel like to serve during war with the Big Red One patch on your right shoulder?

(JJ): Very exhilarating you didn't take a lot of grief, it's one of those things like you don't have to prove how good you are because people know. Are training was outstanding I was trained at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, 101<sup>st</sup> air born; I was trained by green berets and rangers at Fort Sill I was trained by rangers. Like you say we were invincible, told an treated like the best, you had a certain walk to you when you were out in public, you carried yourself as a proud human being, and it seems like everyone when they saw the first division patch they knew what you were all about, what it stood for and what it meant. As it is I am a member of that division for life, we look out for our own, I get a little correspondence from them every now and then. We were at, as

you remember, Fort Riley, Kansas, where you were stationed at First Infantry Division Headquarters, and I introduced you to Major General Hartzog, who was the camp commander, and that made you puff your chest up a little bit too you know a little pride there. He found out I was in Vietnam and we got a guided tour of the museum there for a half hour and by him himself and that's the way they treat their people.

(I): Actually being over there for the 12 months, you hear so many stories and what it was like but from a first-hand experience, what was it like being a man over there and having the feelings that men are known for, what was it like to be over there in the darkness, in the rain, not being able to take your boots off for three days in a row. What was it like being over there and actually serving in a war?

(JJ): Very humbling, that's humiliating at sometimes, people over here take it for granted when you can just wash your face, brush your teeth, we waste water here like you wouldn't believe, of course Americans are wasteful anyways, but over there we would go weeks without taking a shower or even washing up because we didn't have enough water being out in the field, they couldn't fly it in because the water trailers would come back like sprinklers being shot full of holes and there wouldn't be a lot water. All the water we had was rationed to the Howitzers to keep the guns going, either you swab the tubes out, or put water in the radiators when they had the self-propelled Howitzers, and then what water was left was sent to the mess hall, or tent, to try to cook on and sometimes we didn't even have enough water for that so they would fly out meals for us and try to give us at least one hot meal a day or every other day anyways, some days you only get one to two meals a day. You couldn't change your socks, couldn't get out new clothing, you would go three or four weeks before you could even change your clothes, a lot of times we would take our clothes off and just throw it in a pile and douse them with Carnosine or fuel oil and throw a flare in them because the material wasn't worth saving it was soaked with body sweat and perspiration and it would just rot right on your skin, there in the monsoons our feet would be wet all the time you, when they finally got to dry out your feet would crack and bleed and then your boots would be full of blood. Yeah the things that the human body will endure is, when its forced to, go on without sleep sometimes you would be awake for three or four days maybe just grabbing a five or ten minute nap here or there its very agonizing, and we did have some good times there but as a rule you would sleep in mud or your battling the scorpions black and brown ones and the cobra snakes it's a humbling experience and makes you appreciate things so much more when you get back state side.

(I): Do you think, I know that there were stories coming back to America that the heart aches of the soldiers that were occurring over there, but as a whole there were more stories about the drug use involved with the soldiers over there, there were more stories coming back about the baby killing, the sexual intercourses with the women that were over there unwillingly, the prostitution camps that were over there for the soldiers and stuff like that, do you think that's why Americans had more of a prejudice attitude about Vietnam, that they forgot to think about the bloody feet, the days without sleep, do you think that why, do you think journalism messed up this war more than it helped it?

(JJ): I here again agree with part with that the liberal press puts their slant on things as they do yet today, maybe not as much back then as they do today. The baby killer I think comes from the fact that when would drop bombs and some of our artillery, the barrages, the civilians that would get caught, we had had a saying over there "how do you tell the nationals from the Vietnamese"

well the nationals just run faster so in other words, if they're alive they are Nationals, if they are dead they are Vietcong. It was hard to tell, they would be with you all day long but at night they would be fighting against you, it was just hard to tell sometimes. Some of the snipers we had found and shot were dressed as nationals, just regular civilian clothing, but at night the typical black pajamas, everyone wore black pajamas over there so it was hard to tell.

(I): Nationals were your main enemy?

(JJ): No they were the regular South Vietnamese

(I): So your allies?

(JJ): Well we up against North Vietnamese regulars and the Vietcong and the ARVN (The Army of the Republic of Vietnam) over there which was the Vietnamese army with our experience the south Vietnamese army was next to useless, they were unorganized, not trained at all, so that represented some problems because you couldn't trust them, the Vietcong had to filter into their ranks as well. What else did you ask me about besides baby killers?

(I): The drug use

(JJ): Oh yeah the drug use. In our particular unit marijuana was in great supply over there, you know it was about a dollar and a half for about a pound bag or more, but in our particular unit since we were out in the field all the time everybody stayed pretty straight. We did have beer but it was rationed only one or two cans a day, but it was warm we had no ice, but the marijuana in our outfit was pretty much kept under control. You had to be alert and be awake otherwise you would be dead, I know that a couple of Vietnamese stories that have been out emphasize the great marijuana usage but I didn't see it over there when I was there.

(I): When you said the South Vietnamese, why they felt what it was like to be free for a short while and when the Americans were seen when the Americans were being withdrawn, withdrawing from Vietnam, that you saw American helicopters being flown by Vietnamese jumping into the ocean trying to get on boats and stuff, do you think that it was a sign that yes even though that you have indicated that you really didn't get a lot of support from the South Vietnamese and internationals that were on your side, do you think that they really wanted to be free? Could you tell that?

(JJ): Oh certainly, when we would get a half of day pass, they would fly us in to a village that was 85% or more sympathetic towards us they would give us like a half of a day pass and fly you in for whatever you wanted, just to sightsee, shop, some guys had wanted to visit the local prostitutes but you could go into these shops and they spoke some broken English but hey just like anybody else they were making money and they didn't have to give it to the country you know, they didn't have to pay a lot of taxes over there, whereas in North Vietnam they couldn't do that, they couldn't speak their mind they couldn't say what they wanted, and in South Vietnam they could, they could do whatever they wanted basically. They liked the Americans, they liked the money that we had, and they reaped the benefits of it until we left.

(I): Now after everything, after you were gone, after everything was said and done, you came back you didn't have to lie about being in Florida anymore and cover that up, cover your Vietnam experience up, just like the man that you and I had the pleasure of meeting in that Museum, the Vietnam veteran who had hair down to his ankles and you find Veterans, not just

Vietnam Veterans who are very fanatic. They either will sit in a bar 24/7 drinking away their problems or they will be like individual that we met in the Museum, still trying to sell Vietnam and hasn't gone on with his life, how has the Vietnam experience affected your life and where have you been able to go with your life after Vietnam days were over with?

(JJ): A lot of guys, it was psychological, I had my share of problems too that I found, when the wife and I had times and couldn't figure out why until we saw and acquired some help from a psychologist, trying to understand why things were the way they were, I had a lot of flashbacks, I had my own problems doing certain things when I got back, getting my self-esteem back when I was, after I was stationed at Fort Meade Maryland with a unit that was 100% guys back from Vietnam and we were the, you could call it the elite or the riot squads for Washington D.C. in '68, we were put out front and they figured that we could handle the riots better, the pressure because we had combat experience and so we were the lead team for any of the riots that we went on but I think the guys that can't let go or won't let go, they have a little bit, they want someone to feel sorry for them, and you have to get over that. I came back got married, went back to college, didn't get my degree, changed jobs a few times, but now I am in management, a design engineer for Maritech and I pulled myself up as well as a lot of other guys have, or it can be done and its being done and the guys who don't want to do it, I guess maybe they need to try a little harder or get some help, I really don't know what their problems are, I have talked to a few of them and they seem to be the same, they want to keep rehashing Vietnam they don't want to let it go, but you have to, you have to get over it and let it go, go forward.

(I): When you said that you went to the riots, what riots was that? Was that civil rights riots, or riots that were still involved in Vietnam?

(JJ): Well it was both, it started out being protesters I know that they called the tent city on the Washington Monument area and reflection pond out there, it's called the plaza or the square or whatever in front of the capital there and it started out being a tent city and it was Vietnam protestors and then after a while it turned into a racial riot and that one particular time in April I was there for eleven days fighting riots we had declared marshal law in Washington D.C. because the police couldn't handle it and they brought us down and we just took over the city we didn't need search warrants, we didn't need any type of warrant to stop vehicles, we started out the first three days we were with the police department, and they had to get search warrants but it got so bad that they eventually declared marshal law and the government took over, the army did and then police went with us instead of us with them and we stopped vehicles, did searches, went into buildings and apartment complexes, and they, the rioters would break into clothing stores, drug stores, grocery stores, liquor stores, and we had to take control of the city and we did, and there was a few casualties of the civilian population but not too much ever got out they kept on the wraps, there again we were the Vietnam veterans and we had a point to prove that we were the best and we proved that point the civilians backed down from us but we had to have the show of force and we did it immediately, we didn't give it a second chance, they knew where we were coming from, they knew why we were there and we didn't show up as a ragtag bunch of weekend warriors, we were the elite, we were the only dressed in, dressed greens, polished boots, dress pants, wearing your metals, black leather gloves, we had a point to prove and we proved it.

(I): Were any of those protestors yelling and spitting, and spitting on you, calling you baby killers even while you were there, knowing that you were from Vietnam?

(JJ): Yeah we had a lot, we even had the flower power people trying to put flowers down the barrel of your gun, trying to hang flowers on the bayonet of your rifle throwing bottles at us and rocks, spitting at us, throwing bags of bodily waste and dog waste, throwing that stuff at you and fruits, vegetables, eggs, whatever they could get their hands on and throw at you, that's what they were doing.

(I): How did you feel about that just coming back from Vietnam knowing that these people were down casting you, just coming back serving your country, willing to die for your country, spitting on you, throwing dog waste on you, how did that affect you mentally?

(JJ): We got very mad, very upset, we kind of figured as much as these people were the low life's of the country, most of them were college educated or in college and some of course were non-working, a lot of them were highly educated people and they had their point of view as well and they couldn't take it out on the government so to speak and we were the closest thing so they would try to take it out on us, but all that did to us is make us madder and meaner, and then thing that they didn't realize is that in the two years in the military we had seen things that they could never ever even visualize, so their little tempura tantrums of throwing bottles and eggs and rocks was the typical childish, immature, and for the college kids, the term of book smart, common sense, stupid, really showed the point, it really held up, even though they think in the long it's their presence of protest that swayed it, it was basically a political move, come to find out it's for the petroleum on the pacific rim and all this other stuff, I don't think their protest had much to do with it.

(I): If you had to do it all over again knowing that, from the very beginning before you knew that you were going to be drafted, would you still do it all over again, and go in early before you were drafted and just be as gung-ho to serve your country as you were back in 1967?

(JJ): Yeah I think I would be even more so, because you only got one life to live and this is a greatest country in the world and if you have never left the country to see how it is other places you wouldn't know what we have here and it's for people like my dad and other peoples dads who fought through the Spanish American war, the Cowboy Indian war, the Civil war, and so on we fought for the right to be free and the freedom of choice and all the constitution and the amendments and its just all those people who have died to make this country what it is and look at where we have come in a little over 200 years as to some of the other countries that are thousands of years old. That can only because of the people who want to make this country great and if you don't like I'm a full believer that you should leave it, hey if Canada will take these people then great, then let them go to Canada, that is why Canada isn't as great as the United States is, that's why Great Britain isn't a great at the United States is, only here, why would all the other people in the world want to come to America, because we are a great country, and I would, I would do it over again sure.

(I): So your viewpoint on draft dodgers and all the people that did everything they could not to go to Vietnam, "Chickens" to serve their country but not too afraid to become "richer" by staying home

(JJ): If you're a draft dodger and want to leave the country, then leave the country but don't come back after they give you amnesty I think that sucks but I do think that the country is better off without them. Draft dodgers are, they are taking the lazy way out, the chicken way out, there are ways that you could serve in the military, you don't necessarily have to carry a rifle, or a

weapon, or missiles, we had guys that were consciences objectors and I don't mind that, you could have gone into the reserves, national guard, post guard, whatever, there are other ways of serving the country without having to carry a rifle or to kill someone, but I still think you should serve your country when they ask, that's the least you could do.

(I): Well Jim that would conclude the question I have, is there anything you would like to add, anything in particular that you might have felt I left that is important that deals with 'Nam or that deals with anything that you feel is important with your personal experience that you would like to add.

(JJ): Well I just think that the country as a whole since desert storm has taken a different outlook on the military, I think Clinton is hurting the military again but hopefully he will be voted out of office, I think our press and the media could help out our military guys a little better, support them more, other than that everybody, that's my opinion and everyone is entitled to their own opinion, that's why it is America and that's why it is a great place to live and I am all for people who want to voice their opinions in a mature and grown up type manner, I think protesting and rioting is not the way to do it, I just think that is why America has flourished, and done as well as it has because of all the different types of nationalities and different types of opinions so, keep it strong and support the United States.

(I): Thank you

END OF INTERVIEW